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at 3 p.m.
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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KORHONEN (Finland)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 76: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
(continued) (A/40/99, A/40/272; A/SPC/40/3)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)
(A/40/20 and Corr.1)
- (b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/40/621 and Corr.1)

1. Mr. SCHLICKE (German Democratic Republic) said that, since his country had started its participation in international co-operation activities in the field of outer space, it had committed itself to using it exclusively for peaceful purposes. Accordingly, it was alarmed at the danger of the militarization of outer space entailed by recent tests of a weapon against space targets and other similar activities. Unless a halt was put to those activities, the nuclear threat would increase even more and mankind would be deprived of vast intellectual and material resources necessary for the solution of more vital issues.

2. The German Democratic Republic supported unreservedly the initiative submitted by the Soviet Union to the General Assembly at its fortieth session, because it offered a clear and constructive answer to the question now being put to all the Governments and peoples of the world, namely, the necessity of using outer space ever more effectively to improve life on Earth and not to prepare mankind's annihilation.

3. His delegation congratulated the delegations of those States which had recently made constructive contributions to the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, in particular, the repairs made by the Soviet cosmonauts V. Dzhanibekov and V. Zavnych to the SALYUT 7 orbital station; the docking of the SOYUZ T-14 spacecraft manned by the cosmonauts V. Vazjutin, A. Volkov and G. Grechko; the INTERCOSMOS programme, in which launchings had been made with the participation of Soviet, French and Indian cosmonauts and in which Swedish-made instruments had been used; the international research programme on Halley's Comet; and the international COSPAS-SARSAT system, which had made possible the rescue of more than 500 victims of shipwrecks and aircraft accidents.

4. Under the INTERCOSMOS programme, the German Democratic Republic had actively shared in the peaceful exploration of outer space. Instruments made in the German Democratic Republic continued to function aboard the SALYUT 7 orbital system, for example, the MKF-6M multispectral camera and the MKS-M multichannel spectrometer, which had been used in experiments aimed at directing atmospheric disturbances in remote sensing pictures of the Earth and thus at ensuring improved interpretation. Furthermore, scientists of the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic and of the Humboldt University of Berlin, in close co-operation with the Soviet Union, had participated, in July 1985, in experiments carried out aboard the

(Mr. Schlicke, German Democratic Republic)

biosatellite COSMOS 1667 for the purpose of investigating the increase of individual stress resistance, the dynamics of biological microrhythms, the work-sleep cycle and mineral metabolism.

5. With regard to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the key to enhancing the effectiveness of that body was the political willingness of States to contribute to the solution of the problems on its agenda. The legal and political problems raised by the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, some of which had been considered in the Committee and in its two Sub-Committees, should be resolved in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and other recognized norms of inter-State relations. In that regard, the draft submitted by Austria (A/AC.105/L.158) formed a basis for arrival at a compromise on the elaboration of the catalogue of principles for remote sensing of the Earth.

6. His delegation considered that priority should be given to some questions that were being considered in the legal Sub-Committee, such as remote sensing of the Earth, the definition and delimitation of outer space and the elaboration of a convention on international direct broadcasting by satellites. Lastly, he hoped that the General Assembly at its fortieth session would adopt decisions that would ensure a peaceful future for mankind on the halting of the arms race on Earth and the prohibition of the extension of that race to outer space.

7. Mr. AKOLZIN (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that cosmonautics had made a valuable contribution to knowledge of the world and had produced positive results in the area of telecommunications, weather forecasting, world cartography, mineral prospecting and the location of victims of shipwrecks. It had also promoted technical progress and the creation of economic, scientific and technical links between countries. He cited by way of example the INTERCOSMOS programme, whose investigations had revealed new data on the Sun and its influence on the Earth and on the biosphere and the magnetosphere, and the remote sensing programmes in which scientists from the Byelorussian SSR and other socialist countries collaborated. It was thus a question of activities that were very important for the future of mankind and which must therefore not be militarized.

8. The international community was concerned at the prospect of the extension of the arms race into space, which increased the risk of war and jeopardized all that had been achieved so far in the field of arms limitation. In 1958, one year after initiating the space age with the launching of its first satellite, the Soviet Union had proposed in the United Nations that the militarization of space should be prohibited. Despite the obstructionist attitude of some countries, the Soviet Union's consistent and decisive policy had produced some tangible results. International instruments had been adopted prohibiting the placing of nuclear weapons in space and the use of space for military purposes or activities prejudicial to the environment. Similarly, two years earlier, the Soviet Union had proposed the elaboration of a treaty on the prohibition of the use of weapons in space or from space against the Earth. The General Assembly had adopted a resolution on the prohibition of the placing of arms in space by 147 votes in

(Mr. Akolzin, Byelorussian SSR)

favour and only 1 vote against: that of the United States. In 1984, the draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space had been adopted by 150 votes in favour and only 1 against: that of the United States. One year later, the Soviet Union had tried to prevent the militarization of space during the Soviet-American talks at Geneva and had proposed a 50 per cent reduction of nuclear armament, both its own and that of the United States. On the initiative of the USSR, an item entitled "International Co-operation in the Peaceful Use of Outer Space" had been included in the agenda of the fortieth session of the General Assembly. Nevertheless, the leaders in Washington opposed any measure designed to limit the arms race in space. Currently, the United States was investigating the possibility of placing nuclear weapons in space: the so-called "Strategic Defense Initiative". At the same time, it was trying to influence international public opinion and maintaining that the purpose of its plans was to strengthen peace. Washington would clearly like to have, at the same time, a space defence system and a nuclear attack force in order to be able to impose its will. That was, of course, an illusion: the Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist community had means of safeguarding their security and would not allow the strategic military balance to be destroyed.

9. His delegation considered that, in order to prevent the extension of the arms race into space and to reduce it on the Earth, it was necessary to have the political will and a genuine desire to achieve that historic objective. The Soviet Union had demonstrated on numerous occasions that it had that will and that desire. It was now for the other party to furnish proof of its intentions.

10. The work done on the peaceful uses of outer space had been of value and had promoted the development of international co-operation. It had also promoted the development of international law on space matters. That work must continue, with the formulation of the principles that should govern remote sensing of the Earth from space. Those activities could be much more effective if there were a specialized international organization, the establishment of which was favoured by some States.

11. Lastly, his delegation expressed the hope that the Special Political Committee would continue, as in the past, to work for the achievement of peace and understanding among peoples.

12. Mr. AENA (Iraq) said that his delegation had studied carefully the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on its twenty-eighth session. He reaffirmed his country's position on remote sensing by satellite, namely, that the sensed State had a right to receive the primary data concerning its territory and that States which carried out remote sensing activities must respect the rights of sensed States and obtain their consent before disseminating the data obtained. The draft principles relating to remote sensing of the Earth from space submitted by Austria (A/AC.105/L.158) had his country's support, for they took the same approach. States carrying out remote sensing activities must take full responsibility for those activities, whether they were carried out by governmental or non-governmental organs. In view of the risk of the commercialization of remote

(Mr. Aena, Iraq)

sensing activities to the detriment of the interests of the developing countries, the Committee must continue its work until it completed the draft principles. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee which appeared in paragraphs 54 and 55 of the Committee's report.

13. Efforts must be stepped up to reach agreement on the least controversial aspect of the use of nuclear power sources in outer space: security measures and protection against radiation. In his country's view, considerable attention should be given to determining the needs of the developing countries in that area. The proposal of the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space concerning prior notification of the re-entry of a vehicle carrying nuclear power sources on board and the rendering of assistance could serve as a basis for a general agreement in the near future. His delegation hoped that the Committee would make progress at its next session on the question of the definition and delimitation of outer space, even though the issue was a controversial one.

14. The extension of national sovereignty to the geostationary orbit involved insuperable technical difficulties. In view of the importance of the orbit and its small dimensions, which limited the number of satellites to those for which room could be found, a legal basis must be established guaranteeing equitable use of the orbit and protection of the rights of all countries, especially the developing countries. Satellite broadcasting must also be regulated so as to reduce interference to a minimum. In the case of direct television broadcasting, it was important to obtain the consent of the States concerned. The Legal Sub-Committee should prepare a draft convention on the basis of the declaration of principles contained in General Assembly resolution 37/92.

15. He wished to emphasize the importance of the Committee's work to maintain peaceful uses of outer space, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/96. His country supported the idea of stepping up co-operation in the area of space technology as recommended by UNISPACE 82 and was grateful to the Governments which had provided advanced training scholarships in the past two academic years.

16. Mr. VIGLIENZONE (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, refuted the statements made by the representatives of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, which had misrepresented the policies of the United States Government. His country's activities in outer space were peaceful and were conducted in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, international law and the principle of the maintenance of international peace and security. He wished to point out that the United States Government had kept the international community informed about its space activities and its policy promoted the peaceful use of outer space.

17. Other States, by contrast, did not inform the world community about all their activities. The only system currently stationed in outer space had been tested and deployed over the years without the knowledge of the general public. The representatives of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic should make their representations to the country which had deployed that system and not to the United States.

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(Mr. Viglienzone, United States)

18. Document A/40/476 detailing the development and other assistance provided by the United States was now available for distribution in the Committee.

19. Mr. AKOLZIN (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that it made no sense to speak of the use of outer space for the benefit of mankind in the present circumstances of the militarization of space. He wished to refer to an interview with the former Secretary of Defense of the United States, Mr. McNamara, broadcast on 19 November on one of the New York television channels, in which Mr. McNamara had recognized the dangers of the present situation. Unless action was taken to limit the arms race in space, mankind might soon find itself confronted with an uncontrollable situation.

20. Mr. VIGLIENZONE (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, recalled that he had cited a practical example of the activities of another country which was known to everyone. At a time when the Special Political Committee was about to consider the item on information, it was ironical that the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic should use as an argument against the United States position comments which had been broadcast nation-wide and given full publicity.

21. Mr. AKOLZIN (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, again invoked the dangers of the arms race. The United States Government had so far taken no official steps to prevent the militarization of space.

AGENDA ITEM 78: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION (continued) (A/40/21)

(b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/40/617; A/40/418)

(c) REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (continued) (A/40/667)

22. Mr. DAAER (United Arab Emirates) congratulated the Committee on Information on its work and emphasized the importance of questions relating to information for the countries of the third world. Some western States had a monopoly of the main news agencies, which promoted the political and economic interests of the industrialized countries without taking into account the interests and aspirations of the developing countries. Those news agencies emphasized the negative and sensationalist aspects of the developing countries and talked about their backwardness, yet failed to mention the positive aspects or the development efforts of those countries, which could not do their own reporting about themselves because they lacked the necessary infrastructure.

23. Not even UNESCO, an organization which performed great services for the international community, had been able to escape the unjustified campaign of the western press services which highlighted only its adverse financial and

(Mr. Daaer, United Arab Emirates)

administrative aspects and did not mention UNESCO's services and achievements in the spheres of education, science and culture. That imbalance showed that the true purpose of such campaigns was to misrepresent the facts and disseminate an unfavourable image of UNESCO, and that the Western press and mass media were under the control of their Governments, although they claimed to be defending democracy and boasted of freedom of information.

24. Information was an important element in the efforts of the international community to achieve the purposes of the Charter and attain social and economic development and understanding among peoples. The establishment of a new world information and communication order was linked with the establishment of a new international economic order. Both were needed to correct the injustice and imbalance of relations between developed and developing countries and to combat the economic hegemony of the industrialized countries over the third world. The goal of the new international economic order was to eliminate inequalities and restructure world markets so that all States could enjoy the fruits of development by making better use of their natural resources, while the new world information and communication order was designed to increase co-operation and remove inequalities in the area of information. His country therefore supported the concept of free, reciprocal access to sources of information in other States with a view to promoting peace and understanding among peoples, and stressed the vital need to put an end to the dependence of the developing countries and for the industrialized States to assist in that effort.

25. His country supported fully the DPI programme of information on violations of basic principles of international law and of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, wherever such violations occurred, and, in particular, on policies impeding the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of self-determination. DPI should continue to disseminate that information through all possible channels, in particular the information provided by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories. DPI should also continue to send fact-finding missions to the Middle East.

26. International news agencies and the Western press did not show sufficient interest in the practices affecting human rights in the occupied Arab territories. On the contrary, their position was one of duplicity with regard to human rights, as if those rights should be respected in some parts of the world and could be ignored in others. Because of that duplicity, information was disseminated in a discriminatory manner and in line with the interests of certain States.

27. His delegation rejected the position taken by some members of the Special Political Committee and the Committee on Information to the effect that those bodies were not competent to consider questions of information on problems such as Namibia and Palestine. The rights of the peoples of those Territories and the violation of their fundamental human rights could not be divorced from the need for information on those problems simply because the latter were political issues.

(Mr. Daaer, United Arab Emirates)

Just as the United Nations had a political role to play in promoting international peace and security, so too it had a role to play in providing information on political issues which were a source of concern to the world and required lasting solutions.

28. His delegation also supported the work of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) in promoting exchanges and co-operation among the specialized agencies in the field of information and its information campaign on the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations.

29. He commended the work of DPI in connection with the emergency situation in Africa and the high priority given to information concerning relief assistance to peoples afflicted by natural disasters such as drought. It must not be forgotten that 30 million lives were still in danger. The needs of Africa and ways of obtaining the assistance and co-operation of the international community in relief efforts must continue to be emphasized.

30. JUNIC should continue to give priority to economic and social questions and to ways of securing the assistance and co-operation of the international community in promoting world-wide development. Above all, it should emphasize aspects which were of interest to the developing countries so that the latter could make progress in their economic and cultural development.

31. His country particularly appreciated the efforts of DPI to provide extensive information on the United Nations Council for Namibia and to disseminate information on various major events such as the 1963 Paris Declaration on Namibia, the Bangkok Declaration and Programme of Action of the extraordinary meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia and the Programme of Action on Namibia of the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence.

32. The recommendations of the Committee on Information on strengthening and expanding the Middle East and Arabic Unit in the Radio Service, which produced Arabic television and radio programmes, were very positive. That Unit should continue to broaden the scope and diversity of its programmes and a major effort should be made to step up its activities and Arabic language services in general, which had not increased in real terms. DPI should be urged to expand its contacts with Arabic language radio stations and increase its co-operation with ARABSAT.

33. With regard to the restructuring of the Radio and Visual Services Division of DPI, it should be noted that the report of the Secretary-General on that question (A/40/821) stated that the restructuring would not result in increased budgetary appropriations in the future and would improve the capacity for programme delivery and the timeliness of such delivery. That restructuring should be carried out only if there was absolute certainty that it would bring positive results and that the effectiveness of DPI would be enhanced. Furthermore, it must be satisfactorily guaranteed that the integrity and execution of existing programmes would not be affected as a result of the measure.

(Mr. Daaer, United Arab Emirates)

34. Lastly, he stressed once again the important role of UNESCO in all matters relating to education, science and culture, and its positive contribution to efforts to reach the necessary international consensus for achieving a new international economic order.

35. Mr. BANGO BANGO (Zaire) said that the euphoria experienced by the African countries in the 1960s, just after they had achieved independence, had soon disappeared when they had realized that political independence was meaningless unless it was accompanied by economic independence. Many calls had then been made for an overhaul of colonial structures and the establishment of a new, more just and equitable international economic order.

36. Although the African States had been independent, they had continued to be a source of cheap labour and raw materials for the developed countries. The latter had deliberately kept commodity prices down while prices for industrial products had risen steadily.

37. Under those circumstances, the resources available to the African States for their development had declined steadily to the point that those countries were now overwhelmed by a steadily mounting international debt. Since they were unable to participate in the mechanisms for fixing prices on world markets, the African countries had to suffer the consequences of systems established arbitrarily by the developed countries. The latter had very little interest in negotiating with the developing countries the establishment of a new international economic order. The launching of global negotiations had been postponed indefinitely. The North-South dialogue had turned out to be a dialogue of the deaf.

38. In the search for ways and means of initiating a constructive and effective dialogue that was beneficial to all participants, both developed and developing, the ability to make effective use of information and communication techniques was important. The flow of information, as manipulated and monopolized by the Western press, could not benefit the developing countries unless they succeeded in decolonizing information. International news agencies served up on a daily basis information which depersonalized the developing countries and disseminated the propaganda of the colonial system as a means of perpetuating the system's former domination. In order to bring about the decolonization of information, it was necessary to overhaul the structures of the old order and establish a new, more just and effective information and communication order. It had been seen that the developed countries were not prepared to make concessions; the massive economic interests at stake prevented the colonial empires and the monopolies they had spawned from loosening their grip over the developing countries.

39. There were those who viewed efforts to establish a new world information and communication order only in terms of the conflict between the capitalist world, with its diverse sources of information, and the communist world, where the press was directed and controlled by the political powers. That diagrammatic view of the situation took no account of the aspirations of the developing countries: the call for a new, more just and more effective, world information and communication order

(Mr. Bango Bango, Zaire)

essentially concerned access for developing countries to the transnational flow of information and their right to build independent telecommunication infrastructures in order to free themselves from colonial mechanisms, preserve their sovereignty and reaffirm their own identity, which for so long had been caricatured by the colonialist and imperialist information media. After 25 years of independence, it was no longer acceptable that the monopoly press of the developed countries should continue shamelessly to present the political, economic, social and cultural realities of third-world countries deliberately and unilaterally in terms of the dishonourable schemes of colonialism in order to maintain the myths created by colonialism for its exclusive benefit. The disinformation practised on a large scale by the imperialist monopolies should be abolished forever and room made for a tranquil atmosphere which would genuinely contribute to the harmonious and natural development of relations among countries. It was not a question of East-West opposition, but of the complete emancipation of third-world countries.

40. His delegation attached great importance to the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order and considered that it was an indispensable instrument for the strengthening of peace and mutual understanding among peoples and thus of international security which was indispensable for economic development.

41. In the contemporary world, information had been transformed into a commodity which must be handled with tact and delicacy, since it could be either a source of peace or a powder keg. Through images and sound, information was penetrating more and more forcefully into the countries and societies of the third world and their families and homes; it could be a way of enriching social and cultural values, but it could also be the instrument of their destruction. Very often, instead of bringing peoples together, it was a cause of alienation, destruction of identity, misfortune and disorder. It could turn the countries of the third world into battlefields on which the various forms of imperialism struggled to obtain hegemony. In its present, and already obsolete, manifestation, the existing information and communication order did not encourage the necessary exchanges between nations and could not do so because it was implicated in the cold war between two hegemonistic imperial Powers. The disinformation which they used and abused could do nothing but harm to the less developed countries and the future of all their communities. The right to more, and especially to accurate, information had become one of the fundamental rights of peoples. The establishment of a new, more just and more effective information and communication order, based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of just and honest information, would unquestionably strengthen peace and understanding among peoples.

42. Zaire was fully aware of existing deficiencies in the transmission and dissemination of information and of the fact that they could not be rectified instantly. But it could not tolerate a situation in which information prepared and offered for consumption by the imperialist monopolies continued to distort the realities of the third world for the benefit of those monopolies. For that reason, he welcomed the efforts of UNESCO and the Department of Public Information to promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order.

(Mr. Bango Bango, Zaire)

43. The dissemination of information should facilitate understanding among peoples of different cultures and philosophies and should encourage friendly relations among States. Zaire was aware that the task was difficult and merited in-depth study, and also that a solution would be found only after long and arduous negotiation.

44. At a time when the evil régime of apartheid had decreed a total news blackout with regard to the struggle against apartheid, it was the duty of the United Nations to inform the public about practices which violated fundamental human rights. The discriminatory and selective way in which they produced and disseminated information on Africa was characteristic of the developed countries. Everything they published had a negative slant. When several thousand black people were felled by South African gunfire, that news was condensed; but if a single white person was killed, the incident was widely publicized, as if the seriousness of the crime depended on the colour of the victim's skin.

45. His delegation congratulated the Director-General of UNESCO for his valiant efforts on behalf of the establishment of a new world information and communication order, despite the campaign mounted against it. UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication was a positive and important contribution which deserved much praise. UNESCO's contribution to education and teaching in the third world was crucial to the establishment of the new order.

46. The Department of Public Information also deserved tribute for the way in which it disseminated information on the third world. He wished, however, to recommend that the Department should give greater emphasis to information concerning the victims of apartheid in South Africa.

47. Mr. JESUS (Cape Verde) said that his delegation had already explained its position on questions relating to information on previous occasions and he would therefore only comment on the work of the Radio Service of the Department of Public Information. During the fortieth session of the General Assembly, short-wave radio broadcasts to Africa had been reduced, particularly broadcasts in Portuguese. He would have hoped that that reduction would not take place, although he understood that it was due to an experimental programme of short-wave broadcasting. In his region, radio was one of the most important communication media because, given the level of Africa's economic and social development, it was the quickest and most direct way of obtaining news. Consequently, the reduction in short-wave broadcasts, mainly in Portuguese, decreased the possibility of obtaining news about the United Nations. He hoped that that situation would be short-lived and that broadcasting services would be restored to their previous levels.

48. Cape Verde was aware of the Department's valuable work, in particular on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, and considered that its activities should be extended, in a way that was balanced and adapted to the needs of countries, particularly the developing countries.

(Mr. Jesus, Cape Verde)

49. In view of Cape Verde's interest in short-wave broadcasts, his delegation had followed with special interest the proposal to restructure the Radio and Visual Services Division, the object of which was to improve the Department's capacity to carry out its task. Nevertheless, he considered that any restructuring should take into account the legitimate interests of those whose daily lives would be affected. For that reason, his delegation favoured postponing a decision on restructuring until the impact it might have on the Department's effectiveness in the area of radio and visual services had been studied in depth.

50. Mr. VIKIS (Cyprus) said that technological developments which had facilitated world-wide communication had greatly increased the influence of information on all aspects of modern society. It was therefore understandable that when that delicate question was considered in the United Nations, divergent opinions emerged which were reflected in the report of the Committee on Information (A/40/21). It was regrettable that, despite intensive efforts, it had not been possible to obtain the necessary consensus with which to make tangible progress in establishing a new world information and communication order.

51. There was a need to devote serious attention to providing adequate coverage of United Nations activities aimed at the implementation of the inalienable right of the Palestine people to self-determination, and to the question of restructuring the Radio and Visual Services Division (A/40/841), which involved a number of issues that must be taken into account, ranging from costs to consequences for the staff.

52. The necessity of providing accurate information, particularly in Western countries, on United Nations activities should also not be overlooked; although it should be pointed out that there had been wide and objective coverage of the United Nations for its fortieth anniversary in almost all countries. He hoped that that situation would continue in future.

53. Cyprus had always considered that the role of the Department of Public Information as the focal point for United Nations information activities should be strengthened: there should be no duplication of effort through the establishment of new information units outside the Department. He hoped that the report to be submitted to the General Assembly would deal effectively with that issue. He added that efforts to improve the geographical distribution of the Department's staff had yielded results and he hoped that that new trend would continue.

54. The establishment of a new world information and communication order was a priority issue for the developing and non-aligned countries, not simply because the injustice of the existing system and its consequences were most felt in those countries, but also because information and communication were crucial to national development. For that reason, Cyprus, in the context of the Group of 77 and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, would spare no effort to achieve that new order. Meanwhile, as part of its contribution to the collective efforts of those countries, it participated in the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies and the Broadcasting Organizations of the Non-Aligned Countries.

(Mr. Vikis, Cyprus)

55. His delegation expressed its appreciation to the Department for its co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies and its training programme for journalists and broadcasters from developing countries. It also appreciated the Department's role in organizing media round tables and the second round table on a new world information and communication order.

56. His delegation reiterated its appreciation to UNESCO for its important contribution towards establishing the new order and considered that all possible support should be extended to that Organization and to its International Programme for the Development of Communication. In order radically to change an unjust situation the co-operation of all parties concerned was required. For that reason every possible effort must be made to achieve consensus and thus make progress towards the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

57. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that information played a significant role in all human endeavours and was vital to development since it could foster understanding and co-operation among countries. If misused, however, it could increase tension and conflict between peoples, as regrettably had occurred in recent years.

58. The existing world information structure was heavily weighted against the developing countries, since the news agencies of the industrialized world monopolized information and reduced the countries of the third world to the level of mere recipients. If international relations in the field of information were to be just and equitable it would be necessary to establish a new world information and communication order that encouraged a more balanced dissemination of information and redressed the dependent status of developing countries. Regretfully, the Western countries had represented the new order as a challenge to the principle of freedom of information. In reality, such freedom could not exist while information was the monopoly of a few countries whose particular interests were served by their communication media through campaigns based on half truths, falsehoods or distorted images of the truth.

59. That was the case with regard to coverage of UNESCO by the Western media, which had attempted to discredit all its efforts and ignore all its achievements. With a vigour which would have been desirable in applying sanctions against the racist régime of South Africa, political pressure and financial sanctions had been applied in an effort to make UNESCO conform to the wishes of a few powerful countries. That action reflected a desire to punish UNESCO for questioning the justice of the existing world information order, even though the majority of the international community recognized the need to rectify the existing imbalance in that field. For that purpose, efforts were being made to modernize the information infrastructure of the developing countries, with the assistance of the Department of Public Information and UNESCO. Accordingly, Uganda appealed to all countries to increase their contributions to the UNESCO International Programme for the Development of Communication, whose operational activities could help to narrow the technological gap between developed and developing countries.

(Mr. Irumba, Uganda)

60. However, it was not sufficient to create infrastructure, it was also necessary to solve the problem of conception of news as a commercial product, which obstructed efforts aimed at providing an alternative view of events in third-world countries, whose news agencies were falsely accused of inefficiency by Western agencies.

61. The power and importance of information has been illustrated by the world response to the critical economic situation in Africa achieved by the proper use of the communication media. Nevertheless, in spite of repeated warnings by FAO in previous years, the communication media had begun to focus on that tragedy only when it was already in an advanced stage. Had the conscience of the world been aroused earlier, the extent of the disaster might have been limited.

62. His delegation was pleased with the services of the Department of Public Information, which, in spite of financial constraints, had done good work in disseminating information on the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, improving the Organization's image and providing an accurate picture of its activities. In that regard the role of the information centres was very important and they should be expanded and adequately staffed. He took the opportunity of reiterating Uganda's request that an information centre should be established in Kampala.

63. The Department should continue to stress such questions as apartheid and the rights of the Palestinians, since they were directly related to the exercise of fundamental human rights. Uganda associated itself with those countries which had called for an expansion of the Department's training programme for developing countries, which was of proven benefit to recipient countries. It should be allocated increased funds.

64. Uganda firmly supported the recommendations of the Committee on Information and regretted that they had not been adopted by consensus in spite of the efforts of the Group of 77.

65. Mr. NYAMUDAHONDO (Zimbabwe) said that information and its dissemination had a role to play in the development of small countries like his own. For that reason, the attitude of some industrialized countries was reprehensible: they were maintaining the existing imbalance in that area and had even blackmailed a United Nations body, accusing it of having become politicized. The attempt to hide the struggle of peoples oppressed by the allies of those countries was scandalous. The world should be informed in detail of the horrible situation in South Africa, Namibia, the Middle East and other critical areas. United Nations bodies should not be politicized, but neither should the aspirations and needs of oppressed peoples be ignored.

66. Zimbabwe appealed to all countries not to allow ideological differences to hinder progress. Certain countries used the information media to disseminate propaganda instead of to facilitate development in the developing countries, which lacked the resources to acquire sophisticated technical equipment. In southern

(Mr. Nyamudahondo, Zimbabwe)

Africa, for example, the racist régime of South Africa had set up a radio station in the northern part of the country, on its border with Zimbabwe, to spread provocative propoganda against his country.

67. In the field of information his Government was planning to produce cheap and durable radios, establish communication centres and rural newspapers, go into the film industry and make external radio broadcasts, all of which were fundamental activities designed to bring Zimbabwe into the modern world.

68. The establishment of a new world information and communication order must entail the strengthening of the Pan African News Agency, the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies and the Kadoma Declaration, which barred foreign journalists based in South Africa from reporting on the front-line countries.

69. With the assistance of friendly countries Zimbabwe had made tremendous progress in telecommunications. Micro-wave telephone lines had been established with Botswana and Zambia, and an earth station had made the country independent of South Africa in telecommunications.

70. Furthermore, steady progress had been made in the broadcasting of socialist-orientated programmes concerning independence and the transformation from a capitalist to a socialist socio-economic order, as well as in the screening of locally produced and imported documentary films on the condition of workers and peasants and their aspirations and on the status of women and their struggle for equality. Realizing the importance of the rural population, in 1985 the Government had established a rural news agency, the Zimbabwe Information Service, under the Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications, whose task was to facilitate communication between the Government and the people. In addition, the Government had started building communications centres in the rural growth points which would have newspapers, telephone and postal services, bookshops and radio and television sets. The aim was to bring the rural population to such centres to watch television programmes and listen to radio broadcasts about development activities, since development would not be possible without an extensive infrastructure for the dissemination of information and without the participation of the rural population in all national activities.

71 . The United Nations should disseminate more information on international problems such as decolonization, the struggle against racism, apartheid, human rights, the explosive situation in Namibia and southern Africa, and the questions of Palestine, East Timor and Western Sahara. His country urged the super-Powers to stop the arms race and channel all the resources thus released to development. Lastly, his delegation commended the Committee on Information on its report: information should be used not to engineer wars but to inform people about development and innovations and encourage them to learn.

72. Mr. RODRIGUEZ MEDINA (Colombia) said that his country had just been struck by a natural disaster of terrible proportions, about which the whole world had learned just minutes after it had happened through the dynamism of the communications

(Mr. Rodriguez Medina, Colombia)

media. Colombia thanked the peoples and Governments, the United Nations, the Department of Public Information and all the delegations which had expressed their sorrow; they had demonstrated a solidarity for which he personally was profoundly grateful.

73. Nothing could outweigh the vital interests of peoples, and nothing should impede the task of closing the technology gap and co-operating in the building of a new society. One necessary step towards that solidarity would be the abandonment of the old prejudices and recognition of the real scale of the problem: the existence on the one hand of a developed world with integrated systems for processing, evaluating and communicating information, and on the other a developing world with few communications services or none at all. The following figures had been made public at the recent Conference of the International Telecommunication Union: the world had 585 million telephones and 612 million television sets. They were distributed as follows: 0.4 per cent in Africa; 4.5 per cent in Latin America; 5.2 per cent in Asia; 19.1 per cent in Europe, and 71 per cent in North America. In other words, 15 per cent of the world's countries owned 90 per cent of the telephones and television sets, while the other 85 per cent had only 10 per cent. Such figures highlighted the profound geographical imbalance in communications. The explosion of the so-called "information bomb" must also be kept in mind, for it was transforming civilization into an information culture with revolutionary transmission techniques such as digital systems, optical fibres and satellites. While millions of human beings received no information, there were thousands of more fortunate persons communicating with each other by means of advanced technologies such as laser beams.

74. How could the world become an integrated, connected whole? How could the enormous information structure of the developed countries at least be made to concern itself more with the problems and rights of the developing world? The new world information and communication order was not merely a technological, cultural or political question, it was above all a humanitarian one. It was therefore worrying that mention of the new order should arouse suspicion and hostile attitudes.

75. His country reiterated that the new world information and communication order must be based on full freedom of the press, the only safeguard of democracies and development. The right to information enabled the governed to be properly aware of the decisions of their leaders and diminished the dangers of political dogmatism or monopoly. The right to development and the right to information were two fundamental collective rights associated with the right to sovereignty. His country therefore supported the establishment of a satellite system for the United Nations and the regional work on satellite communication carried out, for example, by the Andean Pact. It was also in favour of the new world information and communication order and of strengthening the structure and programmes of DPI. Colombia believed in action by consensus, but a consensus based on dignity and effectiveness. An appeal must also be made to the developed countries, urging them to realize the need to establish international co-operation on information so as to enable the dangerous gap which now existed to be bridged.

76. Mr. AKASHI (Under-Secretary-General for Public Information) said that, as several delegations had pointed out, world public opinion did not adequately understand the achievements of the United Nations in safeguarding international peace and security and promoting the economic and social development of the international community. DPI was determined to play its catalytic role and stimulate greater interest in the Organization on the part of the mass media, non-governmental organizations and educational institutions everywhere.
77. While a conceptual divergence on a new world information and communication order still persisted, there was unmistakably general support for the efforts to bridge the cleavage in the development of the infrastructure for communication and information in the third world. DPI reaffirmed its firm commitment to continue its co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies and other regional news organizations and its Development Forum and World Newspaper Supplement projects, as well as its training programmes for journalists and broadcasters from developing countries and the round tables for mass-media leaders.
78. A number of delegations had referred to the question of management and, in particular, to the need for greater economy and rationalization of the work of DPI in order to enhance its efficiency. Reference had also been made to the role of DPI as the "focal point" for all United Nations information activities. The praise expressed in that regard would not cause DPI to let up in its efforts to achieve greater effectiveness.
79. The delegations of the European Economic Community, Canada, Japan, Poland, Togo and others had referred to the setting of priorities. The list of DPI priorities was growing longer and, under current conditions, it was not possible to shorten it, however desirable that might be from the standpoint of utilization of resources. Various groupings of States had stressed different areas of activity. It was gratifying that some delegations, like that of the Congo, had said that DPI should be more flexible in carrying out legislative priorities.
80. A number of delegations, including those of Austria, the EEC, Morocco and the Soviet Union, had raised the question of objectivity. DPI would continue its efforts to achieve the greatest possible objectivity and impartiality in all its information activities, since that was the only basis for ensuring the credibility of the Secretariat's role among the Member States.
81. Several delegations, including those of the Eastern European States, the Congo and Syria, had referred to the need for DPI to respect the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The obstacles which had arisen in that regard had been due to the lack of vacant posts and the need to ensure career prospects for deserving staff members. Nevertheless, DPI reaffirmed its strong commitment to equitable geographical distribution.
82. The delegations of Kuwait, Syria and the United Arab Emirates had referred to the Middle East and Arabic Radio Unit. That Unit had high priority, and co-operation between the radio and visual activities in that area would be encouraged in the future.

(Mr. Akashi)

83. The restructuring of the Radio and Visual Services Division (A/40/841) had great advantages from the standpoint of size of operations, the functional difference between radio and visual services, and the need for a more streamlined management structure. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the restructuring, if approved, would be carried out in such a way as to encourage common use of resources, where appropriate, and fully satisfy the career expectations of deserving staff members. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, it was proposed to delay implementation of the proposal for one year in order to formulate the plan of implementation in the clearest and most detailed manner possible - a process which would include consultations with staff - so that the concerns expressed by the delegations of the United Arab Emirates and Cyprus would be met.

84. The delegation of Brazil had asked what the financial implications of restructuring would be. Paragraph 7 of the Secretary-General's report (A/40/841) stated that the proposal did not entail any additional cost or shortfall in programme delivery. Furthermore, the Director of the Budget Division had informed the Fifth Committee at the current session that savings in the order of \$96,000 would be achieved in the next biennium.

85. The comment by the representative of Barbados that a P-3 post had been abolished in the Caribbean Unit of the Radio Service was not correct. That Unit had one P-4 and one P-3 post, in addition to two General Service posts, like the other regional radio units. The temporary reallocation of resources had had to be carried out throughout the Radio Service in order to be able to conduct the six-month experiment of daily short-wave radio broadcasts to Africa.

86. The delegation of Cape Verde had referred to the reduction in broadcasts in Portuguese concerning the fortieth session of the General Assembly. That reduction was to the six-month experiment referred to. As of 1 January 1986, the activities which had been temporarily reduced would be restored to full strength and normal operations would resume.

87. With regard to the question raised by the delegation of Austria, the press releases received from Vienna were issued in New York on the same day they arrived at Headquarters. The delays occurring in the Vienna office were due to a shortage of staff, a situation which DPI was trying to rectify.

88. The delegation of Chile had stressed that more emphasis should be placed on the use of imaginative ways to improve coverage of United Nations issues and the delivery of information material to information centres. In that regard, the identification of target audiences was a key element in the information strategy of DPI.

89. The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran had raised the question of coverage of the conflict between that country and Iraq. DPI had provided full coverage of that situation, including the statements by the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council, the activities of the Security Council and the missions sent to the area in connection with the use of chemical weapons and the welfare of prisoners of war.

(Mr. Akashi)

90. DPI was still considering the comments made during the debate on the item, which would serve to guide and orient its future work.

91. Mr. IRTEMÇELİK (Turkey) said that, in speaking on agenda item 78, the representative of Cyprus had referred to the urgent situation in his country but had failed to provide accurate information on that situation, about which he had complained and made hypocritical insinuations. Since Mr. Irtemçelik considered that the Committee deserved to have more complete information, he read out an excerpt from a statement made by Archbishop Makarios to the Security Council in 1974 in connection with the invasion of Cyprus, an act which had obliged Turkey to intervene in accordance with the Treaty of Guarantee. That statement was contained in document S/PV.1780.

92. He also referred to an eye-witness account published in France Soir on 24 July 1974 which described the nature and scope of the tragedy that had befallen Cyprus as a result of the invasion. In 1963 Turkish Cypriot youths had been expelled illegally and by force from the binational organs of the State of Cyprus, and from that time until 1974 injustices and attacks had been perpetrated against the Turkish Cypriot population, as was stated in the reports submitted by the successive Secretaries-General to the Security Council during that period.

93. Referring to a somewhat earlier period, the speaker drew attention to an article by the Italian journalist Giorgio Bocca published in Il Giorno on 14 January 1964 which described the situation of terror leading to the exodus of the Turkish population and the massacres carried out at the time. In the circumstances, it seemed strange that the representative of Cyprus had complained about the unjust situation in his country. The Yugoslav Press Agency, Tanjug, had reported that when Mr. Kyprianou had been asked why he had undermined the efforts of the Secretary-General at the Denktash-Kyprianou summit meeting held in January, he had answered that if he had said "yes" to the Secretary-General, the question of Cyprus would have been removed from the agenda. The representative of Cyprus had actually complained that, because of the communication media, the real situation in Cyprus was known. It would be much more useful for Cyprus to admit the truth and, for a change, to do its utmost to contribute to the success of the Secretary-General's mission of good offices aimed at helping the two parties concerned to establish a federation based on the political equality of the two peoples of Cyprus. That was the proper framework for resolving the question. Cyprus could not hope to deceive the international community indefinitely by distorting or concealing the established facts. History could be made, but it could not be rewritten.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.