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SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

Review of publications by the Department of Public Information

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 51/138 B of 13 December 1996, the General Assembly requested the management of the Department of Public Information to review the Department's publications and proposals for publications to ensure that all publications fulfil an identifiable need, that they do not duplicate other publications inside or outside the United Nations system and that they are produced in a cost-effective manner, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its nineteenth session.
2. The present report is submitted to the Committee on Information pursuant to those requests of the General Assembly. In accordance with the resolution, the report covers both recurrent and non-recurrent publications produced and distributed by the Department of Public Information. A list of recurrent publications issued during 1996 is contained in annex I, and a list of non-recurrent publications appears in annex II.
3. The Department of Public Information continued during 1996 to implement the publications strategy detailed in its report to the Committee at its eighteenth session (A/AC.198/1996/3). The goal of this strategy is, through rigorous review of the rationale and effectiveness of the Department's outputs, to make all its publications more widely available, more cost-effective, more timely and also more marketable. With the enhanced access to sales market for United Nations publications made possible by the incorporation of the Sales and Marketing Section into the Department, publications are being revitalized through the adoption of more demand-driven approaches in style and content. At the same time, the Department is taking rapid advantage of the vast potential



presented by electronic publishing, particularly the Internet, to further broaden its outreach.

II. GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

4. The Department's publications are designed to provide authoritative information on the goals and activities of the Organization and to reflect the vital role it plays in meeting contemporary challenges. To realize that goal, the Department's publications are now being more sharply focused to show how the work of the United Nations system is relevant to the lives of people in every part of the world. The Department is thus working closely with substantive departments, programmes and agencies to help sharpen and give greater authority to each publication's message and content, including information about the reform programme now under way. An important aspect of this approach is correcting the many misperceptions and misunderstandings of the role and work of the United Nations. To help address that problem, the Department has published a revised edition of Image & Reality in a format that permits easy updating and reprinting. Like many of the Department's products, it has been adapted for publication on the United Nations home page on the World Wide Web.

5. Authoritative publications continue to have a long-term impact on opinion and policy. Our principal target groups as such are the media, the academic community, non-governmental organizations and other public and official institutions. United Nations information centres, with their immediate access to such audiences in the regions they serve, remain a principal means of accessing those target groups. In addition, customized mailing lists are used for a number of products, such as the quarterly magazine Africa Recovery and the bimonthly newsletter Development Update, to enable those news-driven publications to rapidly reach important sections of their target audience. The development of the United Nations web site is of course further enhancing this outreach effort.

6. Other ways of broadening the outreach of the Department's print publications are co-publishing ventures with United Nations information centres and/or commercial publishing houses. Such publications, mostly in non-official languages, have enabled the Department to reach a wider group of people at a minimal cost to the Organization. In 1996, for example, a Russian edition of Basic Facts about the United Nations was produced, and other language versions are in preparation. United Nations information centres were instrumental in the publication of shorter versions of titles in the Blue Books Series, which are targeted at a wider audience than the academic and research communities at which the Series was principally aimed. Popular versions of The United Nations and Cambodia, 1991-1995 and The United Nations and Apartheid, 1948-1994 were produced in Russian (the latter was also produced in English), and a Japanese version of The United Nations and Human Rights, 1948-1995 was also produced in 1996.

III. ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

7. With the ever-increasing use of non-traditional media, an area of publishing has developed that offers more than an additional format for printed material. Electronic publishing allows for the creation of products specifically designed to take advantage of the unique features of the media.

8. As we continue to serve the demand for traditional print products, the development of the United Nations web site is providing the Department with the means to reach directly a vast new audience. The United Nations home page is the most visible addition to the Department's publication responsibilities.

9. Another is the United Nations CyberSchoolBus, an award-winning on-line educational service. In a visually stimulating and content-rich environment, the United Nations CyberSchoolBus offers real-time projects, weekly quizzes and resources for teachers and students of all grades and all fields of study. It offers information about the United Nations, its activities and important global concerns, a database of facts on each of the 185 Member States and much more, all done in a highly interactive environment. Although it appears in a new medium, the United Nations CyberSchoolBus is classified as a United Nations publication, adapting the successful series of school kits on the United Nations originally published for the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization.

10. Also available on-line are procurement notices from Development Business. Called Scan-a-Bid, this service is produced with a commercial company that provides access to development projects. The United Nations accrues income based on usage.

11. Taking the experience gained by the production of the United Nations CyberSchoolBus, the Department will continue to explore areas in which the new electronic format can broaden access to information or facilitate its use.

12. Existing materials, such as Information for Delegations and Image & Reality, are now available on the Internet. Publications normally distributed free of charge, such as Africa Recovery, UN Briefing Papers and United Nations in Brief, are also being put on the Internet.

IV. USE OF NEW PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES

13. The Department's increasing use of new technologies in the area of production is also enabling it to enhance productivity and ensure more timely delivery of products. Investment in desktop publishing capacity for the Yearbook of the United Nations, the most comprehensive and authoritative reference book on all aspects of the work of the Organization and its common system, for example, is expected to shorten the production time, thus making new volumes available sooner.

14. The Department's use of new technologies played an important role in its success in publicizing the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, in which production of an attractive information kit was linked to a multimedia, satellite-linked launch of the Initiative, leading to excellent

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coverage throughout the world. An extensive training programme has been undertaken for the Department's staff to enhance their ability to utilize fully developments in information technologies.

V. INTERNAL PRINTING

15. As was the case for an increasing number of the Department's publications in 1996, The Blue Helmets was printed internally, thereby helping to keep costs down. In 1996, all of the 11 volumes published in the Blue Books Series were printed internally. The combined use of desktop publishing and internal printing, with the improved productivity and lower costs that result, is enabling the Department to improve the timeliness of its publications, with more frequent updating of basic products such as United Nations in Brief and Image & Reality. Improvements in internal typesetting are also helping to facilitate publication in all six official languages of basic information materials on the United Nations. The short, easy-to-read guide to the United Nations, United Nations in Brief, which is aimed at general audiences, is produced in all six languages at little cost and is updated as demand for copies requires.

VI. PUBLICATIONS BOARD INITIATIVES

16. Under the chairmanship of the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, the Publications Board, assisted by its Working Committee, continued its work to strengthen coordination within the Secretariat on a range of publication activities and policies. Assistance from the revitalized Vienna Working Group, as well as the appointment of a new Chairman of the Vienna Working Group, have contributed to the Board's work.

17. The acceleration of electronic publishing in the United Nations led to the Board's increased focus during 1996 in that area. The Working Committee began updating the ST/AI/189 series of administrative instructions on regulations for the control and limitation of documentation to take into account developments in electronic publishing. In that connection, a revised instruction on newsletters, which also encompasses information disseminated electronically on home pages, was drafted. A new instruction on guidelines for publishing in an electronic format was produced by the Board and issued in 1996.

VII. ENHANCING SALES

18. With the close involvement of the Sales and Marketing Section, the Department has been able to realize its goal of enhancing sales publications. For example, the Blue Books Series provides primary United Nations research and reference materials, along with an extensive introduction on important issues in international affairs in which the Organization has been centrally involved, for use by scholars, policy makers, journalists and others. It has proved to be a successful sales item, with 1996 sales increasing 40 per cent over those in 1995.

19. Notes for Speakers, which is primarily geared to audiences active in outreach efforts on behalf of the United Nations, has been given a new design and has been renamed UN Briefing Papers. This will enhance its appeal to university students, who have been identified as a potential sales audience for this publication. The latest edition of the authoritative publication on peacekeeping, The Blue Helmets, has also been completely redesigned, and its print run has been increased significantly.

20. The Department's increased focus on the marketing and sale of its products is also reflected in changes to its magazine, UN Chronicle, which provides a unique and concise overview of all major United Nations activities in a journalistic style. The relevance and marketability of the magazine has already been enhanced with an improved design and more interviews with and essays on issues of immediate public concern prepared by senior United Nations officials and other international figures.

21. The biennial Basic Facts about the United Nations, already one of the best-selling United Nations publications, is also being completely rethought and designed to make the large amount of information it contains easily accessible to the reader.

22. Such actions are ensuring that all publications are carefully differentiated and positioned with regard to audience and markets. To assist in that task, a survey on recurrent publications is being prepared for distribution through United Nations information centres, the Sales and Marketing Section and other disseminators of the Department's publications, such as non-governmental organizations.

VIII. ACCESS TO UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION

23. In order to facilitate and enhance access to United Nations information, in 1996 the Dag Hammarskjöld Library published the Index to Proceedings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. The Library also published UNDOC: Current Index. Those publications are the basic tools needed to search for United Nations information.

24. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library also launched its own home page on the Internet, on which it has published an ongoing series of subject-focused bibliographies in areas such as reform of the United Nations, the Security Council, the Charter of the United Nations, peacekeeping operations and the Secretary-General. The Library has also posted on its site a database providing access to document symbols for the most frequently requested United Nations information, known as UN-I-QUE (UN Info Quest).

Annex I

RECURRENT MATERIAL PUBLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC INFORMATION IN 1996

DPI No.	Title	Type	Language and quantity	Month of release
<u>Institutional publications</u>				
1	1723 Confronting New Challenges: Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1995 (Sales No. 95.I.47)	Book	Arabic 3 500 Chinese 1 500 Russian 2 000	January January January
2	1821 The Fiftieth Anniversary Annual Report on the Work of the Organization (Sales No. 96.I.19)	Book	Arabic 3 000 Chinese 1 500 English 10 000 French 4 500 Russian 2 000 Spanish 3 300	November October October October November October
3	Vol. 48 Yearbook of the United Nations (1994) (Sales No. 95.I.1)	Book	English 6 000	June
4	Vol. XXXVIII UN Chronicle	Quarterly		
5	1580 Basic Facts about the United Nations (Sales No. 95.I.31)	Book	English 12 500 French 5 000 English 12 500	March December June
6	1223/Rev.3 United Nations in Brief	Pamphlet	French 10 000 Spanish 7 500 Russian 5 000 (UNIC Moscow)	April April June
7	1838 Image & Reality (Sales No. 96.I.31)	Booklet	English 7 000 Spanish 3 000	October October
8	Vol. 10 Africa Recovery	Quarterly	English 10 000	December
9	1452 Development Update	Newsletter	English 23 500 French 8 500 8 000 8 200	May/October/December May October December
10	Nos. 430-453 Development Business	twice-monthly newspaper	English 6 000	February May June August October January-December

DPI No.	Title	Type	Language and quantity	Month of release
<u>Thematic publications</u>				
<u>A. Blue Books Series</u>				
1	1676 The United Nations and Human Rights, 1945-1995, Vol. VII (Sales No. 95.I.21)	Book	Spanish 2 500	February
2	1677 The United Nations and Somalia, 1992-1996, Vol. VIII (Sales No. 96.I.8)	Book	Arabic 750 English 6 000 French 2 000	October January June
3	1678 The United Nations and Rwanda, 1993-1996, Vol. X (Sales No. 96.I.20)	Book	English 5 000	June
4	1770 The United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict, 1990-1996, Vol. IX (Sales No. 96.I.3)	Book	Arabic 2 300 English 6 000 French 1 500	June February August
5	1804 The United Nations and the Advancement of Women, 1945-1996 (revised edition), Vol. VI (Sales No. 96.I.9)	Book	English 5 000	April
6	1839 The United Nations and Haiti, 1990-1996, Vol. XI (Sales No. 96.I.11)	Book	French 3 000	November
7	1850 The United Nations and the Independence of Eritrea, Vol. XII (Sales No. 96.I.10)	Book	English 3 500	December
<u>B. Mini-Blue Books Series</u>				
1	The United Nations and Cambodia, 1991-1995 (UNIC Moscow)	Book	Russian 1 000	May
2	The United Nations and Apartheid, 1948-1994 (UNIC Moscow)	Book	Russian 1 000	May
3	1810 The United Nations and Apartheid, 1948-1994 (Sales No. 96.I.18)	Book	English 1 000	April
<u>Reference publications</u>				
1	ST/LIB/SER.M/117 UNDOC: Current Index, January 1996 (Parts I and II)	Serial	English 1 840	February
2	ST/LIB/SER.M/118 UNDOC: Current Index, April 1996 (Parts I and II)	Serial	English 1 930	June
3	ST/LIB/SER.M/119 UNDOC: Current Index, September 1996 (Parts I and II)	Serial	English 1 930	October
4	ST/LIB/SER.B/A.51 Index to Proceedings of the General Assembly, forty-ninth session	Serial	Chinese 110	April

DPI No.	Title	Type	Language and quantity	Month of release
5	ST/LIB/SER.B/A.52 Index to Proceedings of the General Assembly, fiftieth session (Parts I and II)	Serial	English 1 635	December
6	ST/LIB/SER.B/S.32 Index to Proceedings of the Security Council, fiftieth year (1995)	Serial	Chinese 110 English 1 690	August April
7	ST/LIB/SER.B/E.72 Index to Proceedings of the Economic and Social Council, 1995	Serial	English 1 680	June
8	Reference Paper No. 35 United Nations Conferences and Observances	Reference paper	English 12 560 French 1 360 Spanish 1 050	February February February

Annex II

NON-RECURRENT MATERIAL PUBLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC INFORMATION IN 1996

DPI No.	Title	Type	Language and quantity	Month of release
<u>Institutional publications</u>				
1	1384	What's the United Nations?	English 10 000	May
2	1598/Rev.1	About the United Nations: Information Guide for the Public	English 10 000	September
3	1744	Understanding the United Nations: The Official Guidebook	English 350	December
4	1753/Rev.2	Setting the Record Straight: Some Facts about the United Nations	English 1 000	February
	Rev.3		English 5 000	March
	Rev.4		English 5 000	April
	Rev.5		English 5 000	May
	Rev.6		English 5 000	May
	Rev.7		English 5 000	July
	Rev.8		English 5 000	August
	Rev.9		English 5 000	September
	Rev.10		English 5 000	October
	Rev.10		French 2 000	October
Rev.10	French 2 000	November		
Rev.10	Spanish 2 000	November		
5	1759	The United Nations at Fifty: Statements by the Secretary-General at the United Nations Fiftieth Anniversary Commemorative Session, 22-24 October 1995	Arabic 75 Chinese 50 English 400 French 200 Russian 75 Spanish 150	February February February February February February
6	1761	Office of Internal Oversight Services	English 5 000	February
7	1794	1997 United Nations Calendar (Sales No. 96.I.17)	English 5 000	June
8	1806	Come to the United Nations, It's Your World!	English 250,000	June
9	1815/Rev.1	United Nations Financial Crisis at a Glance	English 5 000	May
	Rev.2		English 5 000	May
	Rev.3		English 5 000	May
	Rev.4		English 5 000	August
	Rev.5		English 5 000	September
	Rev.6		English 5 000	October
	Rev.7		French 2 000	October
Rev.7	English 5 000	November		
Rev.7	Spanish 2 000	November		

DPI No.	Title	Type	Language and quantity	Month of release
10	1817 Rev.1 DPI: Achieving Still More with Less DPI: New Challenges, New Efficiencies	Fact sheet	English 5 000 English 5 000	May November
11	1820 Rev.1 Why Business Should Support the UN The United Nations and business: A Global Partnership	Background	English 5 000 English 5 000	May July
12	1825 Rev.1 Rev.2 United Nations Conferences: What Do They Accomplish?	Fact sheet	English 5 000 English 5 000 English 2 000 French 2 000 Spanish 2 000	May July August October November
13	1835 Fifty-first Session of the General Assembly	Press kit	English 3 000 French 2 000	August August
14	1841/PIU Three Ways to Help the United Nations	Brochure	English 10 000	September
15	1844 September 1996 Mid-term Review of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s: Report of the Secretary-General	Press kit with 4 enclosures	English 6 000 French 2 000	September September
16	1847 The United Nations: Telling the Story Selected Media Coverage	Pamphlet	English 7 000	September
17	1848 Rev.1 Setting the Record Straight	Compilation	English 7 000 English 8 000 French 3 000 Spanish 3 000	September November November November
18	1857 The United Nations System	Chart	English/ French 10 000	October
19	1867 An Agenda for Democratization (Sales No. 97.I.3)	Booklet	English 5 000	December
<u>Reference publications</u>				
1	ST/LIB/34/Rev.2 United Nations Documentation: A Brief Guide	Brochure	English 2 000	January
2	ST/LIB/40/Rev.1 UNBIS Thesaurus	Book	French 775 Spanish 525	January January
3	ST/LIB/41/Rev.1 United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library	Brochure	English 5 000	July
4	1755 UN in Action Catalogue	Booklet	English 500	May

DPI No.	Title	Type	Language and quantity	Month of release
<u>A. Peace and security</u>				
<u>Publications on thematic issues</u>				
1	1634/PKO/Rev.2 Rev.3	United Nations Peacekeeping Operations	English 2 000	March
	Rev.4		English 5 000 French 2 000 Spanish 2 000	March March March
	Rev.5		English 5 000 French 2 000 Spanish 2 000	August August August
2	1800/PKO	The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peacekeeping Forces (Sales No. 96.I.14)	English 5 000 French 2 000 Spanish 2 000	December December December
3	1823	United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES)	English 5 000 (Sales) 10 000	December
4	1827	United Nations Peacekeeping	English 2 500 French 1 500	May September
5	1845	United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina	English 20 000 French 5 000	August December
6	1851 Rev.1	United Nations Peacekeeping: Some Questions and Answers	English 5 000	August
7	1852	United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH)	English 5 000 French 5 000 Spanish 2 000	September November November
8	1853	The United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH)	English 2 000 French 2 000	June July
9	1860	United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan	English 2 000	October
10	1861	Year in Review 1996: UN Peace Missions	English 4 000	December
<u>B. Advancement of women</u>				
1	993/WOM/Rev.1	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	English 30 000 French 5 000 Spanish 5 000	August September September

DPI No.	Title	Type	Language and quantity	Month of release
2	1762/WOM Fourth World Conference on Women: Platform for Action Summary	Leaflet	French 10 000 Spanish 10 000 English 30 000 (reprint)	March March June
3	1766/WOM Fourth World Conference on Women: Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration (Reprint of document A/CONF.177/20)	Book	English 30 000 Arabic Chinese French Russian Spanish 5 000 each	March January
4	1773/WOM CEDAW to hold its 15th session in New York, 15 January-2 February 1996	Backgrounder	English 2 000	January
5	1785/WOM Women in the United Nations: approaching critical mass	Backgrounder	English 2 000	March
6	1796/WOM Rev.1 UN Action for Women	Fact Sheet	English 2 000 English 20 000 French 5 000 Spanish 5 000	February May June June
7	1797/WOM 8 March: International Women's Day	Backgrounder	English 2 000	February
8	1809/WOM Focus on Women: After the Beijing Conference, Movement for Equality Is Still Alive	Fact sheet	English 2 000	April
9	1862 Women at a Glance	Fact sheet	English 1 000 (photocopied)	December
<u>C. Economic and social development</u>				
1	1143/CRM/Rev.2 The United Nations and Crime Prevention: Seeking Security and Justice for All (Sales No. 96.IV.9)	Book	English 5 000	June
2	1707 World Summit for Social Development: The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action	Book	French 10 000	March
3	1711 Report of the 48th Annual DPI/NGO Conference: The United Nations at the Turn of the Century: Global Issues, Global Actors, Global Responsibility	Booklet	English 3 000	June
4	1747/HAB/CON Habitat II - The City Summit	Poster	Arabic 8 000 Chinese 4 000 English 50 000 French 15 000 Russian 8 000 Spanish 15 000	January January January January January January

DPI No.	Title	Type	Language and quantity	Month of release
5	1760 Habitat II - The City Summit	Information kit with 8 backgrounders and a biography (also distributed individually)	English 20 000 French 7 500 Spanish 7 500	January January January
6	1776/CRM The United Nations and Crime Prevention: Seeking Security and Justice for All	Brochure	English 5 000	June
7	1780 Keys to Longevity	Backgrounder	English only 10 000 (photocopied)	April
8	1799 United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa	Press kit with 6 enclosures	English 7 000 French 3 000	March March
9	1807/POV International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, 1996	Information kit with 8 enclosures	English 10 000 French 2 000 Spanish 3 000	March April May, June
10	1818/HAB/CON Habitat II Update	Backgrounder	English 20 000 French 8 000 Spanish 8 000	May May May
11	1822/HAB/CON Habitat II: Information for Media	Information note	English 8 000 French 3 000 Spanish 3 000	May May May
12	1824 Habitat II: Some Facts about the City Summit	Fact sheet	English 1 000 (photocopied)	May
13	1829 Of Drought and Dust Bowls: Getting the Global Picture	Fact sheet	English 1 000	June
14	1842/POV United Nations Action against Poverty	Backgrounder	English 20 000 French 4 000 Spanish 6 000	September October November
15	1846/HAB/CON Habitat Agenda and Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements: Summary	Brochure	English 50 000	October
16	1858/AGE The Ageing of the World's Population: Preparing for the International Year of Older Persons in 1999	Backgrounder	English 4 000	October
17	No. 10 Credit at the Grassroots (Africa Recovery insert)	Briefing paper	English 10 500 French 2 000	October October

DPI No.	Title	Type	Language and quantity	Month of release
<u>D. Sustainable development</u>				
1	1307 Convention on Biodiversity	Booklet	English 8 000	October
2	1745 Action '95: Commission on Sustainable Development	Booklet	English 5 000 French 3 000 Spanish 3 000	January January January
3	1814 Rev.1 The United Nations: Protecting the Global Environment	Fact sheet	English 1 000 English 5 000	March May
<u>E. Human rights</u>				
1	1627/HR The Challenge of Human Rights and Cultural Diversity	Backgrounder	Arabic 4 000 Chinese 3 000 Russian 4 000	February February February
2	1765/HR Children's Rights	Backgrounder	English 20 000 French 8 000 Spanish 8 000	January January January
3	1772/HR Women and Violence	Backgrounder	English 20 000 French 8 000 Spanish 8 000	February February February
4	1774/HR The United Nations and Human Rights	Brochure	English 20 000 French 8 000 Spanish 8 000	July July July
5	1833 Impact of Armed Conflict on Children	Press kit with 8 backgrounders and 8 photos/graphics	English 8 000	October
6	1834 Impact of Armed Conflict on Children	Booklet	English 5 000	October
7	1837/HR Independence of the Judiciary: A Human Rights Priority	Backgrounder	English 20 000 French 8 000 Spanish 8 000	August August August
<u>F. Public administration</u>				
1	1777/PUB/ADM Resumed Fiftieth General Assembly Session on Public Administration and Development	Brochure	English 14 000 French 6 500 Spanish 6 500	February March March
2	1793/PUB/ADM Resumed Fiftieth General Assembly Session on Public Administration and Development	Press kit with 1 brochure and 5 backgrounders	English 5 000 French 2 000 Spanish 2 000	April April April