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New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 25th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KOUASSI (Togo)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 74: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued) (A/41/21, A/41/562 and Add.1, A/41/582 and Add.1, A/41/120 and Add.1)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION (continued)

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

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

1. Mr. TANASA (Romania) said that the existing inequalities and imbalances in the field of information and communication adversely affected the free flow of information, impeded the strengthening of multilateral co-operation and exercised a negative impact on the efforts of the developing countries to accelerate economic and social progress and to preserve their national and cultural identity.

2. As a member of the Committee on Information, Romania had sought to make its constructive contribution to enhancing the information policies and programmes within the United Nations system and had consistently promoted dialogue and understanding. But his delegation fully shared the opinion of those who felt that it was indispensable to establish a new, more just and more effective information order based on a free and more balanced flow of objective and accurate information disseminated with a high sense of responsibility. In order to overcome the obstacles confronting the new order, his delegation had consistently called for realistic and practical measures, such as those contained in the recommendations made by the Committee in its report (A/41/21), including, among others, the access of developing countries to communication technology, the strengthening of their information and communication infrastructures and co-operation between the United Nations and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies and the regional and national news agencies of the developing countries.

3. His delegation recognized the contribution made by UNESCO, on both the conceptual and the practical levels, to the establishment of a new world information and communication order and appreciated the assistance rendered to the developing countries through the International Programme for the Development of Information. The General Assembly should reaffirm the central and important role of UNESCO in the field and should request it to continue its efforts in order to contribute to the clarification, elaboration and application of the concept of a new world information and communication order.

4. Despite the financial difficulties, the Department of Public Information (DPI) was attempting to promote understanding for the purposes and principles of the United Nations. In further enhancing the effectiveness of its work, it should disseminate to a greater extent factual and objective information on priority areas, for instance, disarmament and, above all, nuclear disarmament. The role of the United Nations information centres should also be further enhanced.

(Mr. Tanasa, Romania)

5. In conclusion, he reiterated his delegation's conviction that the Committee on Information would be able to overcome differences and to adopt realistic and balanced recommendations acceptable to all members.
6. Mr. MORENO (Uruguay), noting that every individual had the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which implied the right not to be harassed for one's opinions and the right to seek, receive and disseminate information, said that the fundamental rights that constituted the foundation of the new world information order must be defended. His delegation had already pointed out that the preservation of the right to seek and disseminate information was the best protection against any attempt to manipulate public opinion.
7. A society was not truly free unless its members could think and express their opinions freely. That fundamental human right, i.e. the right to disseminate and receive information, thus became a collective right that implied the right to have access to various sources of information. The principle of the free flow of information had been strengthened since the Second World War by technical advances, which had made possible the trans-frontier dissemination of information. That could only be welcomed. Freedom of information must be protected, and any attempt to limit it was unwarranted. In the past, authoritarian Government had been able to maintain their domination by imposing censorship.
8. His delegation considered that the new world information and communication order was a system based on rights enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and was proof of the growing tendency to demand the removal of all obstacles to the access to information. In that context, the need to remedy the dependence of developing countries in the area of information and communication was increasingly urgent.
9. Lastly, the Uruguayan delegation felt that, despite its current financial difficulties, the Department of Public Information, which had created a vast communications network, was very useful, in particular because of its radio and television programmes and its films.
10. Mr. CARAZO (Venezuela) said that his country, where democracy had been solidly anchored for nearly three decades, fully respected freedom of information as a basic right. Venezuela had decided to become a member of the Committee on Information in 1979 in order to help to prepare an information policy that would serve the interests of the United Nations effectively. Owing to the opposition of a group of privileged countries, the Committee had not been able to discharge the mandate assigned to it by the General Assembly in resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979 concerning the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information. The reform of the current order, in which all countries must participate on an equal footing, was all the more necessary because, without the requisite technical and financial resources, the developing countries would be unable to put an end to their state of dependence in that area for a long time.

(Mr. Carazo, Venezuela)

11. His delegation was in favour of extending the mandate of the Committee on Information in the hope that the continuation of its efforts, facilitated by the spirit of compromise already shown by the Group of 77, would make it possible for positions to be reconciled and a consensus to be found.

12. The Department of Public Information, which, owing to budgetary constraints, was faced with a very difficult task, should be given the means needed to accomplish its important mission. It should give priority to pleading the cause of multilateralism, which at present was under heavy attack. His delegation, for its part, hoped that particular emphasis would be placed on the dissemination of information on United Nations activities in the field of human rights. The preparatory work of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking to be held in Vienna in 1987 should also be given the widest possible publicity.

13. Mr. DISZTL (Hungary) said that his delegation had always taken an active part in the work of the Special Political Committee aimed at contributing to the establishment of a more just and more effective world information and communication order. All Member States should collaborate on that task. There was an urgent need to put an end to the dependent status of developing countries in that field by relying on the principles laid down in the recommendations published in document A/AC.198/L.32. UNESCO was pursuing its activities to promote the development of communication and to establish a new order.

14. The Department of Public Information continued to carry out useful work by drawing attention to United Nations activities. In certain countries, however, DPI should carry out a more coherent and complete coverage of the United Nations and its work, especially in such priority areas as international peace and security, disarmament, decolonization and economic, social and development issues so that public opinion might be better informed. DPI should also disseminate as widely as possible the activities of UNESCO and co-operate more regularly with it.

15. With the rapid development of communication technology, information was playing an increasingly important role in international relations. In the current political climate, the exchange of correct and responsible information was more necessary than ever to build confidence and encourage co-operation among peoples.

16. Great importance was attached to information in Hungary, where the public was informed in an objective manner about domestic and international events. The amount of time and space devoted by the press and broadcasting media to news compared favourably with that of countries of a similar size and degree of development. The Hungarian news organizations had established relations with their foreign counterparts for the sake of improving information.

17. Mr. VALLE (Brazil) said that freedom of information was not confined to free access to information from a multiplicity of sources. Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, freedom of opinion and expression implied not only the right to receive information and ideas but also the right to seek and impart them through any media, regardless of frontiers. To over-emphasize the right to receive

(Mr. Valle, Brazil)

information tended to confine the debate to one aspect of the issue, that of the restrictions that Governments might impose on the media. Redressing the current imbalances in the flow of information through the establishment of a new order was an urgent necessity and the developing countries sought to assert their legitimate right, namely, that of being an equal partner in the production and dissemination of information. Such a reform would permit a true diversification of information sources and would implement the principle of the equality of States enshrined in the Charter. Unfortunately, certain States saw the developing countries' concern to reduce their dependence on the developed countries in that field as a threat. In their view, the new order would jeopardize the plurality of information sources, and some were even afraid of Governments controlling the media. Freedom of information was a concept that implied shared responsibility and had national and international components. Nationally, the right to hold and to disseminate opinions presupposed the elimination of pressures and restrictions often imposed through repressive legislation. The use of the media for political propaganda or dissemination campaigns should also be avoided as it could pose a serious obstacle to the expression of democratic forces and the free circulation of ideas. Internationally, freedom of information was an ideal that could only be achieved through a gradual decentralization of information sources and the development of appropriate infrastructures in the developing countries. Thus the establishment of a new order in no way implied the intention that any Government should apply policies aimed at restricting information. Many of the objections raised by the implementation of the new order in all its aspects were only a pretext for maintaining the monopoly on information and encouraging the perpetuation of a debate that opposed two extreme positions: on the one hand, that of the countries hosting the main information centres; and, on the other hand, that of the countries that made use of the media for ideological propaganda purposes.

18. If some States persisted in misrepresenting the facts, there was very little chance of reaching agreement on the recommendations of the Committee on Information. In this delegation's view, the question of the establishment of the new order could not be dissociated from other practical measures aimed at promoting the establishment of communication infrastructures. Although significant progress had been made, particularly within the framework of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the question of the establishment of a new order must remain on the agenda as the only framework for consideration of problems that tended to widen the gap that separated developed and developing countries. For example, in the communications technologies sector, any country was entitled to seek to protect its infant industries from unfair competition. The concept of a new order should, therefore, remain the policy directive and master plan. Even if a new terminology were adopted, developing countries would still be careful to avoid vague formulations such as a reference to "practical work" or "rationalization of activities" which could be intended as a smokescreen for the essential content of the new order. Furthermore, the developing countries would not allow the crippling of the Department of Public Information's programmes in that essential area, not so much owing to financial constraints, as to positions which called into question the work of the United Nations at all levels and thus falsified the concept of multilateralism. While the present financial crisis

(Mr. Valle, Brazil)

justified a cost-benefit analysis of activities financed under the regular budget, Brazil rejected the view that the Committee on Information should play the role of financial auditor of DPI. In that connection, it was interesting to note that those countries that insisted the loudest on the need for budget cuts were maintaining that the DPI should concentrate its activities on one specific area, leaving issues of political interest to be implemented on a secondary basis. He wondered if it was not ironic that those same countries that suggested that information should be limited to certain issues played the role of the staunchest guardians of freedom of information. Those contradictions explained the stalemate in which the Committee currently found itself.

19. Turning to the proceedings of the Committee on Information, the Group of 77 had been accused of forcing a vote by the Committee on the draft recommendations submitted to it in June 1986. After intensive negotiations, which had produced a quite considerable rapprochement, the developing countries had hoped that the Committee would reach an agreement. Their efforts in that direction would not waver. However, owing to a selective interpretation of the consensus, some members of the Committee still felt that unilateral views should be reflected in the final document. Multilateral agreements resulted generally from mutual concessions, and did not reflect the preferences of specific delegations and were not put to the vote. Brazil was ready to continue the negotiations but not to renounce basic ideals and principles which guided its efforts with regard both to national development and to the elimination of all inequalities in international relations.

20. Speaking of the impact of the financial crisis on the activities of the DPI, he said that Brazil had supported the reductions envisaged to the extent that they had been regarded as temporary measures. He congratulated the Department on its work to enlist the co-operation of broadcasting organizations resuming transmission of short-wave radio transmissions (see document A/41/562/Add.1). Concerning the continuity and expansion of radio broadcasting to Portuguese-speaking countries, the Radio Service would do well to appoint a Portuguese-speaking producer. The Government of Brazil, which attached great importance to increasing the operational capacity of the United Nations information centres, had made arrangements to strengthen its links with the Rio de Janeiro Information Centre.

21. Mr. PYADYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his country had come to the current session of the General Assembly with an integrated programme of concrete proposals and ideas, which reflected the new political approach formulated by the XXVIIth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The world was changing rapidly and the nature of modern weapons meant that no State could hope to defend itself by military and technical means alone. Ensuring the security of a State was increasingly a political task. The Soviet Union recognized the place, role and interests of all States, large or small, and was willing to co-operate with them on a basis of equality. That principle, which was one of the foundations of Soviet doctrine on international affairs, also applied to the sphere of information.

(Mr. Pyadyshev, USSR)

22. The USSR attached great importance to the debate that the Committee devoted to the agenda item entitled "Questions relating to information". Information was one of the foundations of a comprehensive system of international security which it would like to see established. The role of the media was to express the anxieties of our time, to help consolidate peace and to arouse the conscience and responsibility of Governments, States and each individual.
23. His delegation subscribed to the view expressed by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information that the financial difficulties facing the Organization should not cause dismay but should rather encourage a critical review of the possibilities and aims of the Department of Public Information. It hoped that the totally abnormal situation regarding the make-up of the Department's staff would also be subject to review; the countries of the Eastern European group were not only substantially underrepresented but also the only regional group whose situation was deteriorating in that regard.
24. Several points had emerged from the discussion in the Special Political Committee. The debate had shown, first that there was an urgent need for fundamental changes in the structures, regulations and methods currently existing in the sphere of information, i.e., the need for a new world information and communication order. As one of the representatives of the Group of 77 had observed quite correctly, the current information order had become obsolete and reflected the morals of the 19th century which had been based on domination, lack of mutual understanding and mistrust.
25. The Political Declaration of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-aligned Countries, held at Harare, had pointed to the need to end the dominance of the Western information agencies, eliminate information imperialism, set up and modernize national mass media and redress the imbalance in the information exchange between the developing countries and the developed capitalist States. His country supported those demands fully and reaffirmed its willingness to strengthen its co-operation with the national mass media of the developing countries and with their information pools.
26. UNESCO played a major role in developing the concept of a new world information order. His country would continue to support that Organization, which had for 40 years been working tirelessly to strengthen mutual understanding and co-operation among peoples.
27. The arms race was accompanied by a widespread campaign of ideological disinformation. The same quarters were responsible for both activities, namely those who based their policies on force and on illusory hopes of achieving military superiority. The so-called free press, radio and television were in fact controlled by sophisticated methods devised long before. The information they disseminated was manipulated in order to give it the desired slant. Disregarding the concept moral, those organs were out to create the image of an enemy, portraying entire peoples as a hostile force. The tendentious interpretations of the United States-USSR meeting at Reykjavik, at which his country had put forward far-reaching initiatives in the field of nuclear disarmament, were a case in

(Mr. Pyadyshev, USSR)

point. The disinformation virus had penetrated the top echelons of leadership in some Western countries and spread to many of their information organs. There were also such centres of subversion as Radio Martí and Radio Liberty. Such practices must be strongly condemned. What was now required was a sharp turnaround in both the quality and content of information. It was essential that all press, radio and television, as well as other mass media, contribute to reinforcing positive trends in international life. They should foster détente, help remove the threat of war and encourage progress towards the reduction of all types of weapons, above all nuclear missiles. The world information order should also help to strengthen the climate of confidence among peoples and highlight the national, historical and spiritual values of other peoples as well as their contribution to world civilization. It was also very important to see to it that information work was conducted in a spirit of civility, culture and respect.

28. Fortunately, there were some good examples of how mutual relations should be conceived. He was referring first and foremost to the all-European process begun at Helsinki. At the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which had opened recently at Vienna, his country had advanced an important proposal for States participating in the Conference to meet at Moscow to examine the entire range of issues relating to humanitarian co-operation, including people-to-people contacts, information, culture and education.

29. The Soviet ideal was not the policy of strength but the strength of policy. That was the very essence of its new political thinking. His country therefore called for collective action based on the reasonable norms of international relations and co-operation.

30. Mr. N'GREGAI (Central African Republic), noting that technological progress in the area of communication had done much to bring people together, said that access to and the rapid transmission of information were one of the striking features of the present age. The right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas was a fundamental right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Access to information was of vital importance for citizens participating in political, economic and social decision-making, and the efforts made by the developing countries to elaborate a consistent national information policy should be supported effectively by the developed countries. The international community must also make an effort to promote mutual understanding, trust and the dissemination of objective information, which was an essential pre-condition for both economic and social and cultural progress.

31. Because they lacked adequate infrastructures, the developing countries faced considerable difficulties in making themselves heard. In view of the decisive role played by information in international relations, the imbalances in information flows must be ended. The establishment of a new order, which also formed an integral part of the restructuring of world economic relations, would make it possible to redress those imbalances. To that end, frank and productive co-operation should be established between developed and developing countries. The Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries had reaffirmed at Harare their complete support for the work of UNESCO in that area. His delegation, for



(Mr. N'Gregai, Central African Republic)

its part, paid tribute to UNESCO's efforts to clarify, define precisely and implement the concept of a new world information order and to encourage information organs to help find solutions to the serious problems facing mankind with regard to maintenance of international peace and security, the protection of human rights, the struggle against apartheid and the world economic crisis.

32. Since information was a factor in economic, social and cultural progress, the developing countries were working to develop information exchanges and to strengthen their infrastructures with a view to ending their dependence in that area. Those efforts would achieve results only if there was trust between the wealthy countries and the developing countries. Only by redressing existing imbalances could co-operation be promoted and the work and purposes of the United Nations be better understood.

33. Mr. FARTAS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) observed that it would be incorrect to say that there was currently a genuine information exchange between the countries of the South and the North. The only voice being heard was that of the developed countries, yet it could not be reasonably affirmed that their points of view were always objective and impartial.

34. It was therefore perfectly legitimate for the developing countries to seek to base the international flow of information on the principles and norms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the rules of international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for only thus would it be possible to reconcile freedom with responsibility and to transform difficult relations into cordial and constructive ones.

35. Information would simply lose its universal scope if it continued to be monopolized by the Western countries. Using it to serve imperialist plans to suppress peoples' aspirations simply to undermine its moral principles. Similarly, it lost all credibility if such plans formed part of a disinformation policy reflecting its originators' total disregard for the public they sought to manipulate and for the information organ used for that purpose.

36. The Washington Post had recently published a memorandum which the United States National Security Advisor, John Poindexter, admitted to having sent to the President of the United States and in which he suggested launching a disinformation campaign by disseminating reports of dubious authenticity in order to place Libyan leaders in a difficult position and provoke unrest in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. That scandal had aroused strong reactions among United States public opinion, press and political circles, as the many articles on the incident demonstrated. The campaign was a long-term undertaking conducted at the instigation of world zionism, which exerted great influence over the United States media, and motivated by the unwavering support which his country gave to national liberation movements and, in particular, the Palestinian people. In the face of such massive campaigns, the developing countries, which owned only a tiny fraction of the communications media, were completely helpless. As a result, they could not but distrust the motives of those who qualified the new order as "an evolving and continuous process".

37. Mr. IDRIS (Sudan) said that his country's aspiration to a new world information and communication order was based on several considerations. The first of these was political: many developing countries were increasingly exposed to the destabilizing effects of a one-way flow of information which impeded international efforts to put an end to the colonization and foreign occupation which had been imposed for several decades on the peoples of southern Africa and the Palestinian people. The resistance of those peoples was equated with terrorism by biased information media which criticized them for resorting to violence. At the same time, the policies of terror pursued by some States were carefully covered up.

38. A new world information and communication order would also give renewed impetus to efforts to restructure international economic relations, particularly since the existing order clearly favoured the countries of the North and foreign monopolies.

39. Lastly, there was a socio-cultural dimension: the one-way flow of information had transformed the countries of the South into passive consumers, and their value systems and cultures were being threatened.

40. The current order was characterized by the blatantly biased viewpoints of the countries of the North and relative indifference to the problems of the South, a virtually one-way flow of information; obvious contempt for the values and cultural heritage of third world countries, and a tendency to present Western society as the only viable model.

41. His delegation therefore welcomed the joint measures taken by the Committee on Information, UNESCO and the Department of Public Information. Various meetings would perhaps make it possible to iron out differences of opinion and make progress towards the establishment of a new world information and communication order. Sudan also welcomed efforts to increase transfers of modern communication technology to the developing countries and, thus, to balance the flow of information both qualitatively and quantitatively. Mention should also be made of the important projects carried out within the framework of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) and the training courses organized by the Department of Public Information for young third world journalists and information technicians, or activities aimed at enabling third world national news agencies, the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies and the Pan African News Agency to catch up on the news agencies of the industrialized countries.

42. It was also important to continue to call the attention of world public opinion to the crisis in Africa, where the combined effects of drought, desertification and the increasing foreign debt burden had impeded the development process. Greater attention should also be drawn to the struggle of the world's liberation movements, in particular that of the Palestinian people, the Namibian people and the people of South Africa.

43. His delegation was aware of the need to promote a better understanding of the efforts and ideals of the United Nations in all parts of the world and therefore advocated the strengthening of United Nations information centres.

(Mr. Idriss, Sudan)

44. Lastly, his country hoped that the efforts made by the Group of 77 to reach a consensus on questions relating to information would be successful now that there were more points of agreement.

45. Mrs. CARRASCO (Bolivia) said that her delegation supported the establishment of a new world information and communication order based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information, which would guarantee the diversity of sources of information and put an end to the dependent states of the developing countries in that field, and noted the extremely useful role being played by UNESCO to remedy that situation. The report of the Director-General of UNESCO (A/41/582) described the many activities carried out within the framework of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). The periodic report which was to be published on the state of communication in the world would be a very useful source of information for planners and decision-makers (see para. 10). Studies on the contribution of the media to enhancing mutual respect and international understanding had concentrated primarily on the role played by the media in informing and increasing the awareness of the general public concerning such questions as disarmament, the debt of the developing countries, apartheid and other major world problems. Studies on the international flow of information and the identification of the main obstacles to it were an important part of UNESCO's programme on communication.

46. The way to remedy existing imbalances was not to impose restrictions on the free flow of information but rather to diversify sources of information, enable all countries to acquire the necessary technology, strengthen their infrastructures, help them to train journalists and technicians and contribute generally to the strengthening of economic co-operation. The grouping together of news agencies and the establishment of the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies were excellent measures. The Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Harare had stressed the important role of that Pool in the struggle for the decolonization of information and the establishment of a new order.

47. While she was aware of the efforts made by the Department of Public Information to carry out its work as effectively as possible, particularly through the United Nations information centres, the importance of which her delegation had already stressed in its statement to the General Assembly, she wished to draw attention to two anomalies. She was surprised that the information centres at Washington D.C. and Moscow were run by nationals of the countries concerned. That was not the case with the Paris and London information centres. Since the main function of those centres was to represent the United Nation and inform public opinion about its work and objectives, it could be detrimental to have them run by the nationals of host countries, who might be influenced by national politics. The information centre at Washington, D.C., for example, had not kept its information activities up to the desired level. That centre also acted as liaison between the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations but, in the past five years, had provided no service in that regard. The Department of Public Information should investigate with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the possibility of appointing a director who was not

(Mrs. Carrasco, Bolivia)

a national of that country to run the Moscow information centre. The under-representation of developing countries in the Department of Public Information should also be remedied.

48. Lastly, the Department of Public Information should try to disseminate more information on the economic, social and development activities carried out throughout the United Nations system and thus draw attention to the importance of multilateralism.

49. Mr. MAKSOUD (Observer, League of Arab States) said that it was now more necessary than ever to establish a new world information and communication order because the imbalances of the present system were steadily increasing the lack of understanding between developed and developing countries. The League of Arab States attached great importance to the Committee's discussions on that question and to its own co-operation with the United Nations in that field.

50. The Department of Public Information contributed to efforts to overcome the shortcomings of the present order by disseminating, inter alia, very useful information on the rights of the Palestinian people and on Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories, where Arab journalists were constantly exposed to harrassment and acts of intimidation by the occupying authorities. Several magazines and newspapers had been banned recently and the editor of the magazine Al-Sha'b was currently threatened with expulsion. There did not seem to be any point at that stage in attempting to define the concept of the new order more precisely. Communication could be considered neutral but information must, by definition, be objective. On the other hand, objectivity did not mean taking a position midway between truth and falsehood or substituting analysis for information.

51. On the pretext of freedom of information, certain major Western news agencies indulged in analyses which were not always strictly accurate and thus gave a distorted picture of world problems. Considerable coverage was given to certain issues which were accorded an attention out of all proportion to their importance. For example, the slightest incident concerning Soviet Jews was emphasized, while human rights violations in the occupied Arab territories were hardly mentioned. Furthermore, the terms used were often inappropriate. Some Western information agencies were quick to describe as terrorists members of a liberation movement who did not find favour in their eyes. A seminar must therefore be organized to standardize the language used by the press.

52. Because of the position taken by the Western information media, the general public was unable to grasp the underlying causes of the many conflicts in the world. The role of the United Nations was therefore essential, for it could promote dialogue and consensus. Its information programmes, which helped to overcome existing imbalances, should be strengthened.

(Mr. Maksoud)

53. Unfortunately, the information media of the United States and many other Western countries did not give sufficient coverage to the activities of the United Nations, a situation which left the way clear for attempts to undermine the Organization and for the disinformation campaigns waged by such organizations as the Heritage Foundation. Since the Department of Public Information and the press organs of developing countries had only limited resources, attempts to diminish the influence of the United Nations very often succeeded. It would therefore be unwise to reduce further the resources allocated to the Department. On the contrary, its programmes, particularly those targeted at Western countries, should be stepped up in order to thwart schemes to diminish the influence of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.