

## 40/164. Questions relating to information

## A

*The General Assembly,*

Recalling its resolutions 3535 (XXX) of 17 December 1975, 31/139 of 16 December 1976, 33/115 A to C of 18 December 1978, 34/181 and 34/182 of 18 December 1979, 35/201 of 16 December 1980, 36/149 B of 16 December 1981, 37/94 B of 10 December 1982, 38/82 B of 15 December 1983 and 39/98 A of 14 December 1984, on questions relating to information,

Recalling article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,<sup>8</sup> which provides that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression and that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, and article 29, which stipulates that these rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations,

Recalling also articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>21</sup>

Recalling the relevant provisions of the Declarations of the Sixth and Seventh Conferences of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Havana from 3 to 9 September 1979<sup>22</sup> and at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983<sup>23</sup> as well as the Final Documents of the Conference of the Ministers of Information of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Jakarta from 26 to 30 January 1984,<sup>24</sup> and the relevant provisions of the Final Political Declaration adopted by the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Luanda from 4 to 7 September 1985,<sup>25</sup> in which the importance of the establishment of a new world information and communication order was stressed anew.

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation.

Recalling the Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racism, *Apartheid* and Incitement to War,<sup>26</sup> adopted on 28 November 1978 by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as well as the resolutions on information and mass communications adopted by the General Conference at its nineteenth, twentieth, twenty-first, twenty-second and twenty-third sessions,

Recalling the relevant provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975, and those of the Concluding Document of the meeting of representatives of the participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, held at Madrid from 11 November 1980 to 9 September 1983.

Recalling also the relevant provisions of the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace,<sup>27</sup>

Conscious of the need for all countries, the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned, to collaborate in the establishment of a new world information and communication order based, *inter alia*, on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information, guaranteeing diversity of sources of information and free access to information, and, in particular, the urgent need to change the dependent status of the developing countries in the field of information and communication, as the principle of sovereign equality among nations extends also to this field, and intended also to strengthen peace and international understanding, enabling all persons to participate effectively in political, economic, social and cultural life and promoting understanding and friendship among all nations and human rights,

Noting the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to contribute to the clarification, elaboration and application of the concept of a new world information and communication order and recalling resolutions 4/19 of 27 October 1980,<sup>28</sup> 3.1 of 25 November 1983<sup>29</sup> and 3.1 of 8 November 1985<sup>30</sup> adopted by consensus by its General Conference,

Reaffirming that the establishment of a new world information and communication order is linked to the new international economic order and is an integral part of the international development process, and that public information plays the important role in promoting understanding of and support for international co-operation for development,

Emphasizing the role that public information plays in promoting support for universal disarmament and in increasing awareness of the relationship between disarmament and development among as broad a public as possible,

Reaffirming the primary role which the General Assembly is to play in elaborating, co-ordinating and harmonizing United Nations policies and activities in the field of information, and recognizing the central and important role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the field of information and communication, and that the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned should give that organization adequate support and assistance in the field of information and communication,

Recognizing the importance of the co-ordination and co-operation between the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its International Programme for the Development of Communication in the promotion of the establishment of a new world information and communication order,

Fully aware and cognizant of the important contribution which the mass media world-wide can make in enhancing and strengthening peace, deepening international understanding, promoting justice, equality, national independence, development, the exercise of human rights and the establishment of a new world information and communication order,

<sup>21</sup> See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>22</sup> See A/34/542, annex, sect. I, paras. 280-299.

<sup>23</sup> See A/38/132-S/15675 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. I, para. 173.

<sup>24</sup> A/39/139-S/16430, annex.

<sup>25</sup> See A/40/854-S/17610 and Corr.1, annex I, sect. XXXIV.

<sup>26</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Twentieth Session*, vol. 1, *Resolutions*, pp. 100-104.

<sup>27</sup> Resolution 33/73.

<sup>28</sup> See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Twenty-first Session*, vol. 1, *Resolutions*, sect. III.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, *Twenty-second Session*, vol. 1, *Resolutions*, sect. II.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, *Twenty-third Session*, vol. 1, *Resolutions*, sect. III.

*Noting with satisfaction* that, during the observance of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, the lasting values of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations were reconfirmed as a reflection of the high hopes which peoples of the world continue to repose in the United Nations as the most appropriate framework for multilateral co-operation and the pursuit of shared objectives,

*Recalling with satisfaction* the resolution adopted by the General Assembly, acting as United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year,<sup>31</sup>

*Emphasizing* its full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication, which constitutes an important contribution in the development of the infrastructures of communication in the developing countries,

*Conscious* that the transfer of technology in the field of information and communication to developing countries is vital for the acceleration of efforts towards the establishment of a new world information and communication order based on justice, freedom and equity,

*Expressing its satisfaction* with the successful co-ordination and co-operation displayed by the Department of Public Information with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with news agencies of other developing and developed countries, and convinced that such efforts have contributed significantly to progress towards a new world information and communication order,

*Taking note* of the implementation by the Department of Public Information of those parts relevant to public information of the Paris Declaration on Namibia and the Programme of Action on Namibia,<sup>32</sup> as well as those of the Declaration and the Programme of Action contained in the Final Document adopted by the United Nations Council for Namibia at its extraordinary plenary meetings, held at Vienna from 3 to 7 June 1985,<sup>33</sup> in order to develop and further strengthen the dissemination of information regarding the struggle for independence of the people of Namibia, with a view to reaching the broadest possible public by means of more systematic and better co-ordinated information,

*Taking note also* of the implementation by the Department of Public Information of those parts of the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights<sup>34</sup> relevant to information, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/49 C of 11 December 1984,

*Expressing its satisfaction* with the work of the Committee on Information as reflected in its report,<sup>35</sup>

*Taking note with satisfaction* of the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information,<sup>36</sup>

*Taking note with satisfaction* of the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,<sup>37</sup>

1. *Approves* the report of the Committee on Information and the recommendations contained in paragraph 139 of that report and annexed to the present resolution, as adopted, and affirms the requests and appeals reproduced therein as well as the provisions of General Assembly resolution 39/98 A and urges their full implementation;

2. *Reaffirms* the mandate given to the Committee on Information by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/182;

3. *Requests* the Committee on Information, keeping in mind its mandate, the essential tasks of which are to continue to examine the policies and activities of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, and to continue to promote the establishment of a new, more just and effective world information and communication order, to continue to seek the co-operation and active participation of all organizations of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Telecommunication Union, while taking all possible steps to avoid any overlapping of activities on this subject;

4. *Reaffirms* its strong support for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, its Constitution and the ideals reflected therein, its activities and for its efforts to further enhance its capabilities with a view to promoting the establishment of a new world information and communication order;

5. *Reiterates its appeal* to Member States, to the information and communication media, both public and private, as well as to non-governmental organizations, to disseminate more widely objective and better balanced information about the activities of the United Nations and, *inter alia*, about the efforts of the developing countries towards their economic, social and cultural progress and about the efforts of the international community to achieve international social justice and economic development, international peace and security, the promotion of disarmament and the progressive elimination of international inequities and tensions; and the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the right of peoples to self-determination; such dissemination being aimed at achieving a more comprehensive and realistic image of the activities and potential of the United Nations system in all its purposes and endeavours;

6. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to continue to give, as a matter of high priority, its full support in promoting and publicizing the noble goals and accomplishments of the United Nations, as the most appropriate forum for multilateral co-operation and for pooling efforts of States to contribute to the quest for a climate of mutual trust, political dialogue and negotiated solutions to the outstanding problems;

7. *Urges* the Department of Public Information to give the widest possible dissemination of information pertaining to the acute world economic problems, particularly to the critical economic situation in Africa, the severe economic difficulties of the least developed countries and the external debt of developing countries, as well as to the adverse effect of the international economic environment on these countries, taking into account the views expressed during the fortieth session on these issues;

8. *Urges* the Department of Public Information to strengthen its co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies and, in particular, to ensure that its daily dispatches are received by the United Nations Office at Geneva and the United Nations Headquarters in New York;

9. *Urges* the Department of Public Information to take all necessary measures to ensure the dissemination of appropriate information on the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth;

<sup>31</sup> Resolution 40/14.

<sup>32</sup> See *Report of the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence*, Paris, 25-29 April 1983 (A/CONF.120/13), part three.

<sup>33</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 24 (A/40/24)*, para. 513.

<sup>34</sup> *Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine*, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.1.21), chap. I, sect. B.

<sup>35</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/40/21)*.

<sup>36</sup> A/40/617.

<sup>37</sup> A/40/667, annex.

10. *Urges* the Department of Public Information to adequately disseminate in its programmes and information activities the positive results of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace,<sup>38</sup> aimed at the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of the role of women world-wide;

11. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue its follow-up programmes in further implementation of those parts relevant to public information of the Paris Declaration on Namibia and the Programme of Action on Namibia,<sup>32</sup> as well as of the Declaration and Programme of Action contained in the Final Document adopted by the United Nations Council for Namibia,<sup>33</sup> and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986;

12. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to cover adequately policies and practices which violate the principles of international law relative to belligerent occupation, in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,<sup>7</sup> wherever they occur, especially those policies and practices which frustrate the attainment and exercise of the inalienable and national legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986;

13. *Urges* the Department of Public Information and the mass media world-wide, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 34/182 and 35/201, to intensify their activities of dissemination of information with regard to the policies and practices of *apartheid*, taking due account of recent measures and official censorship imposed upon the local and international media related to all aspects of this issue;

14. *Reiterates* the recommendation contained in its resolution 35/201 that additional resources for the Department of Public Information should be commensurate, as appropriate, with the increase in the activities of the United Nations which the Department covers for the purpose of public information, and that the Secretary-General should provide such resources to the Department to this end where needed;

15. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to contribute more effectively, through its training programmes, to the development of human, managerial and technical resources of the mass media from developing countries;

16. *Reaffirms* the importance of the rapidly increasing role of the United Nations public information programmes in fostering public understanding and support of United Nations activities and requests the Department of Public Information to consider the recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on publications policy and practice in the United Nations system<sup>39</sup> and to report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information, at its substantive session in 1986, on the implementation of all the recommendations contained in the Committee's report and annexed to the present resolution;

18. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-first session on the imple-

mentation of the present resolution and, in particular, on the implementation of all the recommendations contained in the annex to the present resolution;

19. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring of the Radio and Visual Services Division of the Department of Public Information,<sup>40</sup> and requests that additional information be submitted to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986;

20. *Requests* the Committee on Information to report to the General Assembly at its forty-first session;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-first session the item entitled "Questions relating to information".

118th plenary meeting  
16 December 1985

#### ANNEX

##### Recommendations of the Committee on Information

1. The recommendations of the Committee on Information approved by the General Assembly in resolution 39/98 A of 14 December 1984, as well as all the provisions of the resolution, should be reiterated, taking into account the views expressed by delegations at the 100th plenary meeting of the thirty-ninth session of the Assembly on 14 December 1984. Those recommendations should be implemented in full, and the Secretary-General should be requested to report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on measures taken for the implementation of those recommendations and provisions pending implementation.

2. The mandate of the Committee on Information, as set forth in General Assembly resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979 and reaffirmed in Assembly resolutions 35/201 of 16 December 1980, 36/149 B of 16 December 1981, 37/94 B of 10 December 1982, 38/82 B of 15 December 1983 and 39/98 A of 14 December 1984, should be renewed.

##### PROMOTION OF 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

3. All countries, the United Nations system as a whole, and all others concerned, should collaborate in the establishment of a new world information and communication order based, *inter alia*, on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information, guaranteeing diversity of sources of information and free access to information and, in particular, the urgent need to change the dependent status of the developing countries in the field of information and communication, as the principle of sovereign equality among nations extends also to this field, and intended also to strengthen peace and international understanding, enabling all persons to participate effectively in political, economic, social and cultural life and promoting understanding and friendship among all nations and human rights.

4. The ongoing efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to contribute to the clarification, elaboration and application of the concept of a new world information and communication order should be noted. In this regard, resolutions 4/19 of 27 October 1980<sup>28</sup> and 3.1 of 25 November 1983,<sup>29</sup> which the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization adopted by consensus, should be recalled.

5. Under the current international climate of political conflicts and economic disorders, the Committee on Information, fully aware and cognizant of the important contribution which the mass media world-wide can make in enhancing and strengthening peace, deepening international understanding, promoting justice, equality, national independence, development, the exercise of human rights and the establishment of a new world information and communication order, recommends that the General Assembly address appeals to the following:

(a) The international media, in order to obtain their support for the efforts of the international community towards global development and, in

<sup>38</sup> See *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10).

<sup>39</sup> A/39/239.

<sup>40</sup> A/40/841.

particular, for the efforts of the developing countries to achieve economic, social and cultural progress;

(b) The United Nations system as a whole to co-operate in a concerted manner, through its information services, in promoting the development activities of the United Nations and, in particular, the improvement of the conditions of the lives of the peoples of the developing countries.

Such appeals should be aimed at achieving a more comprehensive and realistic image of the activities and potential of the United Nations system in all its endeavours, in accordance with the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

6. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,<sup>8</sup> which provides that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression and that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, and article 29, which stipulates that these rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, should be recalled.

7. Aware of the existence of structural imbalance in the international distribution of news affecting the two-way flow of news, the Committee on Information recommends that urgent attention should be given to the elimination of existing inequalities in and all other obstacles to the free flow and wider and better balanced dissemination of information, ideas and knowledge by, *inter alia*, diversifying the sources of information as a step towards free and more balanced information and the promotion of the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

8. The Committee on Information recommends that the need be stressed to ensure and promote the access of the developing countries to communication technology, including communication satellites, modern electronic information systems, informatics and other advanced information and communication facilities with a view to improving their own information and communication systems corresponding to the specific conditions prevailing in each country.

9. The Committee on Information, while expressing satisfaction with the successful co-ordination and co-operation displayed by the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with regional news agencies of developing countries, recommends that the Department of Public Information continue to strengthen this co-operation as it constitutes a concrete step towards a more just and equitable world flow of information, thus contributing to the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

10. The Department of Public Information should be urged to monitor, as appropriate, important meetings of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as of regional intergovernmental organizations devoted to information and communication questions, in particular the fourth Conference of the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies to be held at Havana in 1986.

11. With regard to its co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies as well as with the regional news agencies in developing countries, the Department of Public Information should co-operate, as appropriate, with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in assisting that organization, within existing resources, in the following activities:

(a) Preparation and implementation of a plan of integrated communication network and regional data and communication centres;

(b) Provision of facilities for meetings on data and communication exchange of the public information bodies of the non-aligned countries.

12. The United Nations system as a whole, as well as the developed countries, should be urged to co-operate in a concerted manner with the developing countries towards strengthening the information and communication infrastructures of the latter countries, in accordance with the priorities attached to such areas by the developing countries, with a view to enabling them to develop their own information and communication policies freely and independently and in the light of their history, social values and cultural traditions. In this regard, full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication, which constitutes an important step in the development of these infrastructures, should always be emphasized.

13. The United Nations system should constantly promote the creation of a climate of confidence in relations among States, as a means of easing tension and facilitating the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

14. Reaffirming the primary role that the General Assembly is to play in elaborating, co-ordinating and harmonizing United Nations policies and

activities in the field of information and recognizing the central and important role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the field of information and communication, the Committee on Information recommends that the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned should be urged to give that organization adequate support and assistance in the field of information and communication. The Department of Public Information, in particular, should co-operate more regularly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, especially at the working level, with a view to maximizing the contributions of the Department to the efforts of that organization in promoting the establishment of a new world information and communication order and to disseminating as widely as possible information on the activities of that organization in this respect.

15. The consolidated study contained in the report of the Secretary-General<sup>41</sup> on the contributions, effects and levels of co-ordination between the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, its International Programme for the Development of Communication and the International Telecommunication Union in support of the development of information and communication infrastructures in the developing countries should be noted.

16. Recalling its recommendation, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 39/98 A, the Committee on Information recommends that the Secretary-General should be requested to expedite the convening, jointly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, of a Round Table on a New World Information and Communication Order.

17. The United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, should aim at providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries, within existing resources, with regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to actions already adopted within the United Nations system, including, in particular:

(a) Assistance to developing countries in training journalists and technical personnel and in setting up appropriate educational institutions and research facilities;

(b) Granting of favourable conditions to provide access to developing countries to such communication technology as is requisite for the establishment of a national information and communication system and corresponding to the specific situation of the country concerned;

(c) Creation of conditions that will gradually enable the developing countries to produce the communication technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, specifically for radio and television broadcasting, by using their own resources;

(d) Assistance in establishing telecommunication links at subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries, free from conditions of any kind.

18. All the information activities of the Department of Public Information should be guided by and carried out in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the aspiration for a new world information and communication order, as well as conform to the consensus reached among States in resolutions 4/19, 4/21 and 4/22 of 27 October 1980,<sup>28</sup> adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and 3.1 of 25 November 1983<sup>29</sup> adopted by the General Conference on Major Programme III.

19. The Secretary-General should be requested to ensure that the activities of the Department of Public Information, as the focal point of the public information tasks of the United Nations, are strengthened, keeping in view the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and along the lines established in the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly and the recommendations of the Committee on Information, so as to ensure a more coherent coverage of and a better knowledge about the United Nations and its work, especially in its priority areas, such as those stated in section III, paragraph 1, of Assembly resolution 35/201, including international peace and security, disarmament, peace-keeping and peace-making operations, decolonization, the promotion of human rights, the struggle against *apartheid* and racial discrimination, economic, social and development issues, the integration of women in the struggle for peace and development, the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order, the work of the United Nations Council for Namibia and programmes on women and youth.

20. The relevant provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975, and those of the Concluding Document of the meeting of representatives of the participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in

<sup>41</sup> A/AC.198/96.

Europe, held at Madrid from 11 November 1980 to 9 September 1983, should be recalled.

21. The Final Documents of the Conference of Ministers of Information of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Jakarta from 26 to 30 January 1984,<sup>42</sup> should be recalled.

22. The Department of Public Information should be requested to continue its co-operation with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries as well as with intergovernmental organizations and regional organizations with a view to promoting a new world information and communication order.

23. The Conference of Ministers of Information of States members of the Organization of African Unity, held at Addis Ababa in March 1985, which expressed its conviction of the importance of a new world information and communication order, should be noted.

24. In the light of the grave economic situation prevailing in Africa, the Secretary-General should be requested to ensure that the Department of Public Information does its utmost in bringing to the attention of the international community the real dimensions of the plight of the African people and the tremendous efforts of the African countries, with a view to increasing its contribution towards alleviating this human tragedy.

25. The relevant resolution on the question relating to information of the Fourth Islamic Summit Conference, held at Casablanca from 16 to 19 January 1984,<sup>42</sup> should be recalled.

CONTINUATION OF EXAMINATION OF UNITED NATIONS PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES IN THE LIGHT OF THE EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, PARTICULARLY DURING THE PAST TWO DECADES, AND OF THE IMPERATIVES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER AND OF A NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER

26. In connection with the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, the Department of Public Information should be urged to give appropriate support to the Preparatory Committee for the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations in promoting and publicizing the noble goals and accomplishments of the United Nations as a major forum for pooling efforts of States to contribute to the solution of vital world problems.

27. The Committee on Information again stresses that the Department of Public Information should maintain editorial independence and accuracy in all material produced by the Department and should promote, to the greatest extent possible, an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world. The Department should ensure that its output contains objective and equitable information about issues before the Organization, reflecting divergent opinions where they occur.

28. The Department of Public Information should continue to ensure that the daily dispatches of the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies that it receives are appropriately utilized in the performance of the public information tasks of the United Nations:

(a) With a view to further promotion and development of functional and mutually beneficial co-operation between the Department and the Pool, the existing arrangements in the Department for the conduct of this co-operation should be established on a more regular basis;

(b) In view of the successful joint coverage by the Pool and the Department of important conferences and other events within the United Nations system, this practice should be continued and further strengthened;

(c) The Department should consider the possibility of utilizing the dispatches received from the Pool to establish a data base on the information and communication facilities in the non-aligned countries.

29. In connection with its annual training programme for journalists and broadcasters from developing countries, the Department of Public Information should continue to allocate the last week of the programme for a visit by them to one of the developing countries that expresses readiness to receive them for the purpose of acquainting themselves with the ways in which information on the United Nations is received and utilized.

30. The Secretary-General should be requested once again to make available to the Committee on Information, as soon as possible, a comprehensive report on the outcome of the activities of the International Telecommunication Union with regard to the World Communications Year.

31. The exchange of information between the Committee on Information and the Commission on Transnational Corporations on matters pertaining to the mandate of the Committee should again be encouraged.

32. The assessment contained in the report of the Secretary-General relating to the acquisition by the United Nations of its own communications satellite<sup>43</sup> in conformity with recommendation 36 made by the Committee on Information to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session<sup>44</sup> should be noted, and it would be appropriate to re-examine the question of the acquisition of such a satellite should circumstances permit.

33. The attention of the pertinent organs of the General Assembly and of the United Nations system as a whole should be drawn to the findings of the International Telecommunication Union set forth in its report,<sup>45</sup> especially as concerns the problem of the geostationary orbit reflected, *inter alia*, in paragraphs 33 and 49 of that report, taking into account the needs of the developing countries.

34. The Committee on Information recommends the rejection of the use of the mass media, especially radio broadcasting, to disseminate false or distorted reports as an instrument of hostile propaganda against the sovereignty of other States. In this regard, it stresses that the media should contribute to the fostering of peace, mutual respect, non-interference and self-determination.

35. With regard to the improvement of communication infrastructures, the Committee on Information draws attention to the success attained by the ARABSAT, BRASILSAT, INSAT-1B, MORELOS and PALAPA satellite systems, designed to promote national and regional integration. In this connection, it endorses the execution of satellite projects such as CONDOR by the Andean group of countries. The United Nations and the specialized agencies, in particular those in the financial sector, should support such activities and initiatives.

36. The Department of Public Information should co-operate closely with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies to organize a workshop, within existing resources, in 1985 for the familiarization of news agencies of developing countries with modern technology of relevance to news agencies and for the standardization of teaching methods and syllabuses and to produce training manuals in various languages for the training centres of the Pool, and should report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on progress made to this effect.

37. In order to enhance awareness and understanding of the lofty objectives of the United Nations, the Department of Public Information should endeavour to promote teaching in the educational institutions of Member States about the structure, principles and aims of the Organization in conformity with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. In order to implement this recommendation, the Department should continue to organize, on a yearly basis, a fellowship programme for educators.

38. The Department of Public Information should be requested, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, to continue to cover adequately the Israeli policies and practices which violate and affect the human rights of the populations in Arab territories occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, especially those policies and practices which impede the attainment and exercise of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986.

39. The Secretary-General should be requested once again to maintain the functions of the Middle East/Arabic Unit as the producer of Arabic television and radio programmes, to strengthen and expand this unit to enable it to function in an effective manner and to report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on the measures taken in implementation of this recommendation.

40. In view of the importance of United Nations broadcasting for the European region, further steps should be taken to maintain and enhance the functions of the European Unit in the Radio Service, within existing resources.

41. Taking into account the needs of numerous radio producers and journalists who use French as a working language, and the role of the "blue notes" in the preparation of radio programmes of the United Nations, the Committee on Information requests the Secretary-General to instruct the Radio and Visual Services Division of the Department of Public Information to produce a daily edition, in French, of the messages concerning the activities of the United Nations.

<sup>42</sup> A/39/131-S/16414 and Corr.1, annex II, resolution 15/4-P(1S).

<sup>43</sup> A/AC.198/95.

<sup>44</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/37/21 and Corr.1), sect. IV.*

<sup>45</sup> See A/AC.198/73

42. The Department of Public Information should be requested anew to use the official languages of the General Assembly adequately in its documents and audio-visual documentation and to arrange accordingly for an appropriate number of staff in order better to inform the public about the activities of the United Nations. It should also make available to the French Language Production Section of the Press and Publications Division of the Department, within existing resources, the means that will allow it consistently to distribute press releases in sufficient quantity to satisfy the needs of the numerous journalists and delegations that use French as a working language.

43. United Nations information centres should continue to assist press and information media in their respective countries in accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly and, *inter alia*, promote the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

44. While the co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Development Programme in the field should be promoted to the maximum extent, it is also important to bear in mind the intrinsic functions of the United Nations information centres as distinct from those of the United Nations development activities. The information centres should redouble their efforts to publicize the activities and achievements of operational activities for development, including those of the United Nations Development Programme, taking into account the priorities determined by the General Assembly.

45. The report of the Secretary-General concerning measures to improve the effectiveness of United Nations information centres<sup>46</sup> should be further noted and the Secretary-General should be encouraged to implement the proposals made by him therein, within existing resources.

46. The United Nations information centres should intensify direct and systematic communication exchange with local information and educational communities in a mutually beneficial way, in accordance with the priorities of the General Assembly and taking into account the areas of particular interest to host countries.

47. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/98 A, by which the Assembly acceded to the request of the Government of Benin for the opening of a United Nations information centre at Cotonou, the Secretary-General should be requested to continue negotiations with the authorities in Benin for the rapid opening of the centre, within existing resources, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986.

48. Taking into account the request of the Government of Poland for the opening of a United Nations information centre at Warsaw, the Secretary-General should be requested to continue to take appropriate steps for the establishment of the centre, within existing resources, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986.

49. The Department of Public Information should disseminate information concerning the decisions of the United Nations dealing with acts of terrorism in all its forms. In this regard, all the relevant United Nations resolutions and the statement made by the Secretary-General at San Francisco on 26 June 1985 should be recalled.

50. The Department of Public Information should focus on and give wider coverage to the economic, social and development activities of the United Nations system aimed at achieving a more comprehensive image of the activities and potential of the system, taking into account the priorities set by the General Assembly, particularly in the light of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations.

51. Note should be taken of the assessment contained in the report of the Secretary-General of the experimental daily short-wave radio broadcasts from Headquarters,<sup>47</sup> pending the submission to the Committee on Information of the final report on the results of the experiment.

52. The Secretary-General should continue his efforts to develop a system for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the activities of the Department of Public Information, particularly in the priority areas determined by the General Assembly.

53. Future reports of the Department of Public Information to the Committee on Information, in particular on new programmes or on the expansion of existing programmes, should contain:

(a) More adequate information on the output of the Department in respect of each topic included in its work programme, which forms the basis of its programme budget.

(b) The costs of the activities undertaken in respect of each topic;

(c) More adequate information on target audiences, end-use of the Department's products and analysis of feedback data received by the Department;

(d) The Department's evaluation of the effectiveness of its different programmes and activities;

(e) A statement detailing the priority level that the Secretary-General has attached to current or future activities of the Department in documents dealing with such activities.

54. The Department of Public Information should improve, within existing resources, its data-collection procedures with regard to the actual use made by disseminators of materials distributed by the Department and its information centres and submit a report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on progress made in this area.

55. The steps taken by the Department of Public Information in redressing the imbalance in its staff should be noted. The Department should continue to intensify its efforts to that end and the Secretary-General should be requested to take urgent steps to increase the representation of underrepresented developing countries and of other underrepresented groups of countries, especially at the senior levels, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and to submit a report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986.

56. Member States should be called upon once again to make voluntary contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Economic and Social Information.

57. The assessment contained in the report of the Secretary-General<sup>48</sup> on the present system of charging Member States and the media for video tapes, audio tapes and news photographs of important United Nations events should be noted, and the Department of Public Information should report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on that subject with a view to reducing appropriately the final cost of these materials and spreading overtime charges legitimately incurred in an equitable way so as to enable the media in the Member States, particularly in the developing countries, to give wider publicity to the aims and activities of the United Nations.

58. The interim report of the Secretary-General entitled "The Department of Public Information as the Focal Point for the Formulation and Implementation of Information Activities of the United Nations"<sup>49</sup> should be noted and the Secretary-General should be requested to submit his final report in the light of the ongoing consultations within the Secretariat on the role of the Department with respect to all information activities of the United Nations. The Committee on Information once again recommends that the proliferation of information units in the Secretariat independent of the Department should be discouraged.

59. The Committee on Information takes note of the report on the review of the distribution of taped radio programmes produced by the Department of Public Information in New York<sup>50</sup> and requests the Department to take steps to improve their distribution and to report to the Committee at its substantive session in 1986 on the implementation of the recommendations contained in that report.

60. The operations of the Non-Governmental Liaison Services (Geneva and New York) as voluntarily funded inter-agency projects reaching specific target audiences in the industrialized countries on international development issues should be continued on a stable financial basis through United Nations participation in these services. As with *Development Forum*, it is essential that United Nations financial participation, from the regular budget, should be ensured in the next biennium. Furthermore, the Secretary-General should be requested to urge all specialized agencies to make long-term contributions to the financing of these services, thereby stressing their inter-agency character.

61. The Joint United Nations Information Committee, as the essential instrument for inter-agency co-ordination and co-operation in the field of public information, should be further strengthened and given more responsibility for the public information activities of the entire United Nations system.

62. The quality, usefulness and coverage of the daily press release and the weekly news summary issued by the Department of Public Information in all working languages should be further enhanced and improved in view of the important public information tasks that they can perform. Services provided at the Press Section of the Department both for the media and the delegations should be improved. The Department should continue to co-operate closely with and provide assistance to the United Nations Correspondents Association.

<sup>46</sup> A/AC.198/75

<sup>47</sup> A/AC.198/88.

<sup>48</sup> A/AC.198/87.

<sup>49</sup> A/AC.198/82

<sup>50</sup> A/AC.198/99

63. The Department of Public Information should improve, within existing resources, the timely distribution of its materials to subscribers and United Nations information centres, particularly the *UN Chronicle*, in all languages, a major source of information on the United Nations to its recipients.

64. The report on the programme and activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee should be noted, particularly in regard to *Development Forum* as the only inter-agency publication of the United Nations system that concentrates on development issues, and the Secretary-General should, while continuing his efforts to secure a sound and independent basis for the periodical, make such arrangements as necessary, through the regular budget, to ensure its continued publication. The resources of the United Nations system should be pooled in support of *Development Forum* and *Development Business* and any attempt in the United Nations system to duplicate the functions performed by these publications should be avoided. All specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system should be urged to contribute to the financing of these system-wide publications, thereby recognizing their inter-agency character.

65. The Secretary-General should continue to ensure that *Development Forum* retains its editorial policy of intellectual independence, thus enabling this publication to continue to serve as a world-wide forum in which diverse opinions on issues related to economic and social development can be freely expressed.

66. The Secretary-General should be encouraged to continue and intensify his efforts to explore all possibilities of securing the adequate resources for the continuation of the *World Newspaper Supplement* project.

67. The World Disarmament Campaign should give full consideration to the role of the mass media as the most effective way to promote in world public opinion a climate of understanding, confidence and co-operation conducive to peace and disarmament, the enhancement of human rights and development. Within the World Disarmament Campaign and Disarmament Week, the Department of Public Information should fulfil the role assigned to it by the General Assembly by utilizing its expertise and resources in public information to ensure its maximum effectiveness.

68. The Department of Public Information should be requested to implement fully, within existing resources, the provisions of General Assembly resolution 38/82 B relating to the work programme of the Caribbean Unit and the Secretary-General should be requested to report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on the measures taken in implementation of this recommendation.

69. The conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples at its extraordinary session, held at Tunis from 13 to 17 May 1985 to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration,<sup>51</sup> should be noted. In this regard, the Secretary-General should be requested to intensify his efforts, within existing resources, in order to alert world public opinion against the illegal occupation of Namibia and the policies of *apartheid* of the régime of South Africa and to continue to disseminate as widely as possible information relating to the struggle of the oppressed peoples of South Africa and Namibia.

70. In view of the concerns expressed by several delegations regarding the possible implications on productivity and effectiveness of the proposed restructuring of the Radio and Visual Services Division and taking into account the necessity of strengthening the Professional staff, the Committee on Information recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to submit a written report on the subject to the General Assembly at its fortieth session. Pending submission of the report and a decision thereon, action on the proposed restructuring should be postponed.

## B

### *The General Assembly.*

Recalling its resolutions 34/181 and 34/182 of 18 December 1979, 35/201 of 16 December 1980, 36/149 A of 16 December 1981, 37/94 A and B of 10 December 1982, 38/82 A of 15 December 1983 and 39/98 A and B of 14 December 1984,

Taking note of the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to contribute to the clarification, elaboration and application of

the concept of a new world information and communication order,

Recalling the relevant provisions of the Declarations of the Sixth and Seventh Conferences of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Havana from 3 to 9 September 1979<sup>22</sup> and at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983<sup>23</sup> as well as the Final Documents of the Conference of the Ministers of Information of Non-Aligned Countries held at Jakarta from 26 to 30 January 1984,<sup>24</sup> and the relevant provisions of the Final Political Declaration of the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Luanda from 4 to 7 September 1985,<sup>25</sup> in which the importance of the establishment of a new world information and communication order was stressed anew,

Recalling the relevant resolutions adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its eighteenth ordinary session, held at Nairobi from 24 to 27 June 1981,<sup>52</sup> the Conference of Ministers of Information of States members of the Organization of African Unity at its third ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa in March 1985 and at its first extraordinary session, held at Cairo in November 1985, especially those encouraging regional co-operation in the field of information and promoting the establishment of a new world information and communication order,

Recalling article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,<sup>8</sup> which provides that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression and that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, and article 29, which stipulates that these rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations,

Recalling the relevant provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975, and those of the Concluding Document of the meeting of representatives of the participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, held at Madrid from 11 November 1980 to 9 September 1983,

Recalling resolution 4/21 of 27 October 1980,<sup>28</sup> adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its twenty-first session, and resolution 2/03 of 3 December 1982,<sup>53</sup> adopted by the General Conference at its fourth extraordinary session,

Recalling also resolutions 4/19 of 27 October 1980,<sup>28</sup> 3.1 of 25 November 1983<sup>29</sup> and 3.1 of 8 November 1985<sup>30</sup> adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and, in this context, expressing anew the wish that that organization should contribute to the clarification, elaboration and application of the concept of a new world information and communication order,

Recalling the Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racism, *Apartheid* and Incitement to War,<sup>26</sup> adopted on 28 November 1978 by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,

Recalling also the relevant provisions of the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace,<sup>27</sup>

<sup>51</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly. Fortieth Session. Supplement No. 23 (A/40/23)*, chap. II, annex I

<sup>52</sup> See A/36/534, annex II.

<sup>53</sup> See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference. Fourth Extraordinary Session*, vol. I and corrigendum, Resolutions, sect. II.

Considering that international co-operation in the field of communication development should take place on the basis of equality, justice, mutual advantage and the principles of international law so as to remedy existing imbalances by strengthening and intensifying the development of human and material resources, communication networks and infrastructures, particularly in developing countries, and thus encourage a wider and better balanced dissemination of information,

Emphasizing its full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which constitutes an essential instrument for the development of human and material resources and communication infrastructures in the developing countries and the establishment of a new world information and communication order,

Conscious that diverse solutions to information and communication problems are required because political, economic, cultural and social problems differ from one country to another,

Recognizing the central role of, and the progress accomplished by, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the field of information and communication within its mandate, and that the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned should give that organization adequate support and assistance in the field of information and communication,

1. Takes note with satisfaction of the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the implementation of the International Programme for the Development of Communication, on the activities relating to the establishment of a new world information and communication order and on the social, economic and cultural impact of the new communication technologies;<sup>37</sup>

2. Appeals to the mass media world-wide to explore all possible avenues for more equitable international co-operation in the field of information and communication and to respond in a positive way to the exceptional opportunities now available to them in the field of international relations, in order to open new vistas of progress for the world community;

3. Underlines the importance of efforts made to implement the principles set forth in the Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racism, *Apartheid* and Incitement to War;<sup>26</sup>

4. Reiterates its appeal to all Member States and all organizations of the United Nations system, international, governmental and non-governmental organizations and professional organizations in the field of communication to exert every effort to make better known through all means at their disposal the issues underlying the need for the development of communication capacities in developing countries as a step towards the establishment of a new world information and communication order;

5. Considers that the International Programme for the Development of Communication represents a significant step towards the development of conditions for the establishment of a new world information and communication order, and welcomes the decisions adopted by the Intergovernmental Council of the Programme at its fifth and sixth sessions, held in Paris in 1984 and 1985;

6. Notes with satisfaction the co-operation existing between the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and all other organizations of the United Nations system, particularly

the International Telecommunication Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Universal Postal Union, whose projects have been approved by the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication;

7. Expresses its appreciation to all Member States that have made or pledged a contribution towards the implementation of the International Programme for the Development of Communication;

8. Reiterates its requests to Member States and organizations and bodies of the United Nations system as well as other international governmental and non-governmental organizations and concerned public and private enterprises to respond to the appeals of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to make an increased contribution to the International Programme for the Development of Communication by making greater financial resources available, as well as more training resources, equipment, technologies and staff;

9. Appeals to Member States to respond positively and effectively to resolution 4/22 of 27 October 1980<sup>28</sup> concerning the reduction of telecommunication tariffs for news exchanges, adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and to take the necessary steps to implement that resolution;

10. Notes with satisfaction that a second Round Table on a New World Information and Communication Order will be organized jointly by the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at Copenhagen in April 1986;

11. Reaffirms its strong support for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, its Constitution, the ideals reflected in it, its activities and for its efforts to further enhance its capabilities with a view to promoting the establishment of a new world information and communication order;

12. Encourages the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to continue the chronological survey of the documents dealing with the establishment of a new world information and communication order and the analysis of the evolution of this concept, and to keep the Committee informed on developments in this area;

13. Encourages the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to continue and intensify its studies, programmes and activities with a view to identifying new technological trends in information, communication, telematics and informatics and assess their socio-economic and cultural impact on the development of peoples, and in this context requests it to provide, whenever necessary, periodic studies relevant to these topics;

14. Invites the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to continue his efforts in the information and communication field and to submit to the General Assembly, at its forty-first session, a detailed report on the implementation of the International Programme for the Development of Communication and the activities relating to the establishment of a new world information and communication order as well as on the social, economic and cultural effects of the accelerated development of communication technologies.

118th plenary meeting  
16 December 1985