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at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman:

Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE

(Uganda)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 71: SCIENCE AND PEACE (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 77: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 71: SCIENCE AND PEACE (continued) (A/SPC/45/L.11)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.11 and announced that Romania, Sierra Leone and Suriname had joined the sponsors.

AGENDA ITEM 77: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued) (A/45/21, A/45/533; A/SPC/45/L.8, L.9, L.12 and L.13)

2. Mr. AL-ABBADI (Jordan) said that the information on détente in the present-day world, at the end of the cold war, which was being disseminated by the media was likely to promote international co-operation and highlight the functions of the United Nations. The promotion of co-operation should help in the progressive strengthening of understanding between the countries and peoples of the world. The importance of the role of the media was beyond question; what was truly important was to give the media guidance so that they could carry out their mission fully, instead of being used to widen the gulf between the developed and the developing countries. It was essential to achieve a balanced dissemination of news and to eliminate all obstacles to the freedom of the press. To that end, the most developed countries should not delay the transfer of their technological advances nor resist placing them at the disposal of the information infrastructure of the developing countries, in conformity with the UNESCO programme entitled "Communication in the service of humanity".

3. The Department of Public Information (DPI) had played a major role in making public opinion aware of the scale of the Palestine question and of the intifadah and in giving a clearer idea of the human rights violations committed by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinians living in their own land. Mention should also be made of the efforts made by the Department to inform public opinion about many important matters, such as the policy of racial discrimination pursued by South Africa, the independence process in Namibia, the activities undertaken to promote disarmament and to prevent pollution of the environment or abuse, and all aspects of the work of the United Nations. It was to be hoped that DPI would also disseminate information on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992.

4. DPI should receive financial support, technical assistance and whatever facilities it needed to continue its work, to give greater impetus to the activities of the information centres already in existence and to create others where appropriate, bearing in mind the need for a balanced geographical distribution of the staff, in particular the senior officials. Finally, his delegation requested DPI to increase its output in the Arabic language, and expressed the hope that the General Assembly would reaffirm and expand the consensus achieved at the twelfth session of the Committee on Information by adopting draft resolutions A/SPC/45/L.8 and L.9 without a vote.

5. Mr. EKOUMLONG (Cameroon) said that, in order to build the world of which all dreamed, there was a need to adopt new forms of thinking, supported by freely circulated objective information. Freedom of information was essential to the development and peaceful progress of human society. The developing countries had highlighted the shortcomings inherent in the present system, which represented everything that stood in the way of the democratic and egalitarian concept of the new world information and communication order.

6. Cameroon was at the forefront of freedom of information, and the official and the private press existed side by side there. His delegation welcomed the consensus achieved at the twenty-fifth General Conference of UNESCO and the adoption of the UNESCO medium-term plan and its strategy for "Communication in the service of humanity". Cameroon was ready to co-operate with all countries and organizations which were willing to help in building a modern communications network.

7. The changes which had occurred in the world and the successes achieved by the United Nations had recently made the Organization the focus of world attention as the preferred forum for the solution of many of the problems facing mankind. In consequence, it was essential that DPI make the maximum possible use of its limited resources to develop new and effective programmes, avoiding any kind of duplication of effort. Cameroon welcomed and encouraged co-operation with the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries, the Eco-Pool of the News Agencies and the Broadcasting Organization of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as with other news agencies and intergovernmental and regional organizations (A/45/21, para. 51), with a view to giving wider dissemination to information on all the activities of the United Nations. In connection with draft resolution II approved by the Committee on Information, the Department should give absolute priority to the development problems of Africa and broadcast more frequent and longer radio and television programmes on that topic, in both English and French.

8. After praising the information activities directed against apartheid and stating that such activities should be intensified until they reached the entire people of South Africa, he expressed the opinion that the number of United Nations information centres should be increased, and that their activities should be clearly and specifically defined. There was an information centre in Cameroon, and the country was proud of it, although it was to be hoped that a director would be appointed in the near future to replace the official who was fulfilling that function temporarily.

9. Mr. POPESCU (Romania) said the consensus reached at the twelfth session of the Committee on Information, and the new UNESCO programme entitled "Communication in the service of humanity" were of major importance for the promotion of the spirit of co-operation among all Member States. His delegation commended the endeavours made by DPI to make the work of the United Nations widely known and welcomed the fact that, while being restructured and technologically upgraded, it had continued to fulfil its mission with increasing efficiency. He then referred to the activities of the United Nations information centres around the world, which often offered the only link between the United Nations and the communications media.

(Mr. Popescu, Romania)

educational and cultural institutions and non-governmental organizations in the countries where they were located.

10. As a result of the profound changes Romania was undergoing, freedom of information was now recognized there as a fundamental human right and a basic dimension of democracy. In the new historic context, Romania had decided to withdraw the reservations and interpretative statements it had made on 15 January 1989 in connection with the Concluding Document of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Romania was taking action for the full implementation of all the provisions of that Document, including those relating to the full and free dissemination of all types of information. Romania would endeavour to take a more active part in the international information and communication process and had submitted an application for membership in the European Telecommunications Satellite Organization (EUTELSAT). Freedom of expression was a reality in present-day Romania. In order to reinforce it, consideration was being given to a new law on audio-visual mass media, based on democratic European legislation, the aim of which was to guarantee the independence and impartiality of the public sector of the information and communications media with regard to free competition.

11. Ms. CHAN (Singapore) said that, while her delegation was pleased that the Committee on Information had reached a consensus, it believed that it should renew its discussion on ways of attaining a freer, wider and better balanced flow of information and ensure that its discussions focused on specific and practical issues.

12. The great scientific and technological breakthroughs of the second half of the twentieth century had profoundly changed the way information was disseminated and, during the Gulf crisis, it had been seen that televised news transmitted information faster than diplomatic dispatches. The fact that direct and satellite broadcasting had crossed national boundaries had raised concern in the countries of Western Europe about the impact of foreign television programmes on local viewers. It was feared that, in time, television programmes from the United States of America would undermine the distinctiveness of national cultures. At one point, the Ministers of Culture of the European Community had been considering the possibility of subsidizing trans-European enterprises to counter the onslaught of programmes from the United States. If the developed countries were concerned about the impact of communications technology on their young people, it would certainly be much more of a cause for alarm in developing countries, whose political and socio-economic systems were still fragile and in the process of institutionalization. By crossing national boundaries, satellite television affected the dynamics of domestic events, inadvertently setting the pace and promoting international reaction. All Governments must acquaint themselves with the ways of the world media so as to be able to transmit their views effectively and not be placed at a disadvantage with regard to those countries that were completely at home with the technology.

(Ms. Chan, Singapore)

13. The print media had also undergone a technological revolution and could take advantage of the great advances in that area. Many publications were printed simultaneously at several locations around the world, and easy satellite access to the print media meant that global and regional publications could more readily reach the domestic market of ideas. Governments had to contend with an additional source of ideas that influenced domestic public opinion. Furthermore, the flow of viewpoints tended to be in one direction, from the wealthier developed countries to the rest of the world, and it was therefore important to strengthen the flow in the other direction.

14. The situation she had described could be seen in Singapore, which, in order to advance economically, politically and culturally, had recognized that it must be open to ideas from outside sources. The leading international newspapers and magazines were circulated in Singapore, and broadcasts from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) could be heard. The population could assimilate that information because of its mastery of the English language and because it had the necessary information technology. Although that had positive aspects, it also raised the issue of just how much outside sources should be allowed to participate in the domestic political debate. The problem would be exacerbated, because information technology could totally revolutionize the concept of participation and Governments would have to seek new means to make their viewpoints known and to compete with the new actors in their own territories. It was essential to determine how to make a distinction between access to information and interference in the national debate of other countries.

15. Mr. ALSAIDI (Yemen) said that by facilitating communication and the transfer of technology among all countries, the information revolution was bound to create greater understanding and thereby strengthen international peace and security. Notwithstanding the differences in the area of information and communication between the developed and the developing countries, it was to be hoped that in the current period of greater co-operation, an objective flow of information in both directions could be achieved, traditions of all countries would be respected and assistance would be given to the developing countries to help to reduce the disparities that still persisted. Greater co-operation was needed between UNESCO, the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries and the League of Arab States.

16. Article 26 of the Constitution of reunified Yemen guaranteed its citizens the right to participate freely in the economic, social and political life of the country. In that spirit, 22 political parties had been created in Yemen, representing all political and spiritual trends of opinion in the country, and there were currently more than 53 newspapers and magazines. Reunified Yemen required the support of the United Nations in order to ensure peace and stability both at home and in the countries of the region.

17. His delegation had submitted a draft resolution calling for the establishment of a United Nations information centre in Sanaa (A/SPC/45/L.13, para. 1). Yemen would contribute to the establishment of that centre and hoped that the Committee would approve the draft resolution by consensus.

18. Mr. KORSHENI (United Republic of Tanzania), after commending UNESCO for its work, called upon it to proceed with its plans to hold an African press seminar in Windhoek, Namibia. It was to be hoped that such meetings would provide the necessary impetus for generating mutual trust and understanding, because all countries were ready to co-operate in that regard. The time had come for developed and developing countries to give closer consideration to the need to establish a new, more just and effective world information and communication order to minimize the inequalities existing between the two groups of countries.

19. The Special Political Committee should come up with proposals on how DPI could best fulfil its mandate. Attention must be given to the proposal that the Department should be allowed a certain degree of flexibility in allocating its scarce resources. However, priority should as far as possible be given to the implementation of programmes mandated by the General Assembly.

20. His delegation was once again compelled to remind DPI of its obligation to fill the post of Director of the United Nations Information Office in Dar es Salaam, which had been vacant for the past 15 years. The Department appeared to be overlooking its mandate to extend financial assistance to Tanzania, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Angola in order to supplement their meagre resources so that they could continue broadcasting anti-apartheid programmes to South Africa. His delegation welcomed the suggestion that a United Nations information centre should be established in Namibia, and urged that the process should be accelerated and that the United Nations, and DPI in particular, should bear the costs of establishing and operating the centre.

21. Mr. DENISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the profound changes taking place in the United Nations and elsewhere had transformed the Organization into a mechanism capable of establishing a new international order. That had a favourable impact in many areas, including information. For example, ideological hostility was becoming an anachronism. The Soviet Union, which until recently had been regarded as a "closed" society, was currently demonstrating an unprecedented degree of openness and was contributing along with other States to the elimination of ideological barriers. It had recently adopted a law on the press, which brought its legislation into line with international standards, and would help to democratize Soviet society and promote international co-operation in the area of information. Earlier, the Soviet Union had also proposed the establishment of a world information programme aimed at guaranteeing the free circulation of information, in line with internationally agreed standards.

22. The consensus reached at the twelfth session of the Committee on Information confirmed the determination of Member States to put an end to conceptual disputes and to seek joint solutions to practical issues. In that context, the Soviet Union recognized unreservedly that freedom of the press and information was a basic human right as stipulated in the relevant international instruments. It appreciated the concern of the developing countries over the existing imbalances in the area of information, and believed that efforts must be intensified to overcome them. The problem should be approached not in a spirit of confrontation, but with a view to promoting co-operation among Member States. The Soviet Union was prepared to co-operate with States which sought to improve their communication systems.

(Mr. Denisov, USSR)

23. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the Department of Public Information was generally performing its principal functions well. However, it felt that United Nations public information activities should be enhanced, and agreed with the view that the Department should be more independent, since that would enable it to respond more flexibly to information needs, and to plan and implement programmes and projects that were better suited to current events. In that context, the co-ordination of activities between the Department and the specialized agencies of the United Nations acquired a new importance. It was imperative to minimize duplication of information activities and to spare the Department from having to perform inappropriate functions that depleted its resources and hindered its production capacity and its use of information channels. The Department's technological advances were impressive, but they contrasted with the technical backwardness of its information centres.

24. The fact that most of the co-operative activities between the Department and non-governmental organizations took place in New York posed some problems for the Soviet Union. It would be advisable to organize some of those activities in other regions as well. He supported the view of the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information that the Department needed more flexibility in using the potential of organizations willing to co-operate in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

25. Mr. WAGUE (Mali) said that international relations had made positive progress in the previous year, as demonstrated by the constructive spirit that had prevailed during the twelfth session of the Committee on Information. His delegation felt that it was important to take advantage of those advances to promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order. If those efforts were to succeed, it was necessary to enhance the capacity of the communication media in developing countries, especially since the hegemony of the countries of the North in the field of communications encouraged them to attempt to impose their values on the countries of the South. He noted that developing countries were the target of press campaigns to change their moral values and cultural identity, and that some media organs of the North were engaged in disinformation and in broadcasting apocalyptic visions of events in countries of the South.

26. With regard to the activities of the Department of Public Information, there was a need to further emphasize the programmes on the maintenance of international peace and security, the struggle against apartheid, environmental problems, disarmament, the advancement of women, the problems of development (including that of external debt) and the campaign against illicit drug trafficking. It was necessary to strengthen as much as possible the implementation of the principle of equitable geographical distribution in the Department, to correct existing imbalances among the working languages, to consolidate and broaden co-operation between the Department and the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries, and to provide the United Nations information centres with the necessary resources. It was worth emphasizing the work of UNESCO in establishing and strengthening communications structures in developing countries.

(Mr. Wague, Mali)

27. Freedom of expression and information was respected in Mali. There was a continuing increase in the number of independent publications and of activities to strengthen freedom of the press. A wide-ranging literacy campaign had been undertaken, which aimed at providing literacy training for 1 million persons per year. The Government was making efforts to improve and diversify both the facilities and the content of information services, especially radio and television.

28. Mr. CHAVUNDUKA (Zimbabwe) said that the new climate of co-operation in international relations should be enhanced through, *inter alia*, the establishment of a new world information and communication order based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information among all countries. The consensus reached at the twelfth session of the Committee on Information was an important turning-point in the consideration of those questions, and should constitute a basis for concrete steps towards, among other things, developing and strengthening the communication capacities of developing countries, so that opinions could be formed on the basis of the experiences of both the North and the South, not only those of the countries with the necessary communication capacities to influence other regions. The faith of the developing world in the common goals of the international community depended on the establishment of the new order.

29. The efforts of the Department of Public Information to mobilize emergency assistance for the development of Namibia were noteworthy. His delegation welcomed the Department's decision to open an information centre in Windhoek in early 1991. That centre would play an important role in Namibia's development process. The United Nations should meet all the costs of establishing and maintaining the centre, as it had in some other cases. It was imperative to continue the anti-apartheid activities in order to put the developments in South Africa in their proper perspective. The timely production and distribution of anti-apartheid radio programmes should continue until apartheid was eradicated. In addition, the international community should maintain its firm support of the legitimate cause of the Palestinian people, and the Department should vigorously continue its special programme on the question of Palestine.

30. The work of UNESCO in the field of information was invaluable. He hoped that the consensus reached at its twenty-fifth General Conference on a new strategy for "Communication in the service of humanity" would enhance the effectiveness of the Organization. In particular, his delegation awaited with interest the African Press Seminar that was to be held in Namibia in early 1991.

31. Mr. BOITS'KO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) expressed the hope that the adoption of the two draft resolutions on the item under consideration would, firstly, enable delegations to put aside confrontation in dealing with problems that involved all countries, and secondly, create conditions under which, at its next session, the Committee on Information could concentrate on system-wide activities.

32. The Secretary-General, in the report he had presented pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/50 (A/45/533), and the Under-Secretary-General for Public

(Mr. Bouts'ko, Ukrainian SSR)

Information, in her statement, had emphasized the notable successes of the Department of Public Information, which would do credit to any good information service. Questions relating to information had been included in the Assembly's agenda in 1946 on the understanding that the information activities to be examined would be not only those of the Department, but also those of the entire United Nations system. However, the Assembly had lost sight of that objective over the years, with the result that it did not review the activities of many organizations, such as UNICEF, UNEP and FAO. That was regrettable, since one of the fundamental problems before the Special Political Committee was that of co-ordinating the components of the United Nations public information system. Moreover, the good intentions of the Committee would not bear fruit unless a way of financing the proposed programmes was found. In that regard, a detailed study should be done on the possibility of drawing on more outside sources of financing for information programmes.

33. The Committee on Information should study ways of enhancing the effectiveness of the Joint United Nations Information Committee to help the Department of Public Information to carry out all of the work requested of it, such as the proposal of the United States of America to elaborate a strategy in support of United Nations efforts to resolve the Gulf crisis.

34. As a result of the change in the information policy of the Ukrainian SSR, namely, the lifting of censorship and the liquidation of the State monopoly on the media, its national television received news programmes from the Department of Public Information. That type of activity should be further developed, although such programmes should provide more information on all the organs of the United Nations.

35. His delegation praised the Department's Audio/Visual Materials Library Unit for its interesting programmes on the Chernobyl accident and on international co-operation to deal with its consequences. He noted that the quality of press releases had improved, but that the reduction in the number of permanent posts would not help to create the necessary conditions to produce good materials. He stressed the importance of two seminars for Eastern European journalists which had been organized by UNESCO in Paris and which had been attended by Ukrainian journalists. Regional seminars could be held through the joint efforts of the various United Nations information services. Co-operation and co-ordination among those services, in addition to opening up new possibilities for better informing international public opinion, would set an example of how apparently insoluble problems could be solved through the defence and promotion of common interests.

36. Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria) said that for the first time in eight years, broad agreement had been reached on such a contentious issue as information, thanks to the improved international environment and the flexibility shown by the members of the Committee on Information, whose co-operation with his delegation in its capacity as Chairman had facilitated the consensus. The consensus was a moral pact between developed and developing countries to reduce and ultimately eliminate existing information imbalances. It was therefore encouraging that some developed

(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

countries had announced their willingness to co-operate to strengthen communications infrastructure and technology for developing countries.

37. Nigeria supported the UNESCO International Programme for the Development of Communication, and urged developed countries to increase their assistance to it. It also endorsed the plan to hold the 1991 African Press Seminar in Windhoek, and called on the Organization to give it wide publicity to enable participation by the largest possible number of African journalists.

38. At the meeting of African Ministers of Information, held in Nigeria in April 1990, plans had been developed for the establishment of a new African information and communication order with the goal of promoting regional self-reliance, increased co-operation in news-gathering, reduction of misrepresentation of the African situation, and enhancement of the continent's image.

39. Among Department of Public Information activities, special praise should be given to the publicity received by United Nations campaigns against apartheid, the economic crisis in Africa, the situation of Palestinians under Israeli occupation, the status of women, peace-keeping operations, human rights, and economic and social problems. In that context, all efforts should be made to ensure that Development Forum, a most important publication on development matters, would continue.

40. United Nations information centres represented the Organization and disseminated information about its activities, and they must be strengthened. Negotiations were proceeding for the opening of an information centre in Namibia, whose operating costs, in the opinion of his delegation, should be borne by the United Nations.

41. Mr. FUENTES IBÁÑEZ (Bolivia) said that communications, with the immediate objective of providing the most accurate information, had been one of the areas that had received least attention from the developing countries. Information must be oriented to fulfil a social function, such as respect for the human condition and the right of mankind to live in dignity and security.

42. Since the Second World War, surprising technological advances had occurred, but they had not always been utilized appropriately. They had soon been converted into new commercial tools, often supplanting the constructive reasons for their establishment. Sounds and images communicating ideas had been transmitted over the airwaves to all regions of the world. That flow had reached developing countries, but not always in an appropriate way. It risked becoming another form of alienation, disseminating ideas, ways of life and attitudes foreign to their traditions and customs.

43. The importance of the new world information and communication order must be emphasized, parallel to the new international economic order and movements to strengthen the individuality of countries struggling to build a society true to

(Mr. Fuentes Ibañez, Bolivia)

their traditions, and based on the principles proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.

44. In draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.9, paragraph 3 (a) very wisely recommended that the Department of Public Information should "continue to maintain consistent editorial independence and accuracy in reporting all the material it produces". Expansion of information services and the more adequate dissemination of information would contribute to the development of an analytical ability, and perhaps later could lead to the establishment of an information code of ethics for the use of journalists desiring to give truthful information. Measures restricting freedom of information should not be proposed, however. It would be more appropriate to intensify efforts to persuade the public through education, so that public opinion itself would reject programmes using objectionable topics as entertainment.

45. Bolivia shared the concern of the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information over the Department's scarce resources to fulfil its task, even more so, considering the disproportionate ability of private information agencies to inundate the market with easily accessible products. The Department was the appropriate channel through which to reach the most remote peoples with its message of hope and encouragement. Young people anxious to be useful to their communities should be trained so that later they would form the network communicating the principles embodied in the Charter.

46. Ms. VAN ANTWERPEN (Namibia) noted that the attitude of co-operation and goodwill observed in all United Nations agencies and bodies was facilitating consensus on many important issues, such as information and communication, which had once been controversial. The twelfth session of the Committee on Information had been a watershed in the debate on the subject, and the consensus obtained regarding important points was a fundamental contribution to the success of the work of the United Nations. It had been stressed that the existing information and communication order was a legacy of history. In that connection, it was sad to note that imbalances between the developed North and the less privileged South still remained and had further widened. Putting an end to that situation would require, on the one hand, contributions from countries with resources and technology, and on the other, new strategies and creative programmes from the Department of Public Information.

47. Greater attention needed to be given to questions such as the elimination of apartheid and all forms of discrimination, the continued existence of colonialism, the plight of the Palestinian people and underdevelopment. On behalf of the Government, the delegation of Namibia commended the Department for having continued to disseminate information on Namibia, pursuant to Security Council resolution 435 (1978) of 29 September 1978. Furthermore, she was pleased to mention that Namibia would be the venue for the African Press Seminar in 1991, and that the Government was committed to the development of a free and independent press. Freedom always implied responsibility, however, and must be accompanied by balanced and objective reporting.

(Ms. Van Antwerpen, Namibia)

48. United Nations information centres were of great importance, especially in developing countries. Namibia welcomed the establishment of such a centre in Windhoek, as provided for in General Assembly resolution 44/50 of 8 December 1989. It was possible, however, that the Government might not be able to meet certain requirements for its establishment. It would need United Nations support.

49. Mr. SALAS (Mexico) said that the new international panorama had brought along with it a significant renewal of the United Nations, which now had the central role intended for it in 1945. That new international order and the need to enhance trust, co-operation and multilateralism between countries required a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process (A/SPC/45/L.8), but even more an adequate response to that call. Furthermore, information brought with it strength and power for change which must be harnessed. Mexico therefore supported the draft resolution on United Nations public information policies and activities (A/SPC/45/L.9).

50. The work of the Department of Public Information must be intensified, above all in developing countries. In effect, to measure the success of its campaigns, it was not enough to consider the degree of access to the information media of developed countries. It was important to achieve a balance between mass dissemination of information, frequently selective, predominating in the media of those countries, and the objective needs for information on the United Nations and its evolving tasks.

51. The use of information and the right to receive it were essential elements of the full development of all society in freedom. The consensus achieved in the Committee on Information, as well as the new UNESCO strategy entitled "Communication in the service of humanity" were firm steps towards the achievement of that objective.

52. Mr. BOUKADOUM (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Arab Maghreb Union, mentioned the optimistic atmosphere in the Special Political Committee, which was meeting after the consensus achieved in the Committee on Information. Also, the new strategy adopted by UNESCO opened prospects for dialogue and mutual understanding. Because of the positive changes in international relations, it was to be hoped that a new, more just and more balanced world information and communication order could be established on the basis of respect for the traditions of all countries.

53. The Maghreb States affirmed the need for every country to be free to express its own identity and map out its own course, and rejected any attempt to use the media to distort the facts. In that context, attention should be drawn to the work accomplished by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of 77. In an interdependent world, with the prevailing atmosphere of détente and the end of the cold war, the views of all countries must be listened to and the imbalance and differences between developed and developing countries must be eliminated. Unfortunately, there were many obstacles to the new world information and communication order, and information must flow not only from the developed to the

(Mr. Boukadoun, Algeria)

developing countries, but also in the opposite direction. Since the existing information system was dominated by a powerful minority which controlled and directed it, the Arab Maghreb Union called for the preparation of an information charter enshrining the principles and ethics of the global information system based on the objective of knowing the factual truth. The Arab Maghreb Union trusted that the Committee on Information could submit a draft information charter for consideration at the following session of the General Assembly.

54. Mention should be made of the effective role of the Department of Public Information (DPI) in spreading information about United Nations activities. The Department's resources and flexibility must be increased to ensure greater effectiveness. Increased support to DPI activities relating to the developing countries, more assistance to journalists from developing countries and closer co-operation among the news agencies of the non-aligned countries were also needed.

55. Some institutions and universities of the Maghreb region had expressed the desire to see the establishment of specialized United Nations centres and undertook to make information materials in Arabic available to such centres. DPI should give priority to the dissemination of information on issues involving a threat to international peace and security such as the question of Palestine, the Middle East, racial discrimination and the serious economic situation of the African countries.

56. Mr. MORA GODOY (Cuba) said that, despite financial and budgetary limitations, DPI had accomplished a difficult task. For years the Department had been drawing attention to changing trends and helping to provide deeper insights into the role of communication in social development. Its mechanisms and structures must be strengthened in order to attain the Organization's objectives in that field. To speak of information and communication was to speak of survival, development and preservation of cultural identity. However, it was no secret to anyone that there was a chasm between those objectives and the everyday reality faced by the developing countries, nor that the underdeveloped world had no access to the information which the major transnational communication centres manipulated and monopolized but failed to direct towards that very purpose of fostering friendly relations among peoples. Aware as they were of that situation and that the principle of sovereign equality among nations applied also to that domain, the developing countries had emphasized the need for urgent action to change the situation of inequality, dependence and imbalance to which they were subjected in the sphere of information and communication - a necessity that had been reaffirmed at the Third Conference of Ministers of Information of Non-Aligned Countries, held recently in Havana. The new order would be an irreversible step forward in the right to communicate and to be informed objectively; its increasing relevance today was due to the fact that the very nature of information had remained unchanged and that the introduction of new information technologies went hand in hand with a continuing transfer of decision-making to transnational levels.

57. His delegation was grateful to DPI for the part it had played in the Namibian independence process. The Department should continue to give priority to issues

(Mr. Mora Godoy, Cuba)

concerning Palestine and apartheid. Moreover, it might consider the possibility of promoting a world decolonization campaign to coincide with the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and of proclaiming the last decade of the century the decolonization decade.

58. Finally, his delegation wished to denounce certain schemes of the United States aimed at continuing to transmit radio and television broadcasts to Cuba contrary to the wish of the Cuban Government and people. For all that country's claims to be the driving force behind the current process of strengthening co-operation, understanding and peace, its positions vis-à-vis Cuba had not changed. On the contrary, they had become more hostile. As part of its psychological war against the Cuban revolution and under the guise of the so-called free flow of information, the United States had decided in 1990 to transmit television broadcasts to Cuba from military installations located in Florida for a three-month trial period. The decision had been denounced by the relevant communications bodies as a grave violation of international law and an attempt to violate the sovereignty of a State. The undertaking had no political, legal or indeed moral justification. In that connection, the Government of the United States was the only Government to prohibit by law any telecommunications exchange with Cuba, and failed to renounce its policy of blockade against the country, which had repeatedly stated its advocacy of free exchange with any other country in that field, subject to respect for international law and its own sovereignty.

59. Eight months after its multi-million dollar manoeuvre against Cuba had been launched, United States television was not received in Cuba - in other words, it had failed. Cuba failed to understand why, despite that failure and despite the fact that the competent bodies had declared its activities illegal, the United States continued its all-out assaults on a country which had merely sought to exercise its right freely to choose its own economic, political and social system. Come what might, and however much that country tried to take advantage of the new circumstances to reaffirm its hegemony, Cuba would not abandon either its principles or its revolution, nor give way one iota on its achievements, and would not renounce its sovereignty and its independence.

60. Mr. AL-ZAYANI (Bahrain) thanked UNESCO for the efforts it had made, in co-operation with the Department of Public Information, to strengthen the information infrastructures of the developing countries through its International Programme for the Development of Communication. The consensus achieved held out promise that agreement could be reached on other questions concerning information and communication, since the climate seemed conducive to international dialogue and co-operation. At UNESCO's twenty-fifth General Conference the strategy for "Communication in the service of humanity" had been adopted by consensus, and international co-operation on various aspects of information had been strengthened.

61. It was the duty of the media, news agencies and journalists to disseminate impartial information in order to fulfil the supreme objective of establishing a new world information and communication order, since the interests of peoples were now interdependent and they shared similar aspirations.

(Mr. Al-Zayani, Bahrain)

62. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information had said that the Department would spare no effort in responding to the international community's expectations of the United Nations. The Organization was a unique forum for promoting development and peace, and enjoyed an increasingly positive image. In that context, it was gratifying to note DPI's co-operation with regional organizations, especially the League of Arab States, and with the developing countries' news agencies, such as the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries. However, it was hoped that due attention would be paid to the issues that were of concern to the international community, such as the cause of Palestine, the eradication of racism and racial discrimination, the halting of foreign occupation, and respect for human rights.

63. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that information was a double-edged instrument which, only if used correctly, could foster understanding between countries, contribute to the settlement of conflicts and promote economic and social development. Uganda welcomed the turn of events in international relations and hoped that the change would also prove beneficial to the developing countries. During the cold war, information had been used to perpetuate divisions, widen spheres of influence and implement policies of domination and hegemony to the detriment of the poor countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. In the course of the conflicts that had broken out in the South, the information disseminated - distorted to serve ideological interests - had diverted attention away from the real problems of the peoples of the regions concerned instead of helping to resolve them. Consequently, Uganda cherished the hope that, with the end of the cold war, one of the major factors that had exacerbated conflicts in the African region, the African countries could evolve their own social, political and economic systems founded on democratic principles.

64. Information was clearly vital in making the international community aware of the fundamental principles of any democratic process. In his delegation's view, there were no models of democracy that could be exported wholesale, which was why the media should confine their action to helping to evolve endogenous systems of democracy.

65. With the beginning of a phase of co-operation between East and West, in a multi-polar world which had seen the emergence of large trading blocs in the affluent North, like the European Economic Community, the advantages and disadvantages of those developments in terms of the new economic, social and information order must be carefully weighed up. Those developments might relegate the third world to the margins of world attention and exclude them from the mainstream of international trade, investment and technological development, thereby reinforcing existing imbalances in information. That eventuality must be avoided and endeavours should be made to ensure that the changes led to the strengthening of international co-operation for the benefit of all humanity.

66. The new world information and communication order which the non-aligned countries advocated was designed to bridge the gap between the developed and the developing countries and to ensure a two-way, balanced flow of information.

(Mr. Irumba, Uganda)

Regrettably, their call for a new order had been wilfully misinterpreted as a challenge to the free flow of information. Nothing could be further from the truth, since the intention was to ensure that freedom was exercised by all, whereas information was currently controlled by a handful of news agencies in the North and the flow of information was only one-way: from the rich countries to the poor.

67. Uganda was gratified that on the whole there was now a better appreciation of the call for a new world information and communication order which would facilitate communication of the matters of concern and the just aspirations of all humanity. Uganda believed in co-operation and sharing of experience between developing countries and accordingly supported the efforts of the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries, the Broadcasting Organization of Non-Aligned Countries and the Pan-African news agency. The Department of Public Information should assist those regional institutions.

68. Uganda would support any reform of the Department of Public Information that was in line with General Assembly resolution 41/213, which, moreover, should be seen as a whole. Attention must be paid to the legitimate concern of the staff. In that respect, his delegation reaffirmed its position on the need to achieve equitable geographical representation in the staff of the Department. Uganda also supported the UNESCO International Programme for the Development of Communication and appealed to the international community to increase its contribution to that Programme.

69. His delegation commended the Department for its work for African recovery and development, in which the publication Africa Recovery had played an invaluable role. Uganda attached great importance to the information centres. The Nairobi Information Centre also covered Uganda, and it was regrettable that in spite of the Director's enthusiasm it had not been possible to cover Uganda adequately. An information centre should be established in Namibia as speedily as possible. Uganda regretted that host Governments were expected to contribute to the cost of information centres in the developing countries, while that was not the case in developed countries. With regard to southern Africa, the release of Nelson Mandela and other political leaders would probably bring about more changes. However, the international community should keep on guard and should not relax its efforts until such changes had become irreversible. It was more than ever important for the Department to fulfil its task of promoting the struggle against apartheid. Lastly, his delegation emphasized that the United Nations had an obligation to speed up the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

70. Mrs. SEVIGNY (Under-Secretary-General for Public Information) said that she shared the hope that the Committee on Information, building on the consensus achieved, would provide continuing assistance and guidance in the sessions to come, in order to increase the Department's effectiveness and its capacity to cope with growing information needs. With the unanimous agreement on questions relating to information, a new chapter was opening for concrete action in the 1990s and beyond to promote co-operation for media development in developing countries, as well as freedom of information and an informed public understanding of the Organization's work and purposes.

(Mrs. Seigny)

71. She appreciated the support for the programme of opinion polls about the United Nations. She had also noted the concern to have more public opinion polls in the developing countries. The Department was making efforts in that regard and, in addition to the survey in Mexico, had commissioned polls in Kenya, Nigeria, Jordan and Argentina. It expected to publish the results of the Kenya poll shortly and the results of the Nigeria poll soon after. In 1991 the Department planned to undertake polls in a number of Member States in Asia and Latin America, bearing in mind the need to ensure a regional balance among the countries surveyed.

72. The Department was doing everything possible to promote information on all the substantive questions with which the Organization was concerned, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. With regard to further information on the Department's activities relating to specific subjects which some delegations considered priorities, she emphasized the work on apartheid and the Palestinian question, the articles in the UN Focus series, the publication Africa Recovery, and the documents and booklets on the world economy and the international debt. Demand had been so great for the latter two that the Department had had to reproduce the documents in book form. She also referred to the Department's work in connection with the publication Objective: Justice and the question of traffic in narcotics.

73. With regard to the coverage of special events and the commemoration of the Organization's forty-fifth anniversary, the anniversary had been celebrated with public events and information activities in many parts of the world. The Department had received reports on activities from information centres in Geneva, Vienna, Sydney, Manila, Cairo, Moscow, Rio de Janeiro, Paris, Belgrade, Bangkok and other cities.

74. The Department noted with satisfaction the positive comments on the quality of its teaching guides about the United Nations and welcomed the suggestion that they should be incorporated into the curricula of secondary schools in Member States. The public opinion polls carried out by the Department had revealed that the majority of people polled had learned about the United Nations in secondary school.

75. Several representatives had referred to the languages used in both printed and audio-visual information products. During 1990 alone, 110 publications, 19 posters, and other display material had been produced and distributed, with a circulation of between 1,000 and 100,000 copies each. Of the 110 English publications, 63 had also been issued in both French and Spanish, 12 in Arabic, 11 in Chinese and 14 in Russian. Several of them had been issued in other languages too. The Department had issued 366 press releases in French and English between January and June 1990. The Department's radio broadcasts were produced in 21 languages and the major television programmes, such as UN in Action or World Chronicle, were produced in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

76. Requests had been made for the training programme for journalists and broadcasters to benefit more countries. Supervisory requirements and funds available to the Department would preclude the admission of more than 20 trainees a year. However, the Department would continue to include as many developing countries as possible in future programmes, on a rotating basis.

(Mrs. Sevigny)

77. With regard to broadening the Department's co-ordination of information activities within the United Nations system, through the Joint United Nations Information Committee, that Committee had reviewed common activities at its latest session in Geneva. It had established a group to review the future of Development Forum. The Department was also working closely with the secretariat of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and with members of the Committee to design and implement a multi-media information campaign.

78. The Yearbook of the United Nations had been criticized. She was concerned about the backlog in the production schedule of the Yearbook and said that the Department had never been meant to be an archival office. It had explored various options for improving the situation and during the year had embarked on a comprehensive review of the operation. She thanked the permanent missions which had responded in a constructive and helpful manner to the questionnaire on that publication.

79. With regard to annual conferences for non-governmental organizations, she noted with satisfaction the suggestion that conferences should be held in different regions of the world. The Department was studying the possibility and would accordingly be embarking on consultations with non-governmental organizations, since, owing to financial limitations, the holding of meetings away from Headquarters would depend on the assistance provided by the host country and the non-governmental organizations concerned.

80. There had been many expressions of support for and interest in the work of the information centres. At the Information Centre in Dar es Salaam, the duties of director had been performed by the UNDP Resident Representative because of the lack of resources made worse by the 1987 budgetary cuts. Nevertheless, there was evidence that the Centre was functioning and information was being received periodically from the United Republic of Tanzania. Regarding the Information Centre in Tehran, the Department had already initiated action to recruit an information assistant who would work and co-operate with the UNDP office there. Any suggestions by the Iranian Government on how to improve the Centre's efficiency would be welcome. The Information Centre in Ouagadougou was one of the most active in Africa. Its main purpose was to service the ministries, the media, the non-governmental organizations and the universities, and it organized film shows and information days in the rural areas of Burkina Faso. Despite the budgetary constraints, DPI would do everything possible to provide that Centre with the necessary means to extend its activities to all the regions of the country. At the Information Centre in Dhaka, again because resources had been curtailed, the UNDP Resident Representative would be performing the duties of centre director. The post of information assistant had been kept, although the officer who had filled that post had been promoted to a Professional post in the Department in New York. Steps had been taken to recruit an information assistant, whose duties were being performed in the interim by the reference assistant. Under the administration of the UNDP Resident Representative, the level of activities of the Centre in Dhaka had remained unaffected. Efforts were being made to strengthen the existing good relations with government officials, the media and non-governmental organizations,

(Mrs. Seigny)

seminars were held and activities organized in observance of United Nations Days and Weeks, and services were provided through the printed media, radio and television. Bulgaria, Poland and Yemen had expressed interest in opening information centres in their capitals. If the General Assembly agreed and provided the necessary financial resources, DPI would have no difficulty in meeting those requests. The efficiency of the information centres that serviced more than one country had been questioned. DPI would do its best to cope with that situation, although again the financial constraints would have to be borne in mind. As to the Department's efforts to modernize equipment and computerize operations, the aim was to modernize operations in all the information centres wherever national technological conditions allowed.

81. DPI had local staff in 67 countries and international staff and directors in 35. Of the 67 centres for which it had direct responsibility, 13 were in the more industrialized countries where UNDP was not represented and 54 in the less developed countries where UNDP had offices. Of those 54, 22 were administered by UNDP.

82. In view of the great interest expressed by many delegations in United Nations information centres and services, she wished to add a number of comments in a wider perspective. For 15 years prior to 1988, the demand for more information had not been at its highest point; not even at the height of the United Nations credibility crisis had a Government requested the closure of an information centre; for more than 40 years, technical specialization and professional expertise had never been the only criteria used in recruitment; General Assembly resolution 1405 (XIV) of 1 December 1959 concerning tangible support from Governments to information centres had never been implemented with firmness; recent United Nations achievements and the quality of the information material required were placing additional pressure on the centres. Because of obsolescence of the working conditions, a phased approach in the field had been chosen, with the establishment of regional desks at Headquarters and relations were being strengthened with other United Nations agencies and programmes, especially UNDP. At the same time, operations were being modernized and staff reduced. Having inherited 40 years of difficulties, she had tried, together with the newly appointed Director of Information Centres Division, to revitalize the information network in the field and to motivate staff, and there was no doubt that solid progress had been made.

83. A number of specific measures had been taken by the Department to improve the operation of the information centres. Regional meetings of information centres were being held more frequently to enable them to exchange experiences, to examine their problems at closer range and to enable work at Headquarters and in the field to be co-ordinated more effectively. In the past three years, meetings had been held in all the regions and at a saving to the United Nations, because they had been partially hosted by a Member State. She thanked the Governments of Morocco, the Soviet Union, Tunisia and the Philippines for hosting the meetings in their respective regions. Training seminars for local staff had been intensified and equipment had been modernized, with the installation of, inter alia, facsimile machines in 59 centres and PCs in 34, 22 of which were linked to Headquarters by an

(Mrs. Seigny)

electronic mail system. During the current year, that system would be connected with eight other countries and more than 50 centres would be equipped with PCs by the end of the year. Rotation of directors was at the core of the programme. In the past three years, new directors had been appointed to 87 per cent of the centres; four directors were still to be replaced and another four were being appointed in November 1990.

84. Measures had been taken to work closely with other members of the United Nations family, especially through the Joint United Nations Information Committee. The relationship between field offices of DPI and UNDP needed special attention. An initial understanding had been reached jointly the previous year and had been tested in the field for 12 months. It was agreed that UNDP resident representatives would receive thorough public information briefings before assuming duties, which would be important in countries with no information centres. She had decided that, in those countries, the information material should be sent directly to local radio and television stations and the printed material to UNDP offices. In response to the claims by certain delegations that the material sent directly was not reaching its destination, she promised to monitor the situation personally.

85. A number of centres, with support from Headquarters, had succeeded in obtaining regular slots on radio and television programmes in host countries. Centres were encouraged not only to distribute the material produced in New York but also to adapt it to the interests and needs of each country. Many countries were directly providing the centres with subsidies for the translation and sometimes delivery of material. Information had also been prepared with academic and intellectual communities in mind and several centres had arranged to have studies on the United Nations included in the regular curriculum.

86. She had visited 36 countries and could say without hesitation that while conditions were far from ideal, the approach taken had been the right one. During those visits she had also confirmed the importance of reaching out to the public through radio and television programmes and of teaching about the United Nations at the secondary level. Out of 67 operating centres, about 40 had been provided by the host countries with material help. A special document was being prepared on the subject for distribution to all Member States. She thanked those countries which had given their support and urged the others which had not yet met their initial commitment to make every effort to do so in the immediate future. She also requested those Governments which were not providing facilities and services to the centres to do so, even partially.

87. DPI was well aware of the problems and wished the international community to know what the limitations were. Any suggestions for improving the situation would be welcome. If 150 countries were each to be provided with a centre, the budget for the centres would have to be tripled, from about \$20 million to about \$60 million. Such an investment would be impossible, but the lack of resources could be compensated for by professionalism, flexibility in staffing and more active management. Another point to be borne in mind was the need for advance planning. It was completely unproductive to be confined strictly to a

(Mrs. Seigny)

predetermined calendar of about 45 annual events relating to United Nations Decades, Years and Days, in addition to mandatory exhibits.

88. Some delegations had referred to specific difficulties in staffing their centres. It was public knowledge that the whole United Nations system had undergone a retrenchment operation. However, some flexibility was needed in recruiting the necessary Professional staff for certain assignments. Further flexibility was required in the classification of posts and in the entry level of recruitment of local Professional staff. In that connection, DPI had initiated action to improve the levels and classification of posts, and a working group dealing with those matters would be making some recommendations.

89. DPI would continue trying to ensure that the centre directors and the regional desk officers at Headquarters worked harmoniously to achieve the desired level of efficiency. It was encouraging to note that many agencies, including UNDP, were asking DPI to carry out activities through its centres. Obvious progress had been made but additional resources were required to purchase and distribute material, design appropriate projects and monitor input as well as output.

90. A number of delegations had expressed concern about the geographical distribution of Department staff. The situation was expected to improve, even though DPI already stood rather well when compared to the desirable mid-points established for the Secretariat as a whole. With regard to the representation of women at Professional and senior levels, DPI was in a better position than most other departments. Nevertheless, vigorous efforts were being made to appoint more women as centre directors.

91. Lastly, she reiterated that flexibility was a central question. She commended the attitude of those delegations that had supported her call for flexibility in managing the Department.

92. Mr. ISAKSSON (UNESCO Liaison Office with the United Nations) said that UNESCO noted with great satisfaction that there appeared to be a full consensus on the draft resolutions proposed for the Committee's consideration. UNESCO's new strategy for the development of communications and the free flow of information had the same goal and priorities as those of the draft resolutions.

93. UNESCO had taken note of the constructive comments made by many members of the Committee with regard to its International Programme for the Development of Communication, which would be conveyed to UNESCO headquarters in Paris along with specific proposals, such as the suggestion that UNESCO and DPI, in preparing the African press seminar, should contact the Cairo-based Institute for the Training of African Journalists.

94. UNESCO would continue to work closely with the Department in its own fields of competence.

Draft resolutions A/SPC/45/L.8 and L.9

95. Mr. FASEHUN (Nigeria), speaking as Chairman of the Committee on Information, introduced draft resolutions A/SPC/45/L.8 and L.9, entitled "Information in service of humanity" and "United Nations public information policies and activities" respectively, a result of constructive and cordial consultations with the spokesmen for the regional groups and China. Both texts had been drafted by the Committee on Information at its twelfth session and a preamble had been added to each to incorporate elements from the report of the Committee on Information (A/45/21) and the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information (A/45/533).

96. It was to be hoped that the consensus reached would contribute to ensuring that concrete assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, would be given to the developing countries and would mean more resources for DPI so that the Department could confront the enormous changes taking place in the area of information and communication, where such advances were an integral part of development. He reiterated the need for unofficial quarterly consultations between the officers of the Committee on Information and the Department's secretariat.

97. The CHAIRMAN said that the activities relating to information referred to in draft resolutions A/SPC/45/L.8 and L.9 already appeared in the programme budget for the 1990-1991 biennium; consequently, if the General Assembly adopted those resolutions, they would have no programme-budget implications. If he heard no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolutions A/SPC/45/L.8 and L.9 without a vote.

98. Draft resolutions A/SPC/45/L.8 and L.9 were adopted without a vote.

99. Mr. ARNOLD (United States of America) said that his delegation was pleased that a consensus had been reached; but consensus connoted harmony, and not necessarily total agreement on all points of a resolution. With regard to the "new world information and communication order", the United States remained opposed to any order that could be interpreted as justifying restrictions, limitations or controls on the activities of journalists, the free flow of information or freedom of opinion.

100. Furthermore, certain parts of the draft resolutions referred to situations that were no longer as described. Paragraph 1, subparagraph (2) (e), of draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.9 referred to official censorship imposed on the local and international media with regard to the policies of apartheid. Although the United States remained totally opposed to apartheid, it was gratified at the measures taken by the Government of South Africa to begin rescinding censorship, which was a step towards democracy. It was to be hoped that when the Committee met in 1991, official censorship in South Africa would have been totally abolished.

101. The best way for the Committee on Information to fulfil its task of providing orientation would be by granting a degree of discretion and flexibility to DPI. That called for increased co-operation and consultation between that Committee and the Department, and for considerable attention to existing resources and capacity in order to help the Committee fulfil its mandate.

102. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of the United States wished to speak in exercise of the right to reply.

103. Mr. ARNOLD (United States of America) said that the delegation of Cuba had once again referred to an issue that was being discussed by another United Nations body, the International Telecommunication Union. He looked forward to hearing the comments of the representative of Cuba on the evening news of Radio Habana, whose programmes could be listened to without jamming in the United States.

104. The representative of Cuba had said that the Government and people of Cuba opposed United States radio broadcasting to Cuba. Whereas the Government was undoubtedly against such broadcasts, it would remain impossible to know whether the people of Cuba were also opposed until such broadcasts reached Cuba and could be heard there. He quoted the opinion of Mr. Julio García Luis, leader of the Cuban Journalists' Union, who, in an interview with Juventud Rebelde, the official paper of the Communist Youth of Cuba, had said that it had been eloquently demonstrated that the officialist, apologist and uniform press system had exhausted its possibilities and that if the political and economic system of Cuba was to be improved, the country's mass media must be reformed permanently. It was to be hoped that the time would come when the officials or the people of Cuba would express their gratitude to the nations that broadcast programmes inspired by freedom of thought, just as the leaders and peoples of other countries had already done.

105. Mr. MORA GODOY (Cuba), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the United States delegation was unable to refute Cuba's arguments, which were based on the opinion of the International Telecommunication Union establishing that the actions of the United States had constituted violations of the International Telecommunication Convention, adopted in Nairobi in 1982, to which the United States was a party.

106. As to the misnamed Radio Martí, the same thing had been happening with it over the past five years as with Televisión Martí. Radio Martí broadcast to Cuba at the frequency-modulation band of 1,180 kHz, but it was not a commercial station, like the more than 20 United States stations that could be heard in Cuba.

107. For many years, Cuba had sought to settle the issue through discussions and negotiations: the champions of freedom of information should either abandon their objective of imposing their views on the rest of the world or should apply the principles that they regarded as so sacrosanct outside their country, so that Cuba could also broadcast on the medium-wave band to the territory of the United States. To date, it had not been possible to reach a settlement, because whereas the Cuban territory received radio broadcasts on the medium-wave band from the United States 24 hours a day, the inhabitants of the United States were unable to pick up on that same band opinions and information that differed from those predominating in that society.

(Mr. Mora Godoy, Cuba)

108. With regard to the freedom referred to by the United States, if freedom meant that 80 per cent of all children did not know who Bolívar, Jefferson and Lincoln were, that 20 million persons lived below the poverty level and that blacks, Hispanics and Asiatics were regarded as third-class citizens, Cuba did not want that freedom.

The meeting rose at 2.55 p.m.