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QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION

Note by the Secretary General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, prepared in accordance with section I, paragraph 9, of General Assembly resolution 35/201 of 16 December 1980.

ANNEX

Progress report by the Director-General of the United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1. The Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has the honour to submit this progress report in pursuance of resolution 35/201 of the General Assembly, which requested him "to submit a progress report on the implementation of the International Programme for the Development of Communication to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session".
2. At its twentieth session, on a proposal by the delegation of the United States of America, the General Conference unanimously invited the Director-General to convene a planning meeting of representatives of Governments, to develop a proposal for institutional arrangements to systematize collaborative consultation on communications development activities, needs and plans. After the appropriate consultations, the Intergovernmental Conference for Co-operation on Activities, Needs, and Programmes for Communication Development, known as the DEVCOM Conference, met in Paris in April 1980. By consensus it adopted a recommendation to establish an International Programme for the Development of Communication.
3. That recommendation was approved by the General Conference at its twenty-first session, in resolution 4/21, which was also adopted by consensus. That resolution described the reasons for establishing the Programme, defined its objectives and competence, and described the measures necessary for its effective functioning. In particular, it provided for the creation of an Intergovernmental Council, defined as a co-ordinating body with the task of implementing the objectives of the Programme, and laid down the Statutes of that Council.
4. At the invitation of the Director-General, the representative of the 35 member States elected by the General Conference at its twenty-first session to serve on the Intergovernmental Council met for the first time from 15 to 22 June 1981 at UNESCO headquarters. In addition, the work of the Council was observed by representatives of 41 other member States, seven organizations of the United Nations system and four international intergovernmental organizations.
5. The Council elected as President Mr. Gunnar Garbo, head of the delegation of Norway, and elected its Bureau as follows: Vice-Presidents: the delegates of India, Iraq and Mexico; Rapporteur: Mr. Alfred Opubor, head of the delegation of Nigeria; members: the delegates of Benin, France and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
6. Under the terms of its mandate, it was the task of the Intergovernmental Council to decide on the specific arrangements and practical measures required to launch the operational phase of the International Programme. To that end, the Council outlined two complementary and parallel courses of action which would enable the Programme to move into a new phase. The text of the resolution which it unanimously adopted may be found in appendix 1 to this report.

7. First, the Council decided that beginning next year, the programme would support, within the limitations of available resources allowed, the execution of a few well-studied projects. During this first phase, priority will be given to the regional and subregional levels of communication development, particularly when it affects technical co-operation between developing countries. One fundamental objective will be to strengthen endogenous communications capabilities, especially in countries where those capabilities are most inadequate. Accordingly, a number of projects which meet these criteria appear on the agenda of the next meeting of the Intergovernmental Council.

8. Initially, resources will be provided by financial contributions made to the Programme. At the first meeting of the Council, the representatives of France, Nigeria, Norway, Venezuela and Yugoslavia declared their intention of contributing to the Programme, the form and amount of those contributions to be determined at a later stage, while India, Iraq, and Mexico, together with the Netherlands, announced the amounts of their contributions to the special account opened by the Director-General to receive contributions to the Programme.

9. In addition, the Council invited the Director-General to make an appeal on its behalf to all member States, international organizations and agencies of the United Nations system as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, professional groups or other available sources to make contributions to the Programme as swiftly as possible, and to report on the reaction of these parties to the next meeting of the Council. The Director-General, who has, moreover, often stressed that the Programme will not be able to achieve the objectives unanimously assigned to it by the international community without adequate resources, consequently made an appeal to member States to that end (see appendix II).

10. Secondly, the Council defined the main areas in which further research was required, and specified the procedures for carrying out that work, so that implementation of the Programme could be soundly based and backed up by more comprehensive data.

11. The Council therefore decided that a questionnaire would be sent to all member States in order better to identify their needs. Similarly, the studies already undertaken in that area, particularly by the Secretariat, should be collated and updated in the light of the recommendations adopted by the conferences on communication policies organized by UNESCO in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The Council would then have a clearer idea of the priorities of communication development, and might wish to modify or supplement, as necessary, the criteria which it has fixed for the selection of projects. The questionnaire on needs will be sent out as soon as possible, and a progress report on needs will be submitted at the next meeting of the Council.

12. In the debate on questions of co-operation, the members of the council stressed the link between the successful execution of the Programme and the broadening of co-operation to all bodies which might contribute to communication development, particularly by making optimal use of existing regional and subregional co-operation arrangements.

13. The members of the Council consequently welcomed the close collaboration established between UNESCO and the other organizations and agencies of the United Nations system.
14. In that connexion, the representative of the International Telecommunication Union announced that his organization had decided that one of its staff members would assume full-time responsibility for maintaining liaison between the Union and the Programme. In addition, two meetings of the Inter-agency Working Group set up in pursuance of paragraph IV.4.(d) of resolution 4/21 were convened by the Director-General at UNESCO headquarters, the first in April 1981 and the second immediately after the meeting of the Council in June 1981. While not all the organizations of the United Nations system have the same interest in communication development, the participants at first meeting of the Working Group were of the opinion that it would be desirable to permit all institutions of the system which declared their intention to participate in the Programme to take part in meetings of both the Working Group and the Council. At their second meeting, the participants decided to improve exchange of information among them and to strengthen the co-ordination of their respective activities in the field of communication.
15. Lastly, the Council decided that the appropriate system of financing and resources for the Programme would be established in the light of the result of the studies already carried out on the subject, and invited the Director-General to continue to explore, among other alternatives, the possibilities of elevating that system to the status of an international fund within the framework of UNESCO.
16. The Council agreed to meet again before the end of 1981 and decided, on the invitation of the delegation of Mexico, to hold its second meeting in Mexico in the latter half of November.
17. At the same time as it has been implementing the International Programme, UNESCO has continued its operational activities in the field of communication. On the one hand, the Regular Programme approved by the General Conference at its twenty-first session calls for co-operation activities for integrated planning in communication, development of national production capacities and training of communications specialists. On the other hand, the same level of operational activities continues to be financed by extrabudgetary resources, in particular from the United Nations Development Programme and from trust funds.

APPENDIX I

Resolution No. 1 adopted on 22 June 1981 by the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication

The Council,

Recalling resolution 4/21 adopted at the twenty-first session of the General Conference, resolving to establish, within the framework of UNESCO, an International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) and to elect the Intergovernmental Council of the Programme,

Noting that, under the terms of this resolution, the Director-General is invited, "in consultation with the Intergovernmental Council" to make the appropriate arrangements "to mobilize resources needed for the International Programme and to seek contributions from member States and other parties concerned",

Recalling that the General Conference resolved under the same resolution to set up without delay the appropriate systems of financing and resources, referred to in parts V and VI of the Recommendation of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (DEVCOM Conference, UNESCO, Paris, 1980),

Further noting that in accordance with the same resolution, the Director-General is invited "in consultation with the Intergovernmental Council", to explore, among other alternatives, the possibilities of elevating the appropriate system of financing and resources to the status of an international fund within the framework of UNESCO,

Taking note that by virtue of the Statutes of the IPDC, the Council of the Programme is responsible for "devising an appropriate system of financing for the Programme and seeking the necessary resources for the implementation of the Programme and for the development of communication for the benefit of countries requesting assistance from the Programme",

Recalling also the Recommendation on the IPDC, adopted by consensus at the Intergovernmental Conference for Co-operation on Activities, Needs and Programmes for Communication Development (DEVCOM) and approved at the twenty-first session of the General Conference,

Taking note of resolution A/35/201 adopted at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, which expresses its satisfaction at the establishment of the IPDC and calls upon the Secretary-General to render full co-operation and support to the IPDC and to seek and encourage interagency co-operation and the participation of the agencies in the activities of the Programme and its Intergovernmental Council,

Taking into account with satisfaction the opening by the Director-General of a Special Account for the IPDC in accordance with the provisions of the Organization's Financial Regulations and that contributions to this account may be made by member States or associate member States of UNESCO, organizations of the

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United Nations or other intergovernmental organizations, and public or private organizations or private individuals,

1. Reaffirms that one of the most urgent tasks of the IPDC consists in seeking and mobilizing the resources that will enable the Programme to take up its activities as soon as possible;
2. Considers that the appropriations approved by the twenty-first session of the General Conference might not even be sufficient to commence the IPDC's activities satisfactorily;
3. Expresses its appreciation to all member States which announced their contributions to the IPDC, in the form of financial means, manpower, materials, technology and training for the development of communication, especially taking note of the contributions in this regard from developing countries;
4. Notes with satisfaction the wish expressed by several members of the Council to launch as soon as possible some operational projects under the sponsorship of and with contribution from the IPDC;
5. Considers that while the needs of member States in the field of communication development are being identified and IPDC priorities for activities and programmes determined, certain projects of operational nature can be approved and initiated according to the relevant procedures, within the limitations of available resources;
6. Calls upon member States, developed and developing alike, organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and concerned public and private enterprises, to lend their support to the expansion of IPDC resources;
7. Invites member States to take the necessary steps within the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and other organizations of which they are members so as to secure satisfactory implementation of the IPDC through the allocation of additional resources;
8. Invites the Director-General:
 - (a) To make, on behalf of the Council, an appeal to all member States, international organizations and agencies of the United Nations system as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, professional groups or other available sources to make contributions to the Programme as swiftly as possible, and to report on the reaction of these parties to the next meeting of the Council;
 - (b) To continue to explore in consultation with the Intergovernmental Council among other alternatives, the possibilities of elevating the appropriate system of financing and resources to the status of an international fund within the framework of UNESCO [resolution 4/21 (IV, 4 (f)) of the twenty-first session of the General Conference];

(c) To prepare for the next meeting of the Council dossiers for a few well-studied projects, particularly those of a regional or subregional scope, aimed at improving information and communication within and between regions and based on the wishes of member States as expressed in the the Recommendation of the intergovernmental conferences on communication policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, in Asia and Oceania and in Africa;

(d) To update the studies annexed to the working paper of the DEVCOM Conference related to basic statistics on communication development, needs and programmes for communication development and mechanisms of consultation and co-operation, and submit them to the next meeting of the Council;

9. Requests the President of the Council, in consultation with the Director-General, to solicit the support of the financing and other sources to the IPDC and examine the modalities of this support and to report his conclusions to the next meeting of the Council.

APPENDIX II

Letter dated 31 July 1981 from the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization addressed to the member States of UNESCO

I have the honour to draw your attention to resolution 4/21 which the General Conference of UNESCO adopted at its twenty-first session and by which it established, within the framework of UNESCO, an International Programme for the Development of Communication. This International Programme, aiming to increase co-operation and assistance for the development of communication infrastructures and to reduce the gap between various countries in the communication field must, under the terms of the aforementioned resolution, form part of the efforts for the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order.

By the same resolution, the General Conference elected an Intergovernmental Council responsible for implementing the objectives of the International Programme. This Council, whose first session was recently held in Paris, invited me, by its resolution IPDC/CONF.204/RES.1, adopted unanimously by its members, "to make, on behalf of the Council, an appeal to all member States, international organizations and agencies of the United Nations system as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, professional groups or other available sources to make contributions to the Programme as swiftly as possible, and to report on the reaction of these parties to the next meeting of the Council".

In pursuance of that resolution, I am making the present appeal to member States. I should be particularly grateful if the Government of your country were to contribute to the implementation of the Programme. In order to receive financial contributions, I have, in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Regulations of UNESCO (arts. 6.6 and 6.7), opened a Special Account into which all payments will be made. Several member States participating in the deliberations of the Council announced at its first meeting their intention to make a financial contribution to the execution of the Programme. Among their number were developing countries whose desire thus to contribute to the Programme despite the meagreness of their resources affords evidence of the ideal of open-ended international co-operation and solidarity that has been inspired by the establishment of the IPDC by the General Conference.

I shall notify the Intergovernmental Council at its next meeting, which is due to take place in November 1981, of the amount of the contributions received or pledged, country by country, so as to enable it to take the necessary steps to launch the Programme's initial activities.

The General Conference expressed the hope that, in addition to cash contributions, countries, organizations, professional groups and other sources would lend their support to the expansion of the International Programme in the form of manpower, materials, technology and training, so as to ensure its speedy and satisfactory implementation.

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I should therefore be grateful if you would be so good as to inform me of the action that you are intending to take in response to this appeal.

I consider the International Programme for the Development of Communication to hold out a great hope of improving understanding between peoples and nations by ushering in a new era of international co-operation in communication.

Amadou-Mahtar M'BOW
