

REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION
SUPPLEMENT No. 21 (A/37/21)



UNITED NATIONS

New York, 1982

NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly decided to maintain the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, established under Assembly resolution 33/115, which would be known as the Committee on Information, and to increase its membership from 41 to 66. In its resolution 34/182, the Assembly requested the Committee on Information:

"(a) To continue to examine 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;

"(b) To evaluate and follow up the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications;

"(c) To promote 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 and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly;"

and requested the Committee on Information and the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

2. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and the recommendations of its Ad Hoc Working Group (A/35/21, annex), reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in Assembly resolution 34/182, decided to increase the membership of the Committee from 66 to 67, and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session (resolution 35/201).

3. At its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and its recommendations (A/36/21), reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in resolution 34/182 and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (resolution 36/149 B).

4. The Committee is composed of the following Member States:

Algeria	Kenya
Argentina	Lebanon
Bangladesh	Mongolia
Belgium	Morocco
Benin	Netherlands
Brazil	Niger
Bulgaria	Nigeria
Burundi	Pakistan
Chile	Peru
Colombia	Philippines
Congo	Poland
Costa Rica	Portugal
Cuba	Romania

Cyprus
Denmark
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
German Democratic Republic
Germany, Federal
Republic of
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
India
Indonesia
Italy
Ivory Coast
Japan
Jordan

Singapore
Somalia
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Syrian Arab Republic
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Venezuela
Viet Nam
Yemen
Yugoslavia
Zaire

5. The Committee held its organizational session on 15 March 1982 and its substantive session, the fourth session of the Committee, from 21 June to 9 July 1982.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

A. Opening of the session

6. The Committee held its organizational session at the United Nations Headquarters on 15 March 1982. It held one meeting.

7. The Chairman of the Committee announced that the regional group of African States had nominated Mr. Rachid Lahlou (Morocco) as Vice-Chairman of the Committee to succeed Mr. Patrice Houngavou (Benin).

8. The officers of the Committee for 1982 were:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. Miguel A. Albornoz (Ecuador)
<u>Vice-Chairmen:</u>	Ms. Monique Frank (Netherlands) Mr. Rachid Lahlou (Morocco) Mr. Willie Schlegel (German Democratic Republic)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. Vasant Vishnu Nevrekar (India)

B. Adoption of the agenda, organization and basic programme of work

9. The Committee adopted the following agenda, as contained in document A/AC.198/41:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Organization and basic programme of work for 1982.

10. The Committee also approved the organization and basic programme of work (A/AC.198/42) for its substantive session for 1982, to be held from 21 June to 9 July at United Nations Headquarters, with the understanding that the Committee would work in accordance with its mandate, namely:

- (a) To continue to examine 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;
- (b) To evaluate and follow up the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications;
- (c) To promote 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.

11. It was also agreed that the work of the Committee would proceed along the lines proposed by its officers and would be organized as follows:

A. 21 to 23 June

Consideration of items corresponding to the third part of the mandate of the Committee:

- (a) 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.
- (b) Questions regarding the public image of the United Nations.

B. 24 to 29 June

1. Consideration of items corresponding to the first part of the mandate of the Committee:

- (a) Staff of the Department of Public Information in posts subject to geographical distribution.
- (b) Measures to strengthen the capacity and enhance the role of United Nations Information Centres.
- (c) Balance in the use of official languages in the publications and programmes of the Department of Public Information.

- (d) Review of the regional structure of the Radio and Visual Services Division of the Department of Public Information:
 - (i) Regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division;
 - (ii) Radio Service: proposals concerning the Caribbean Unit, the African Unit, the Middle East/Arabic Unit and the Asian Unit.
 - (e) International short-wave broadcasts by the United Nations using its own facilities and frequencies.
 - (f) Frequency modulation broadcasts by the United Nations in the Headquarters area.
 - (g) Acquisition by the United Nations of its own communications satellite.
 - (h) Satellite transmission of United Nations regional television magazines.
 - (i) Proposals for developing systematic evaluation procedures for activities of the Department of Public Information.
 - (j) Radio and visual means of transmission: advantages, disadvantages and cost-effectiveness.
 - (k) Co-operation between the Department of Public Information and international and regional news organizations, and in particular with the non-aligned countries and regional and national news agencies of developing countries.
2. Consideration of items corresponding to the second part of the mandate of the Committee:
- (a) Co-operation and active participation of all organizations of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the fulfilment of the Committee's mandate.
 - (b) Co-ordination in the field of public information activities among the members of the United Nations system:
 - (i) Report of the Joint Inspection Unit;
 - (ii) Joint comments by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.
 - (c) Review of the financial status of Development Forum including the question of long-term financial support from the organizations of the United Nations system.
 - (d) Progress report on the activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee.

C. 30 June to 5 July

Drafting of the report by the Drafting Group of the Committee.

D. 8 July to 9 July

Consideration and adoption of the draft report.

III. SUBSTANTIVE SESSION

A. Organization of the session

12. The substantive session, the fourth one held by the Committee on Information, took place at United Nations Headquarters from 21 June to 9 July 1982. The Committee held 17 meetings (2nd to 18th meetings). At its meeting of 9 July the Committee adopted its report.

13. The following Member States took part in the session as observers:

Angola	Bolivia
Australia	Sweden
Austria	

The European Economic Community and the Holy See also took part in the session as observers.

14. In addition, representatives of the following units, bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system attended the session:

World Food Council (WFC)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (UNCHS)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Bank

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

15. At the Committee's 2nd meeting, on 21 June, the Secretary-General, the Chairman of the Committee and the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information made opening statements. 1/

16. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the following agenda, as amended (A/AC.198/43/Rev.2):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Drafting Group of the Committee.
4. Organization of working meetings of the Committee.
5. Adoption of the draft report of the Committee.

B. Consideration of items

1. 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 and questions regarding the public image of the United Nations

17. The Committee held a debate on these items at the beginning of the substantive session. Thirty-nine Member States took part. In their statements, members of the Committee stated or clarified the positions of their Governments on a number of issues pertaining to the mandate of the Committee, as expressed in General Assembly resolution 34/182, section I, paragraph 2. A brief survey of the main points emerging from the debate follows.

18. The majority of delegations reiterated their strong support for the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order, the ultimate goal of which was to strengthen peace and international understanding based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information. A number of delegations stressed the urgent need to increase the struggle against information imperialism, the domination of the Western information agencies in developing countries, and for the strengthening of the sovereignty of these countries in the field of information. Many among them stressed the urgent need to develop the infrastructure for information and communication in developing countries in order to increase their capability in the exchange of information with the developed countries. This was essential to redress the current imbalance and to eliminate the dependent status of developing countries in this field. Many delegations stressed that freedom of expression, of thought, of information, and of the press were fundamental human rights, and that diversity in ideas was essential to the free flow of information, a principle which, in the view of a few delegations, was all too often violated at the expense of individual liberties. In this regard, a number of delegations made references to the Council of Europe and Telloires Declarations. Several other delegations emphasized that international relations in the field of information formed a part of the over-all system of international relations. They should be based on respect for the principles of international law and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, respect for national sovereignty, equality and non-discrimination. In accordance with those principles, States and media bore great responsibility for the shaping of information policies in the spirit of improving the international climate. A proposal was made that, as part of the programme for the World Disarmament Campaign, a world conference on the role of mass media - press, radio, television - in promoting a climate of understanding, confidence and co-operation among nations, conducive to peace, disarmament and development, be organized under United Nations auspices. Some delegations said that, in view of the work of the special session on disarmament, the participation of the Department of Public Information in the World Disarmament Campaign should be determined by any resolutions and recommendations adopted by the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. It was pointed out that misuse of information or defamatory radio campaigns were contrary to the efforts aimed at establishing the new world information order and damaged mutual relations among States. Other delegations maintained that any regulation of the mass media should be left to the province of those media themselves.

19. In the context of a new international information order, the importance of continued co-operation between the Committee on Information and UNESCO was emphasized by a large number of delegations, who stressed that overlapping of the activities of those two bodies should be avoided. They supported the International Programme for the Development of Communications (IPDC) of UNESCO, which aimed at redressing the imbalance of the flow of information among nations by strengthening the information capabilities of developing countries. At the same time, a number of delegations stressed that the Committee on Information should intensify its efforts for the promotion of the establishment for a new world information and communication order.

20. As part of the effort to ensure a better balanced flow of information, the importance of the wide dissemination of information on the efforts of developing countries in the economic, social and cultural fields was underlined by many delegations, who emphasized that information itself was an essential element of the development process. In that regard, the paramount responsibility of information to promote development was stressed. It was also stressed that the establishment of a new world information and communication order was of great importance in the efforts to establish a new international economic order.

21. Several delegations emphasized the powerful potential of international mass information in promoting peace, international security and understanding between peoples and States. The need to give the highest priority to the dissemination of objective, factual and balanced information on the arms race, arms build-up, disarmament and on the dangers of nuclear war was stressed by a large number of delegations. It was emphasized by some delegations that, in connexion with the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, a particular responsibility devolved on the Committee on Information and on the Department of Public Information. The Committee took note of a paper circulated, upon request, by the Department outlining its activities in this regard.

22. Various delegations underlined the necessity for the information media to contribute to the promotion of human rights and to the eradication of exploitation, racism and apartheid, as called for in the Berlin Declaration or through any other means. The promotion of economic, social and cultural development, especially of the developing countries, was equally emphasized and the Department of Public Information was urged to give high priority to all of these issues.

23. The Committee recognized that there is an urgent need to project a realistic image of the United Nations to international public opinion. The aim should be neither to aggrandize its achievements nor to minimize its failures but rather to present a balanced and objective description of its activities and goals. Since the preponderance of the activities of the United Nations falls within the economic and social fields where concrete results have been achieved, greater emphasis should be placed on disseminating information about the widespread and substantive involvement of the United Nations in the global development process. The effectiveness and relevance of the United Nations can be better understood and its efforts better appreciated if its activities benefiting millions of people of the world in the economic and social fields are adequately projected. It was also pointed out that the public image of the Organization is to some extent affected by the quality of the whole range of information activities of the United Nations. Several delegations asked that the report of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) on the public perceptions of the United Nations be presented to the Committee.

24. Several delegations proposed that the public information network of the United Nations system should be developed towards the promotion of a new world information and communication order by strengthening its decentralized units and enhancing the two-way flow of information through its channels.

25. Many delegations emphasized the importance of the co-operation between the non-aligned countries in the field of information as a definite contribution towards the implementation of a new world information and communication order. The activities of the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies disseminating authentic information about non-aligned countries was particularly stressed in that regard. These delegations welcomed the continuing co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Pool in dissemination of information about United Nations activities and joint coverage of important events within the United Nations system, and stressed that the Department should also receive news dispatches from the Pool, thus ensuring a two-way flow of information. The importance of the continuing co-operation of the Department with the regional news agencies of the developing countries was also stressed. Several delegations emphasized the need for closer co-operation between the United Nations and regional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity. The co-operation between the United Nations and Africa should be based on the policies of the Intergovernmental Conference on Communication Policies in Africa held at Yaoundé. Some delegations stressed the importance of the co-operation of the Department with all public and private news organizations. Many other delegations recalled the relevant provisions of the Final Declaration of the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Havana in September 1979, of the Declaration of the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi in February 1981, and of the Fifth Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Council of Ministers of Information of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Georgetown in May 1981.

26. Many delegations expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the Department of Public Information fulfilling its public information tasks, in particular the timely documentation prepared for the Committee's consideration. They noted the Department's efforts and intentions to take advantage of new advances in communication technologies in its public information activities within the resources at its disposal. Some delegations urged the Department to follow a policy of zero budget growth by making the most effective use of its resources. While generally appreciating the Department's production and dissemination of information materials, some delegations called for improvement to make them more understandable to the public, particularly in the case of publications.

27. Noting that there is an urgent need for the intensification of the work on promotion of a new world information and communication order, a number of delegations proposed that an editor's round table on that subject be organized by the Department as soon as possible. But several other delegations warned that there should be no duplication in the work of the Department and UNESCO, since UNESCO had already undertaken some programmes in this area. The Under-Secretary-General drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that this subject had already been discussed to some extent in a series of round tables and journalists' encounters organized by the Department and that UNESCO had sent representatives to them. He added that the existing arrangements seemed realistic for both the Department and UNESCO co-operating with each other on a case-by-case basis.

2. 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

(a) Staff of the Department of Public Information in posts subject to geographical distribution (A/AC.198/44)

28. The item was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, who informed the Committee of the additional changes in the geographical composition of the staff of the Department that had occurred since the preparation of the document. He pointed out that the Department's policies on personnel matters were closely co-ordinated with those of the Office of Personnel Services with the view of attaining the objectives established by the General Assembly in that respect. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services stated that the Secretary-General was taking measures as expeditiously as possible to ensure that the geographical imbalance in the staff of the Department of Public Information was rectified. The Secretary-General, she stated, was of the view that, while geographical distribution was to be applied on a Secretariat-wide basis, care must be exercised to ensure that no one country or group of countries had predominance in any organizational unit other than in the regional commissions.

29. Some delegations expressed the view that future reports should include information on the composition of staff by country and representation of women, in addition to the data currently provided by region. In this context, a view was expressed that personnel questions were within the competence of the Fifth Committee, rather than the Committee on Information. While the statistics provided in the present report appeared to indicate that progress had been made to redress imbalances in the composition of staff between developed and developing countries, several delegations felt that they were unable to discern the actual progress made because of the absence of statistics on staff composition based on representation of developed and developing countries. Noting that some regions were below the regional midpoint, the question was raised in respect of some of those regions whether this trend would continue, and some delegations stated that greater efforts would need to be made to recruit staff from underrepresented countries and regions. Questions were raised by some delegations regarding the criteria used for determining the geographical regions indicated in the relevant document, specifically the linking of the Caribbean region with North America and not with Latin America, and the establishment of the Asia and the Pacific region. Other delegations requested that that situation be rectified.

30. In response to the questions raised, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information explained that the geographical composition of staff was inherited from the past when the membership of the Organization was mainly from the developed countries. Since many staff members had permanent contracts, improvements in the geographical composition would unfortunately take time, since they depended on the rate of attrition. With respect to representation of women, he stated that, while improvement was required, almost half of the professional staff of the Division of Economic and Social Information were women.

(b) Measures to strengthen the capacity and enhance the role of United Nations information centres (A/AC.198/45)

31. The item was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, who pointed out that the Department had attempted to identify measures to respond to the Committee's desire to strengthen the capacity and enhance the role of United Nations information centres by redeployment of resources as far as possible. However, some measures would unavoidably require new resources and they were identified separately.

32. The important role of the centres in disseminating vital information about the activities of the United Nations, and their consequent importance in improving the public image of the United Nations, was stressed by a number of delegations. Several delegations made the point that the centres should be required to follow the priorities determined by the General Assembly in programming their activities and should concentrate on the main issues before the Organization, such as disarmament, international security, decolonization, human rights, the struggle against apartheid, and economic and social issues. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the efforts to achieve a more effective use of resources through redeployment. Some delegations expressed reservations regarding the measures requiring new resources. Several delegations noted that the Committee had indicated that it wished to see greater independence and functional flexibility in the centres and hoped there would be improvement in that regard as well as in the criteria for allocation of resources. Other delegations favoured the development of centralized relations between the Department of Public Information and the centres. Some delegations felt that there should not be only a one-way flow of information from Headquarters to the centres, but rather a two-way flow with centres also becoming sources of information for Headquarters, and for each other.

33. The need for closer co-operation between the centres and field offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was stressed. Some delegations felt that information activities should increasingly be undertaken by UNDP offices with support from the Department of Public Information, while other delegations stressed that information was a full-time task and should remain the responsibility of independent United Nations information centres, which should act as the only spokesmen of the Secretary-General in the field. It was proposed that centres should be authorized to publicize national development projects which were newsworthy and of possible benefit to other countries.

34. The need for adequate resources for an effective German-language Service in Vienna, including the functions of the United Nations Information Centre for Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany, was stressed. The satisfactory co-operation between the centre in Prague and the German Democratic Republic, and the need to continue this co-operation within the existing structure, was underlined.

35. The delegation of the Congo presented a request for the establishment of an information centre in Brazzaville for which the Government would provide the required support. The observer of Angola requested the establishment of a centre in Luanda to serve Portuguese-speaking countries in the region.

36. A large number of delegations expressed strong support for the review and upgrading of the levels of posts of centre directors so that they were commensurate with the responsibilities involved and in order to ensure that senior and

experienced personnel could be assigned to the centres. Some delegations, however, cautioned against the budgetary implications of such upgrading. Several delegations thought it was important, in order to reflect the international character of the United Nations, that a director should not be a national of the country in which his centre was located or of the countries to which he was accredited. Some delegations pointed to the imbalance existing where directors from developed countries were appointed to posts in developing countries but not vice versa, and where the posts of directors in the developed countries were generally at a higher level than those of the developing countries. A list showing the nationalities and grades of directors of all United Nations information centres was requested and provided to the Committee (see A/AC.198/45/Add.1).

37. Several delegations supported the establishment of the category of "National" Information Officer in order to recruit more capable and experienced local professionals in the Centres.

38. While several delegations supported closer co-operation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including annual regional and national NGO conferences, some delegations were not in favour of provision of regular budget funds for regional NGO conferences away from Headquarters.

39. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information and other officials of the Department of Public Information expressed satisfaction at the generally positive evaluations by delegations of the work of United Nations information centres and for the support for the review of levels of centre director posts. The Department discussed the establishment of a category of National Information Officer with the Office of Personnel Services, which was in favour of the proposal, and with the Budget Division, which was examining the question of salaries and other financial implications. The Department would ensure that only highly qualified personnel were recruited. The Committee was assured that there was full co-operation with UNDP in the field, the form of co-operation depending on the nature of the Department and UNDP offices in the country concerned. As regards the nationalities of centre directors, while it was the policy of the Department not to post directors to their own countries, in some cases there were exceptions because the intimate knowledge of the culture and media the director brought outweighed any conflict of interest that might be possible.

(c) Balance in the use of official languages in the publications and programmes of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/46)

40. While the Committee members expressed general appreciation of the efforts to ensure balance in the use of official languages in the programmes and publications of the Department of Information, several delegations raised specific related questions. It was stressed that the primary use of English placed non-English-speaking delegates at a disadvantage. Some delegations asked why all press releases could not be issued in French and in Spanish. Some delegations complained about the frequent inaccuracies in press releases and, in some cases, in the UN Chronicle. Several delegations commended the new format and approach of the UN Chronicle. Other questions were raised regarding the criteria used for the production of the Department's programmes in non-official languages. It was observed that there was an imbalance in the approach of articles in Development Forum because the periodical did not have enough staff from underrepresented regions.

41. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information and other representatives of the Department, clarifying the points raised, stated that the Department made every endeavour to achieve the desired balance, but the extent of success was constrained by limited resources. Every effort was also made to ensure accuracy but occasional lapses did occur in press releases because of the speed with which they were produced. It was clarified that the use of non-official languages was determined primarily by the size of the populations using the language concerned.

(d) Review of the regional structure of the Radio and Visual Services Division of the Department of Public Information

(i) Regionalization of the Radio and Visual Service Division (A/AC.198/47)

42. In introducing the item, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information referred to the debate on the subject in the Committee last year and the Committee's recommendations, which resulted in a request in General Assembly resolution 36/149 B for a plan for the regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division. Because of the far-reaching impact that regionalization could have, a phase approach had been adopted for the plan being presented so that it could be assessed as it was implemented. However, in view of the Committee's relevant recommendation last year, the first phase of the plan had been tentatively implemented pending the Committee's approval.

43. Several delegations expressed their appreciation for the different reports presented by the Department of Public Information on matters dealing with radio and television transmission of the Department, contained in documents A/AC.198/47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52 and 54. Some delegations also expressed strong reservations as to the high financial implications of proposals contained therein which could not be supported. In that regard, they also regretted that an agreement on a set of priorities within the activities of the Department was not possible.

44. Several delegations questioned some of the reports submitted to the Committee by the Department, pointing out that information contained in them was sometimes tailored to justify the conclusions of the report and that delegations were often unable to verify the accuracy of the information.

45. Several delegations stated that the plan did not respond to the request in General Assembly resolution 36/149 and was similar to the plan presented by the consultant last year which had not been accepted. Many delegations questioned the implementation by the Department of the plan without authorization. Some delegations stated that it was not conducive to co-operation between the Committee and the Department and recalled and supported the plan presented by the delegation of Yemen last year. In their view, despite the differences between visual and radio media, the current resources of the Visual Service could be merged into the regional units in the Radio Service to produce completely regionalized units; they asked why, on the contrary, it was proposed to move visual production functions from the Arabic Radio Unit. Regionalization was also required to improve the geographical distribution of personnel in the Division. They also considered that that approach would involve less expense than the high cost of the plan being proposed. In that context, they noted that the zero-growth budget had no juridical basis and should not be an obstacle to the regionalization being requested by the Committee, which should then take a decision on the subject.

46. Several other delegations pointed out that both General Assembly resolutions 35/201 and 36/149 had asked for regionalized plans and not for implementation, and in neither plan had the Secretary-General given an opinion as to whether regionalization was desirable. Before taking any decisions, the Committee should be informed of the advantages and disadvantages of regionalization, what it would achieve, and of how the requirements of audiences could be assessed. It was pointed out that regionalization of production did not necessarily require structural regionalization of the Division or the addition of several new posts. For that reason, a cautious approach was desirable. They emphasized that the principle of universality of the United Nations was of fundamental importance and it should be ensured that this was not diluted in any regionalization plan and that the end product was suitable for many regions and not only one.

47. It was proposed by some delegations that a new plan, taking into account the views expressed by various delegations, should be prepared. It was stated in relation to the new plan that the Committee should discuss in depth the desirability of regionalization before proceeding to consider any method for its implementation. In that context, it was also proposed that an intergovernmental group study the question and present a report to the Committee at its next session.

48. In clarifying the questions raised, the Director of the Radio and Visual Services Division explained that the plan, prepared in response to the Committee's request, proposed the regionalization of the Visual Service as a first step, in keeping with the experience of national radio and television organizations throughout the world where the two media functioned separately even though they might belong to one organization. The Director also drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that this report should be considered in conjunction with the report in document A/AC.198/52. Once the Visual Service was regionalized, the merging of its units with the parallel units in the Radio Service could be considered at a later stage. He said that regionalization of production made it possible to disseminate material to a larger number of countries. He clarified that various methods, such as visits to regions, direct contact with broadcasters by cable and telephone, and other means of feedback, were used to assess audience requirements.

(ii) Radio Service of the Department of Public Information: establishment of a Caribbean Unit; expansion of the African Unit; proposals concerning the Middle East/Arabic Unit and Asian Unit (A/AC.198/48)

49. The item was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, who highlighted the main points of the document. Some delegations welcomed the establishment of a separate Caribbean Unit in the Radio Service, and proposed that the Unit should produce programmes in French/Creole and Dutch. Expansion in programming of the Latin American/Iberian Unit was also suggested. Several delegations called for further strengthening of the African Unit, and there were suggestions that programming should also be made available in Amharic, Lingala and Portuguese. It was stressed that the African Unit should be headed by a full-time chief of unit. In that context, both support and opposition was expressed to the proposal to redeploy the P-4 post in question from the European Unit. It was proposed that the United Nations Information Service in Geneva reinstate the production in Serbo-Croat for Yugoslavia. A question was raised by some delegations regarding the reasons leading to the conclusion in the document that the Middle East/Arabic Unit did not need to be enlarged, and its expansion was called for. It was pointed out that the reason given by the Department of Public

Information for not expanding the Arabic Unit was not adequate. Other delegations, however, welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to focus on increasing the productivity of the Unit. Several delegates called for programming by the Asian Unit in additional major regional languages, Bengali and Indonesian being mentioned. Other delegations agreed, provided that the new activities were undertaken within existing budgetary resources. Various delegations also wished to see expanded programming in Arabic, Russian and Spanish. There were comments on the irregularity and inconvenient timings of some regional radio programmes which detracted from their efficacy.

(e) International short-wave broadcasts by the United Nations using its own facilities and frequencies (A/AC.198/49)

50. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, introducing the item, referred to the previous report on the use of short-wave broadcasts that had been presented but not implemented. The present report, while responding to the Committee's request for a study on a centralized United Nations short-wave broadcasts system, also had proposed an alternative regional approach which the Department considered would be more flexible and more responsive to the requirements of various regions. Either alternative would require a considerable outlay of funds.

51. Several delegations supported the idea of a regionalized short-wave network owned and operated by the United Nations, but some expressed concern over the costs of the various alternatives. It was noted that, while the report was comprehensive in many aspects, it did not contain enough information on audience impact and response, or on the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives. Some delegations requested further information for the next Committee session, particularly a detailed plan of the proposed Latin American regional segment, and a study of global frequency requirements. It was suggested that, as an immediate measure, the current United Nations short-wave broadcasts be placed on a daily schedule throughout the year.

(f) Frequency modulation broadcasts by the United Nations in the Headquarters area (A/AC.198/50)

52. There was a brief discussion on the impediments to the establishment of a United Nations FM station in New York City and the possibility in surmounting these obstacles with assistance from the host country, which pointed out, inter alia, that the New York FM reception area was already saturated.

(g) Acquisition by the United Nations of its own communication satellite (A/AC.198/51)

53. Several delegations strongly criticized the report as not seriously examining the issues involved and rejecting the proposal almost summarily by characterizing the costs involved as "prohibitive". No details had been given of how the costs had been calculated, nor was there any comparison with the present and projected communications costs of the United Nations system. There also was no comparison of advantages and disadvantages of the proposed system and the existing system. They stressed that a long-term view of the proposal should be taken and that the United Nations should realize that the satellite age had arrived. It was through its own satellite that the United Nations could achieve independence in its communications. It was essential that the Committee on Information realize the

importance of the proposal, and that the United Nations lose no time in studying the question seriously and considering sources of financing.

54. Several other delegations supported the conclusions reached in the document, observing that the acquisition of a satellite would not be cost-effective since the United Nations would not be able to utilize its full capacity. They thought it would be preferable and less costly to use leased channels at the current stage.

55. A representative of the Office of General Services clarified that the Secretariat was fully aware of the various considerations favouring United Nations communications by satellite. However, the initial study had shown that, in order to establish a comprehensive system, three satellites with the required ground stations would be required, which would not be cost-effective as it would entail an extremely high level of expenditure. It was therefore concluded that currently it was preferable to pool the United Nations systems communications requirements and to lease existing satellite facilities. The Secretariat intended to continue exploring the possibilities, which would be taken into consideration in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on communications within the United Nations system.

(h) Satellite transmission of United Nations regional television magazines
(A/AC.198/52)

56. On the introduction of the document, it was pointed out to the Committee that the report was closely linked to the report on regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division (A/AC.198/47). Several delegations expressed satisfaction that the Department of Public Information had concluded that it was feasible to aim to start transmission by satellite of television magazines, to at least some regions, by using the services of existing carriers at a cost lower than anticipated for both the United Nations and the receiving organizations. A question was raised regarding the transmissions of those magazines before a decision was taken by the Committee both on their production (see A/AC.198/47) and their transmission.

(i) Proposals for developing systematic evaluation procedures for activities of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/53)

57. Introducing the item, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information said that, as suggested by the Committee, the Department had consulted international organizations for mass communications research and had received positive indications of co-operation in the elaboration of methods for the systematic evaluation of the Department's activities. He outlined the stages involved and the necessity for defining target audiences. Several delegations stressed the importance of evaluation procedures in the work of the Department of Public Information, especially since such evaluation would assist the Committee on Information in assessing the work. Some supported the proposal in the document and suggested that a fourth phase should be added related to feedback from the audiences reached. They emphasized the need for the Department to undertake an evaluation with the editors in order to ascertain the information needs and the manner of achieving proper utilization of the Department's services. A view was expressed that the document did not respond to the Committee's recommendations and should have been more comprehensive, including the required information on the Department's activities in respect of each topic in its work programme, and the costs of those activities, thus giving the Committee a clearer picture of the Department's activities against which to discuss evaluation procedures. Responding

to the points raised, a representative of the Department pointed out that the process of evaluation of the Department's activities had started relatively recently. The report requested by the General Assembly last year was meant to focus on evaluation procedures but, at the same time, a parallel attempt on actual evaluation also was being made. Only after a systematic evaluation process with defined stages had been established could concrete assessments be made of the Department's information programmes.

(j) Radio and Visual means of transmission: advantages, disadvantages and cost effectiveness (A/AC.198/54)

58. The report was received by the Committee without substantive comment.

(k) Co-operation between the Department of Public Information and international and regional news organizations and in particular with the non-aligned countries and regional and national news agencies of developing countries

59. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information presented a verbal report to the Committee on the item as outlined below in paragraphs 60 to 65 and paragraph 67.

60. In accordance with paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 36/149 B, the Department of Public Information had continued and further strengthened its co-operation with the non-aligned countries in the field of information, in particular with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with regional news agencies of developing countries. The practice was for the Department to provide information on activities of the United Nations system to the Pool for dissemination. Daily dispatches were telexed to the Tanjug Agency in Belgrade for further transmission to the more than 80 agencies belonging to the Pool. It was expected that the Department would, within a few months, install word processors connected to the Tanjug telex line without charge. This would enable Pool members to receive immediate information on events in the United Nations, including direct coverage of United Nations meetings from conference rooms.

61. In response to paragraph 17 of Assembly resolution 36/149 B, negotiations were well advanced to finalize arrangements to receive dispatches from Pool members via Tanjug. It was expected that the service would be operational by the end of 1982.

62. As regards co-operation with regional press agencies, the Department was currently regularly sending by mail background material and features on United Nations activities to the Pan African News Agencies (PANA). It was expected that by the end of the current year, PANA would be equipped to receive by telex daily news dispatches similar to those being sent by the Department to the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies. Discussions were continuing with regional news agencies in Asia and Latin America for direct transmission of material from the Department which they were currently receiving through the Pool.

63. In response to paragraph 18 of Assembly resolution 36/149 B, the Department also had extended and strengthened its co-operation with national news agencies of developing countries. Currently, 11 national agencies in Africa received by telex from the Department summaries of statements by their respective delegates in the United Nations. That service would be extended to other national agencies in developing countries as resources permitted. The Department continues to stress the value to developing countries of having their own correspondents at United

Nations Headquarters, when possible, but material received by them from the Department through the Pool directly serves as a supplement to the news sent by their own correspondents.

64. In an innovation, which had proved notably successful, the Pool co-operated with the Department in the coverage and dissemination of news from the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy held at Nairobi in August 1981. That arrangement enabled developing countries to receive wide coverage of that important subject, and the Pool had offered to continue its co-operation for further United Nations conferences and other events, such as UNISPACE 1982, the World Communications Year in 1983 and the International Youth Year in 1985.

65. The Pool also co-operated with the Department in selecting journalists and broadcasters from the developing countries for the Department's training programme at United Nations Headquarters. This co-operation will be continued.

66. Many delegations expressed their satisfaction at the increased co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Non-Aligned Pool, which they hoped would be further extended. They observed that the Pool provided an appropriate mechanism for the United Nations to receive objective and balanced information on the social and economic endeavours of the non-aligned countries. It was noted that the experiment of joint coverage, by the Department and the Pool, of international conferences had been successful and should be extended to future conferences. It was observed that, as far as co-operation with national news agencies was concerned, this appeared to be directed mainly towards Africa, and that news agencies in other regions which could not send correspondents to United Nations Headquarters would benefit from such co-operation. Several delegations welcomed the future regular reception by the Department of dispatches from the Pool. Some delegations urged that, in furthering that welcome co-operation with the Pool, co-operation by the Department with all international and regional news organizations should be maintained.

67. In compliance with General Assembly resolution 35/201, section III, paragraph 9, information on the in-service Training Programme for Broadcasters and Journalists was provided to the Committee in outline, and is further elaborated. The first training programme was held in September and October 1981, with participating broadcasters and journalists from Bangladesh, China, the Congo, Democratic Yemen, Ecuador, Egypt, Jamaica, Kenya, Madagascar, Morocco, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Peru, Suriname, Syria, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. The Programme consisted of work assignments in the Department of Public Information and other United Nations programmes, briefings and lectures by officials of Permanent Missions, the Secretariat, specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies on issues of priority concern to the United Nations system, and coverage of United Nations meetings, press conferences and activities by the Programme participants serving as temporary United Nations correspondents for their respective media organizations. Visits to the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities were arranged, as were meetings and discussions between participants and broadcasters and journalists from both developed and developing countries, including members of the United Nations Correspondents' Association. The Programme, on similar lines, will be held again during September and October 1982. While it would be highly desirable to increase the number of

participants and to extend the Programme for the entire General Assembly session, followed by visits to regional commissions, budgetary considerations preclude such expansion.

3. Evaluation and follow-up of the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications

(a) Co-operation and active participation of all organizations of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in the fulfilment of the Committee's mandate

68. The item was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, who cited several examples of co-operation between the Department of Public Information and UNESCO. He noted, in particular, the co-operation during the United Nations conferences on least developed countries and on sanctions against South Africa, both held at UNESCO House in Paris the previous year. The representative of UNESCO stated that his organization had undertaken a wide range of activities organized since the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly to assist in the establishment of a new world information and communication order. He invited the Committee to consider the last session of the General Conference, which asked UNESCO to conduct studies concerning the right to communicate as well as to examine the possibility of having that right recognized as one of the fundamental human rights. He then elaborated on a number of UNESCO projects being implemented to rectify the existing imbalance in the international flow of information. The UNESCO representative reiterated that his organization had continued to co-operate with the Department and information services of the other United Nations specialized agencies.

69. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the major role played by UNESCO in the establishment of a new world information and communication order, and welcomed the fact that some progress had been made in that direction.

70. In that connexion, several delegations expressed a keen interest in disarmament issues, especially in the light of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and felt that the World Disarmament Campaign should be carried out with the Department retaining its role as the focal point for the co-ordination and implementation of the public information tasks of the United Nations. In that regard, some delegations stated that the Department, in disseminating information on disarmament to the world public, should work in close co-operation with the Centre for Disarmament. Several delegations emphasized the linkage between disarmament and development and the need to deal with the issue within the framework of a new world information and communication order.

(b) Co-ordination in the field of public information activities among the members of the United Nations system

(i) Report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/36/218)

(ii) Joint Comments by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (A/37/174)

71. The item was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information. Many delegations expressed their support and appreciation of the

report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the Joint Comments by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC). Some delegations welcomed the JIU report as being an objective presentation which could serve as a model for other reports. Some other delegations noted that the JIU report contained recommendations which would further enhance the effectiveness of the Joint United Nations Information Committee in its function of co-ordination and co-operation among the members of the United Nations system in the field of public information. Those delegations hoped that those recommendations, on which, according to them, there was no divergence of views between JIU and ACC, would be implemented at an early date. In that context, however, some delegations noted that much remained to be done in terms of a greater degree of rationalization and harmonization in the field of public information activities.

(c) Review of the financial status of Development Forum, including the question of long-term financial support from the organizations of the United Nations system

72. Introducing the item to the Committee, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information expressed the hope that more financial support would be extended for the monthly publication from both Member States and from organizations of the United Nations system. He said that the future of Development Forum seemed bleak because traditional donor countries, with the exception of Japan, had indicated suspension of their voluntary contributions after 1982. He added that many pledges from United Nations agencies remained uncollected for 1982, and some even for 1981.

73. Many delegations extended their full support for the continuation of Development Forum as the single regular publication of the United Nations system in the economic and social fields, and expressed the hope that the periodical, reflecting the purposes of public information services of the whole United Nations system, would be allowed to exist on a solid financial basis. In that connexion, most of those delegations hoped that the General Assembly would continue to approve an appropriation from the regular budget, calling on the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to that end. Some delegations, however, said that they saw no justification for an allocation from the regular budget, particularly for an open-ended one, and some others proposed that a solid financial basis be secured by contributions from all United Nations agencies. The representative of the Netherlands announced that her country had decided to make voluntary contributions of approximately \$32,000 for the Swahili edition of Development Forum for 1982.

74. Questions were raised by some delegations as to the progress in the study of the feasibility of relocating the editorial offices and printing services of Development Forum in a developing country. Answering those questions, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information said that a preliminary study had been conducted on the costs to be incurred in relocating the publication offices to a number of possible sites in developing countries. He said, however, that the Joint United Nations Information Committee had felt that more time was needed before definitive findings could be presented to the Committee. He explained that certain savings might be achieved in some aspects, but additional costs would be incurred in other areas, such as travel and postage. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, however, added that the Department taking into account the cost advantages clearly perceived in the publication of the Spanish-language edition of Development Forum, would not hesitate to set up other offices in developing countries if a clear financial advantage could be demonstrated. Some delegations supported the view expressed in the Joint Inspection Unit report that the staff of Development Forum should also reflect the membership of the United Nations system.

75. The contents of Development Forum were commended by many delegations. Some of them described it as extremely well-suited to bridge the gap between the North and the South and enhance the free exchange of ideas between the developed and the developing countries. Some others mentioned that the periodical, in a recent issue, had featured the relationship between disarmament and development. It was stressed by some delegations that disarmament was not an end in itself but a means to peace and the release of resources for other purposes and should be promoted in such a way as to facilitate economic development, achieve social justice and establish a new world information and communication order.

(d) Progress report on the activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee

76. The item was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, who explained the main features of the report of the Joint United Nations Information Committee. In the course of discussion, the Under-Secretary-General also emphasized the fact that the Joint Committee had discussed disarmament issues in the context of development. 2/ He noted that several agencies of the United Nations system had requested the Department to act as a "clearing-house" for disarmament materials to avoid duplication in public information activities.

77. Most delegations found the progress report of the Joint Committee useful. Some delegations expressed the hope that such a report would be submitted to each session of the Committee. It was, however, pointed out that part of the Joint Committee's report concerning the public image of the United Nations was vague and unclear, and the need for clarity on all points in view of the importance of the report was stressed, especially because all United Nations information activities must be impartial to maintain credibility. Many delegations showed a keen interest in the public perception of the United Nations, on which the Joint Committee had drafted a report. It was reported to the Committee that the Joint Committee's report would soon be submitted to the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. Several delegations expressed the hope that it would be officially submitted to the Committee as well for its review and comments.

78. Strong support also came from certain delegations for the recommendation in the Joint Committee's report on the promotion of development education and development support communication, as well as for the work of the non-governmental liaison services in New York and Geneva. Development education and development support communication were described as the two sides of a single process aimed at seeking wide public support both in the North and the South to the common goals of development adopted in the United Nations system. The need for more stable financial support for non-governmental liaison services was stressed as a collective responsibility of the United Nations system because, according to some delegations, non-governmental liaison services were just serving the goals of the whole system, in particular by trying to promote a better understanding of the issues involved in international co-operation for social and economic development. The need for continued assistance to non-governmental liaison services to encourage the peace movement was stressed.

79. Many delegations commended the international television project undertaken by the Department of Public Information to produce a series of films, entitled "Agenda for a Small Planet", as a significant attempt to establish dialogue between the North and the South. They wished continued success for the series.

80. Concern was expressed on the precarious financial situation of the World Newspaper Supplement, with the hope that some arrangement would be found to keep that useful project alive. The Under-Secretary-General said that he shared that hope and that the Department would continue to seek a solution to the problem.

C. Consideration of the report and recommendations

81. At its 16th and 17th meetings, the Committee adopted by consensus its report and recommendations to the General Assembly (see section IV, recommendations).

82. At the 17th meeting of the Committee the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of the group of Western European and other States, expressed reservations concerning the financial implications and the order of priorities of the recommendations.

83. At the 18th meeting, statements were made by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Latin American States, the representative of the German Democratic Republic on behalf of the group of Eastern European States, the representative of Morocco on behalf of the group of African States, and the representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the group of Western European and other States.

84. At the same meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information made a statement.

85. The Rapporteur also made a statement.

86. The representatives of France, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany made statements regarding a working paper presented by Poland and circulated in the Committee.

87. The representative of Poland exercised the right of reply.

88. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics also made a statement in this regard.

89. The representative of Cuba made a statement.

90. The Chairman of the Committee announced the proposed dates for the session of the Committee for 1983 3/ and made a closing statement.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

91. The Committee on Information submits the following recommendations to the General Assembly

1. The 33 recommendations of the Committee on Information approved by the General Assembly in resolution 36/149 of 16 December 1981, as well as all provisions of that resolution, are reiterated. Those recommendations and provisions pending implementation should be implemented in full, taking into account the views expressed by delegations at the 100th plenary meeting of the thirty-sixth session of the Assembly on 16 December 1981.
2. The mandate of the Committee on Information should be renewed as set forth in General Assembly resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979 and reaffirmed in Assembly resolutions 35/201 of 16 December 1980 and 36/149 of 16 December 1981.

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 4/

3. The need should be noted for all 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 the diversity of the 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, and intended also to strengthen peace and international understanding.
4. An appeal should be addressed to the international media to obtain their support for the efforts of the international community towards global development and, in particular, for the efforts of the developing countries for their own economic, social and cultural progress.
5. An appeal should be addressed to the whole United Nations system 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 lives of the people of the developing countries.
6. 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 purposes and endeavours, as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations.
7. 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 and the aspirations for a new world information and communication order, as well as conforming to the consensus reached among States in resolutions 21C/4/19, 21 and 22 as adopted at the twenty-first session of the

General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

8. The activities of the Department of Public Information, as the focal point of the public information tasks of the United Nations, should be strengthened along the lines established in the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly and the recommendations of the Committee on Information 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, namely, international peace and security, disarmament, peace-keeping and peace-making operations, decolonization, the promotion of human rights, the struggle against racial discrimination, the integration of women in the struggle for peace and development, the establishment of the new international economic order for the establishment of a new world information and communication order, activities against apartheid, the work of the United Nations Council for Namibia and programmes on women, due regard being given, at the same time, to economic and social areas.

Evaluation and follow-up of the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications 5/

9. The Committee on Information, noting the valuable effort of UNESCO in the promotion of a new world information and communication order, recommends that the Department of Public Information take steps to avoid any overlapping of its activities on this subject with those of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, while stressing at the same time the ever-growing significance of the close working co-operation between the United Nations and the latter organization.

10. The General Assembly should reiterate its full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication.

11. The Department of Public Information and the United Nations Development Programme, as important elements of the United Nations information and development activities, should be requested to co-operate more closely, both at Headquarters and in the field, in order to concentrate their resources, avoid duplication and effectively foster the process of development.

12. The Joint United Nations Information Committee, as the essential instrument for interagency co-ordination and co-operation in the field of public information, should be strengthened and given more responsibility, thus improving its co-ordination and cost-benefit efficiency on the public information activities of the entire United Nations system. 6/

13. The secretariat of the Joint Committee should be reinforced in order to be able to elaborate new methods of work to help the Committee move towards longer-term indicative planning and joint action, especially in the promotion of a new world information and communication order.

14. The Joint Committee should continue and strengthen its activities in the fields of development education and development-support communication.

15. The Joint Committee report on the public perceptions of the United Nations system should be presented to the Committee on Information for its review and comments.
16. The Joint Committee should continue to report on its programmes and activities to the Committee on Information for guidance and support.
17. The Joint Committee should examine the possibility of finding some financial arrangements for the continuation of the World Newspaper Supplement project.
18. The Department of Public Information should organize, in close co-operation with UNESCO, as soon as possible, a round table on a new world information and communication order, with the wide participation of major news media editors.
19. Since Development Forum is the only interagency publication of the United Nations system and since it provides issue-oriented, well-edited information on the actions and achievements of the various organs of the system and on those of the developing countries, its publication should be continued. In this regard, the Secretary-General should strongly appeal to all specialized agencies and other organs of the United Nations for their voluntary contributions to this system-wide publication and he should be invited to contribute to securing the financial basis for the continuation of Development Forum through the United Nations regular budget, while intensifying his efforts to ensure a sound and independent financial basis for the publication. 7/
20. The Non-Governmental Liaison Services in Geneva and New York as permanent joint projects within JUNIC promoting a wide support of public opinion for the global development and for the development efforts of developing countries should be strengthened and the continuation of their work secured by the JUNIC members reserving the necessary funds for financing their work as well as appealing to the Governments for voluntary extrabudgetary support.

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 8/

21. United Nations information centres should assist press and information media in their respective countries and, inter alia, promote the concept and ideas of a new world information and communication order.
22. It should note with appreciation the report on United Nations information centres 9/ and request the Secretary-General to:
 - (a) Strengthen the capacity and enhance the role of United Nations information centres by reallocating personnel and resources among different centres, information services and headquarters;

(b) Ensure that United Nations information centres orient their activities to disseminate information on questions according to the mandates and priorities of the Department of Public Information established by the General Assembly;

(c) Implement fully the recommendation of Assembly resolution 36/149 requesting a thorough study on ways and means to enhance the role of information centres within the structure of the Department of Public Information. The objective of such a study would, inter alia, aim at measures to increase their functional independence and flexibility to adjust their work to the information needs and interests of the countries they serve and to assess in concrete terms the essential financial, material and personnel needs of the centres;

(d) Review the levels of posts of centre directors in order to upgrade them, where needed, to a level commensurable with their responsibilities. The appointment of directors should be made on an equitable geographical basis in accordance with pertinent Assembly resolutions 35/210 of 17 December 1980 and 36/149 of 16 December 1981 and should be based on Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

(e) Establish a category of national information officers;

(f) Establish new centres in Brazzaville and Luanda, as far as permitted within existing resources and without reducing the capacity of existing centres, and ensure that the Information Service at Vienna will give adequate service in the German language in order to act as an information centre for Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany;

(g) Strengthen the role of the External Relations Division as the part of the Department of Public Information, which is responsible for the management, guidance, supervision and monitoring of the information centres in order to implement the proposed measures effectively and without delay.

23. The Department of Public Information should provide to the Committee on Information a summary of the reports submitted by the United Nations Information centres on their activities in all countries within their jurisdiction in addition to the one in which they are located.

24. The Department of Public Information should continue and intensify its efforts to redress the existing imbalance in its staff, particularly in the Radio and Visual Services Division, and, until equitable geographical distribution is achieved, the Secretary-General should take urgent steps to increase the representation of the group of developing countries, particularly at senior and policy-making levels, by a policy of recruiting from among their nationals, taking into account also the interests of other underrepresented groups of countries, in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolutions 33/143, 35/201 and 36/149; in this regard, the Secretary-General is requested to submit a report to the Committee on Information at its next session. 10/

25. The Department of Public Information should further strengthen its co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with regional news agencies of developing countries, such as the newly established Pan-African News Agency. In addition to supplying the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies with information on the activities of the United Nations system

that the Pool is redisseminating, the Department of Public Information should ensure that it receives the daily dispatches of the Pool in the interest of more balance in the sources of information used by the Department.

26. Having in mind the successful joint coverage by the Pool Agencies of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy in co-operation with the Department of Public Information, the practice of the joint coverage of important conferences and other events within the United Nations system should be continued and further strengthened.

27. The Secretary-General should submit a report to the next session of the Committee on Information setting out all of the various aspects of regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division of the Department of Public Information, taking into account views expressed and suggestions made in the Committee on Information in this regard and in consultation with available experts, as far as possible within existing resources. The Committee should then take a decision and submit a recommendation on this matter to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session. 11/

28. Specific proposals, including estimates of costs and benefits, should be submitted to the next session of the Committee for the purpose of enabling the African Unit of the Radio Service to undertake programming at a meaningful level in English and French and in major languages of the region, other than those already in use.

29. Immediate steps should be taken to strengthen the radio service of the United Nations with special reference to the African Group and the use of Lingala spoken in various Central African States, as far as possible within the existing resources.

30. Bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 36/149 and taking note of paragraph 23 of the Secretary-General's report 12/ on Radio Service of the Department of Public Information, the Committee on Information recommends inclusion of Bengali and Indonesian among the languages of the Asian Unit of the Radio Service for the purpose of undertaking programming at a meaningful level, as far as possible within existing resources.

31. Without prejudice to any future plan on regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division, the Secretary-General should proceed to maintain and enhance the functions of the Middle East and Arabic Unit in the Radio Service as the producer of television and radio programmes for the Arabic-speaking countries and he should, similarly, enlarge it through redeployment of existing resources.

32. The radio production in Serbo-Croat for Yugoslavia by the United Nations Information Service in Geneva should be reinstated in view of the evaluation made of the previous pilot project, as far as possible within existing resources.

33. The Spanish Radio Production Officer position in Geneva already budgeted should be filled as soon as possible.

34. The Secretary-General should implement fully the request, in paragraph 14 of Assembly resolution 36/149 B, that present United Nations short-wave broadcasts over rented transmitters be placed on a daily schedule throughout

the year, to the extent that this can be accomplished through more effective utilization of existing resources. 13/

35. The co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Union of National Radio and Television Organizations of Africa as well as with radio stations, members of the Union, should be continued in order to broadcast radio programmes of the United Nations on those radio stations. The Department should co-operate with the national radio broadcasting organizations in Africa for the establishment of a pilot project for wider broadcasting of United Nations radio programmes. To this end, the Department should take measures with the aim of promoting the study of technical and financial aspects and audience demands for the establishment of the pilot project.

36. The Secretary-General should be requested to present, at the next session of the Committee, a new extensive and detailed report on the acquisition of a United Nations communications satellite. 14/ This report should study the different alternatives and analyse and evaluate the current administration costs in relation with telephone, telex, radio, video, document processing, the holding of conferences, travels of interpreters, and so on, and while projecting seven-year operational goals, compare them with the cost of its own satellite. The study should take into account all potential uses of such a satellite by the United Nations system. It should also present feasible financing and self-maintenance alternatives. In this regard, the Committee on Information should, at its next session, also take into account the basic report on communications to be produced by the Joint Inspection Unit.

37. It should take note with satisfaction of the work done by the Department of Public Information in relation with the transmission by satellite of weekly television programmes on the United Nations. 15/

38. Member States should make voluntary contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Economic and Social Information.

39. The World Disarmament Campaign should give full consideration to the role of mass media as the most effective way to achieve wide access to the public with a view to promoting 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, 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.

40. The United Nations should aim at the provision of all possible support and assistance to the developing countries, with due 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) The 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 correspondent with the specific situation of the country concerned;

(c) The 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 any kind of conditioning.

41. The Committee, noting with appreciation the Secretary-General's report on the proposals for developing systematic evaluation procedures for activities of the Department of Public Information, 16/ encourages the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to develop a system for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the activities of the Department. The process of permanent evaluation of the activities of the Department to which the Secretary-General should give high priority thus ensuring an effective use of resources, should be continued and complemented by evaluation carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit. In this regard, the observations made by consumers of materials and services should also be taken into account. This systematic evaluation process should be pursued and a progress report should be presented to the Committee on Information at its next substantive session.

42. Future reports of the Department of Public Information to the Committee on Information and to the General Assembly 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 the end-use of the Department's products;

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

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

43. In this regard, the Committee on Information requests the Department of Public Information to present, during its next substantive session, a sufficiently broad sample of the various programmes and activities, including journals, booklets, news items, exhibits, films, radio and television recordings produced by the Department for the purpose of studying and analysing the quality and efficacy of the material produced, and, at the same time, to undertake a better informed analysis of the future planning and programming activities of the Department.

92. The above recommendations are submitted to the General Assembly by the consensus of the Committee on Information. Reservations were expressed by some delegations concerning the possible financial implications of some of them.

ANNEX I

Statement by the Secretary-General at the opening meeting of the
substantive session for 1982

[Original: Spanish]

1. It is a pleasure for me to discuss with you a subject of growing interest and concern, namely information which, through the spoken, written and visual media, so directly affects every member of the human race, irrespective of his or her standard education. I believe that we are all consumers of information and that our thoughts and actions are daily affected by the nature and quality of the information directed to us.
2. In the case of this Organization, information is a crucial element; first, because it colours our perceptions and interpretations of the political and economic problems with which we deal and, secondly, because information affects the group behavior of societies and States.
3. Debate on the subject of information has been in progress over the last decade, with particular emphasis on its North-South aspects. The importance of the issues in that debate is reflected in its emotionally charged nature. The United Nations, and more directly UNESCO, have been at the centre of a controversy when information is discussed in this North-South context. In view of the fact that some of the criticism of the United Nations system in recent years has been based on differing perceptions of its interests and aims in the area of information, I should like now to address myself to some of those issues.
4. We who serve this Organization have a deep and abiding interest in the accurate perception of its activities by the world at large. One of our main interests, solidly based on the Charter of the United Nations, is to help the world to understand that the Organization provides a ready and adaptable means which Governments can and should use to settle disputes and to deal with common problems. If this mechanism is perceived incorrectly, if it is seen as a failed attempt at world government or as an ineffectual exercise in international idealism, Governments will not have recourse to or make proper use of it.
5. The past decade has seen a broadening of this basic interest in explaining our activities to the public. This has been due, in the main, to two factors. One is the increasing complexity and diversity of United Nations involvement in world affairs. The United Nations is deeply involved with the gritty problems of keeping the peace in difficult and often dangerous situations. A great part of its resources are committed to speeding economic growth and ensuring adequate social development for dozens of Member States. United Nations action in the economic and social areas is particularly significant. Population growth, excessively high rates of death and disease, the safeguarding of the environment and the ecosystems, the processes of industrialization, food production and agricultural development - all these are subjects of its concern and its efforts. In addition, two months ago, the first comprehensive Convention on the Law of the Sea in human history was adopted. Even as we meet, a special session of the General Assembly is focusing on the most serious problem confronting the world today - the arms race - which is tremendously expensive and poses so serious a threat not only to world peace but to the very survival of the human race.
6. My reason for mentioning these efforts by the United Nations is to point out

that their success will depend to a great extent on public understanding of the nature of the problems at hand, which will have the effect of either helping Governments to work effectively within the United Nations or bringing to bear on them the necessary pressure to use the means afforded to them by the United Nations.

7. I need not emphasize to this distinguished audience the importance of some of the problems I have mentioned. In almost every field of human endeavour, we are caught in a process of such swift change that the experiences of history have become somewhat muted in their validity. Politically, economically, technologically and socially, we are dealing with forces which promise to strongly reshape the nature of our planet's economic, social and political life in the coming decades. In such a situation, it is of vital importance that international communications should be of the highest quality.

8. The second factor responsible for the broadened interest of the United Nations in information matters is the appearance of new countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. The realization of their political independence, the revolution of their rising hopes and expectations and their attempts to set right past imbalances are forces reshaping modern history. The study of these questions has brought out the compelling need for changes aimed at improved conditions for these emerging countries, which will benefit them directly and the developed countries indirectly.

9. When we inquire into why this need for change is not understood by people in developed countries as well as it should be, we find that one of the principal reasons is that they know little about the problems of the world's developing countries. The nature of changes proposed at the United Nations are frequently not reported to them in an intelligible manner. And if we investigate the reasons for this, it becomes apparent that the structures of existing global communications systems do not encourage such communications. We find, in fact, that there is little communication, in the sense of exchange of information, between the world's developing and developed countries.

10. For the United Nations, the improvement of communications among the peoples of the world is essential. The structures of world peace are often built in the minds of ordinary people, based on feelings of security and confidence in a just and rational world. If people are insecure about their neighbours and do not know their nature or intentions, it is only too easy to generate fears, whether justified or unjustified.

11. From fear to violence is, unfortunately, an almost instinctive step. In the modern world, such instinctive use of violence can, of course, be tragically counterproductive; we could, with frightening ease, destroy not only each other but most life on earth. At a lesser level, war inevitably derails development plans, increases inflation to unprecedented levels, ruins economies and can create hunger, disease and despair.

12. While emphasizing the need for a broad United Nations interest in matters of information because of current world trends, I do not want to leave the impression that our concern with this is new. At its very first session, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on freedom of information which declared it to be "the touchstone of all the freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated" and called for an international conference to formulate its views concerning "the rights, obligations and practices which should be included in the concept of the freedom of information" (General Assembly resolution 59 (I)).

13. Over the years, the interest of the international community in information matters has never flagged. In other General Assembly resolutions, at UNESCO and in a number of other United Nations agencies and organizations, a wide variety of information-related matters have been discussed. We all now realize that information is not merely a service function but is a matter of substantive policy and programme effort. When the General Conference of UNESCO adopted the 1978 Mass Media Declaration, it also set in motion the first comprehensive study of information ever undertaken. And the report of UNESCO's McBride Commission reflected the wide-ranging implications raised in our dealing with these matters.

14. Unfortunately, influential sections of the mass media in a number of countries seem to have been alarmed by the adoption of the Declaration and by the debates which have subsequently occurred on this subject, and their presentation of it to the public has reflected certain unfounded fears. The nature and intention of the Mass Media Declaration has, in the process, been considerably misperceived. The Declaration, though a formal and solemn instrument, is not in any way binding upon States nor, of course, upon the media. Its articles, whether directed to the mass media or to States, do not purport to be anything but advisory. What, then, is the use of such a document, it might be asked. The answer is that its use lies in stating a generally acceptable approach on a matter of critical importance to the international community. The Declaration refers to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to the 1966 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and thus, by implication, to the legal obligations of States to assist the mass media to implement its moral and professional obligations.

15. Critics of the Declaration who express concern that national public authorities have been given an instrument to limit freedom of the press are mistaken. Such a concept was not and could never be the intention of any United Nations deliberative body, in which free and open debate always prevails.

16. A realistic and practical example of United Nations hopes for the future is the International Programme for Development of Communications - the IPDC - which aims at creating facilities and disseminating technical skills. It seeks to establish communications networks - nationally, regionally and interregionally - to train journalists for press, radio and television, to give access to communications technology and information stemming from communications satellites or from data banks - and, generally, to assist developing countries to participate fully in the new technologies for communications.

17. The drive by developing countries to correct the existing imbalances in the flow of information is understandable and legitimate and the United Nations system, particularly UNESCO, is committed to help in this regard. Admittedly, there are dangers of governmental excesses in the process of creating a new system that would have to depend for the most part on public policy and funds. But these dangers must be faced and dealt with openly. We cannot avoid them by doing nothing, for we are all caught in inexorable currents of change. The international standards we have set, the ideals enunciated in United Nations instruments, embody the highest aspirations of humanity in this field. They should be used to spur progress and to take us on to a future - in technology, communications and information - in which all the world, developed and developing, can share.

18. In speaking to you so far, I have used the word "information" loosely, in its customary sense, to mean "news" provided by mass media, newspapers, television and radio. But the term "information" in our day includes many heterogenous goods and services - electronic sensing, satellite communications, computer analyses and

memories, magnetic tapes, video discs and recorders, to name a few. Information is specialized in a variety of ways, scientifically, technologically, economically.

19. It is on the flow of such specialized information very often, that the processes of economic and social development depend. And because of this, the United Nations system is broadly involved in the effort to study and reorder, in the common interest, existing systems of international information flow. Information about health, for instance, is vital to the functioning of the World Health Organization, as is that on world food crops to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. In attempting to help reshape the existing industrial map of the world, UNIDO is committed to creating new systems of information flow. The Centre on Transnational Corporations, UNDP, the World Bank - all have special interests in this question.

20. In recent years, a whole new dimension has been added to the debate as countries, both developed and developing, have discovered that information about themselves - their resources, their economic plans, their urban areas - is stored in computers halfway round the world. In many cases, countries discover that they have to pay to get back information which they themselves collected. It is thus becoming quite apparent that the free flow of news is very different from the free flow of specialized information. Both types of information affect our lives in many and profound ways, yet they are bought and sold like any other commodity. This multiple nature of the modern information process is what gives it its particular importance in our work at the United Nations.

21. The creation of this Committee by the General Assembly was an acknowledgement that information matters required a special focus and needed policy directives. During its existence, the Committee has done valuable and difficult work. In concluding my remarks, I would like to comment on what has been and what will surely continue to be, one of the important items on your agenda, the public perceptions of the United Nations.

22. The international situation in which the United Nations exists today is an ominous one. The pattern of world affairs has shifted in unexpected and dangerous ways, creating fresh strains in international relations and tending to aggravate many serious problems. One of the major functions of the United Nations system is to provide the framework to identify the nature and implications of these stresses, so that peaceful actions can be taken in concert in order to deal with them. This will be possible, however, only if the systems of international co-operation are correctly perceived and properly used.

23. The task of informing a global public about the activities of the United Nations system and educating people about its aims, concepts and realities, is formidable. It is not just that the issues before the international organizations are of global magnitude and complexity. There is the unavoidable fact that the "art of the possible", as practised at the international level, is neither gripping in procedure nor, in most cases, dramatic in result. How to convey to a broad mass of people the importance of the often plodding but vital processes of multilateral diplomacy or of development efforts? These are questions which we in the Secretariat deal with on a daily basis and we are acquiring experience which allows us to tackle them with increasing efficiency. I am confident that from your deliberations in this Committee we will gain continuing encouragement and guidance in our work.

ANNEX II

Statement by the Chairman of the Committee on Information at
the opening meeting of the substantive session for 1982

[Original: Spanish]

1. I am very grateful that we have with us the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, whose presence here is highly significant and encouraging. He has proved to be a distinguished son of Latin America in the performance of his noble task before the world community. His statement today has afforded constructive guidelines that will contribute to the work of our Committee in the fundamental area of economic, social and political development, and in matters related to the universality of the United Nations and the need to bridge the information gap between the rich and the poor, at a time when the focus is on the true image of this peace Organization as one providing services and affording opportunities.
2. The United Nations Committee on Information is beginning its fourth year of work at a time when millions of inhabitants of our planet are coming to the doors of the world Organization with a clear and specific request: disarmament and peace. They are raising the flag of all peoples, demanding in many languages from all corners of the earth - in Japan as well as in Western Europe, Canada, New York and Latin America - demanding that Governments fulfil the commitments of the San Francisco Charter. And this historic movement - an encouraging development in this last quarter of a century that has been marked by two world wars and the imminence of the nuclear destruction of our globe - is supported by millions of non-governmental organizations, by hundreds of leading scientists and religious figures, by political groupings of all tendencies, by the survivors of Hiroshima and, primarily, by young people, who, in the full assurance of their right to a world of peace, freedom, prosperity and justice, are turning to the United Nations as a means of preserving the most precious human values which today's rulers must pass on to these same young people when they begin to manage the world's affairs.
3. Thus it is clear that the United Nations, after 38 years of existence, has not been working in vain. The strength of public opinion has reached this peace Organization which, in turn, has at last reached public opinion. This vindicates those who drafted the Preamble to the Charter since today, more than ever before, it represents a commitment on the part of the international community in terms of doctrine and action, a commitment which is respectable, solid and permanent because it begins with the words: "We, the peoples of the United Nations ...".
4. But there are other encouraging trends we must bear in mind as well, with hope, precisely at this tragic and regrettable time of territorialist, doctrinaire, imperialistic, religious or colonialist wars. The industrialized countries of the West, at their summit meetings at Cancún and Versailles, accepted the need for global negotiations. This means that they are beginning to hear the clamour of the peoples and to heed the demand of the developing world that the North-South dialogue should herald understanding rather than implacable, undesirable confrontation and global dichotomy between rich and poor.
5. Meanwhile, the question of the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council is receiving in-depth consideration - and not before time. The Council has been the main source of the grand designs and resolutions which extended and streamlined the United Nations system so that it could achieve precisely the goals

set forth in the Preamble to the Charter: "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

6. Thus, everything falls into place within the general scheme of action in relation to the major responsibilities of our era. Disarmament is of course such a responsibility, but it is not the sole aim or the ultimate objective. Disarmament, with its logical corollary, the peaceful settlement of disputes, is a prerequisite for peace. But peace is not the sole aim or the ultimate objective either. Peace serves a specific purpose, namely, development. Once again, in the Preamble, there is the solemn undertaking to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and to establish conditions of justice and respect for social progress and better standards of life.

7. What does all this have to do with the mandate of this Committee and the social information media? It is fully and absolutely relevant, because this was the purpose for which we established this Committee in the General Assembly and because the media are simply the voice of the conscience of the people. It is only when the media do not so function that crowds take to the streets to make their voices heard and write on the walls, or in the prisons of repression, their messages of justice.

8. This is why we maintain that the promotion of development is a paramount responsibility of information, as it is a paramount responsibility of disarmament, peace and security, the prerequisites in a single process.

9. Accordingly, this Committee on Information will also have to consider this subject and imbue its action with this philosophy, since the mandate of the Committee establishes a direct relationship between information and development: the first paragraph of the mandate refers to the need to examine United Nations public information policies in the light of the evolution of international relations in the past two decades and the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order. This mandate thus encompasses the United Nations bodies dealing with development and the transfer of technology in the preliminary stage.

10. The 33 action-oriented recommendations in the Committee's 1981 report, reached by consensus in the Working Group and adopted by the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly, mark an historic and auspicious level of understanding between the East and the West, the North and the South, with respect to the modalities of information. In addition, since consensus, a desirable and preferable system for reaching agreement, fortunately does not in any way mean a veto, these recommendations were also supported by the democratic voting system, in plenary meeting at the most recent session of the Assembly, in an impressive show of majority support, universal in its dimensions.

11. Those recommendations constitute the greatest contribution our Committee has made in its history. They represent a commitment to activities for the United Nations system and an appeal to the sense of responsibility of the information media in supporting the major issues of peace and international security, such as disarmament and peace-keeping operations, the promotion of human rights, decolonization, the struggle against racial discrimination, the involvement of women in the struggle for peace and development, and the establishment of the new international economic order and the new world information and communication order.

12. A significant and commendable degree of understanding and co-operation has

prevailed in the work of the Committee on Information, as well as a clear awareness of the multitude of positions and approaches in connexion with the information function. Thus, with full respect for the opinions of sovereign countries on the matter, there was a reaffirmation of the principle of freedom of information on the basis of the free circulation and the broadest and best balanced dissemination of information, with the diversity of information sources and the freedom of access to such sources being guaranteed. There was a reaffirmation of the inspiring concept of article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the right to freedom of opinion and the right to receive and impart ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. In my country, Ecuador, which prides itself on its scrupulous respect for freedom of the press, a conference on the relationship between human rights and public information in Latin America is now in progress.

13. The intensification of conflicts and the sowing of resentment by reporters and commentators who are unscrupulous, opinionated and ignorant of the situations, characteristics and certainly the history and geography of other peoples are evils which weaken powerful information systems and convert them into instruments of disinformation or premeditated silence, with which the developing countries are forced to contend in their efforts to achieve their own economic, social and cultural improvement. These evils are as serious as the evils of systems of State censorship or systems in which only the official line of information prevails, in mocking defiance of freedom of thought and of information.

14. Significantly, these issues have begun to be analysed in the United Nations system and, particularly, in UNESCO, since they tend to stand in the way of peace, development, understanding and co-operation among peoples and the very preservation of human freedoms. Stress has also begun to be placed on the training of journalists from the developing countries, on the development of their schools of journalism and news agencies, and on the valuable exchanges of journalists between the North and the South, without which there would be no constructive dialogue or hope for understanding between Governments and regions.

15. All these factors are involved in the over-all concept of development, development being a United Nations objective in the sphere of peace. Of course, on our agenda, these factors reflect the direct, inescapable relationship between information and development in the world today, in the very structure of the United Nations system, in the activities of the Department of Public Information, which should become ever more closely linked to the activities of the United Nations Development Programme, in the clear relationship between all these issues and the need to improve the image of the world Organization, by better explaining to the general public exactly what it is and what potential it holds, and in the need for consistency and harmony, not to mention co-ordination, among all the information services of the network of organizations within the system.

16. We will not, therefore, run the risk of creating division and losing ourselves in minor matters. The three paragraphs containing this Committee's mandate are broad, clear and adequate. They are present in various aspects of the agenda adopted at the organizational meeting and they are reflected in the useful documents made available to us, with the usual efficiency and timeliness, by the Under-Secretary-General for Information, Mr. Akashi, to whom we express our thanks. Perhaps we should group more clearly the list of items under three headings, using the exact words of the paragraphs of the mandate, as was done last year, without relegating them to a mere foot-note.

17. The terms of some agenda items will make it possible to deal in greater detail

with the relationship between information and development. In addition to the debate on the promotion of the new world information and communication order in section A, we have, in section C, the two subsections on the active participation of all organizations of the United Nations system in the fulfilment of the Committee's mandate and on co-ordination in the field of public information activities among the Members of the United Nations system.

18. The correlation between information and development will give us an opportunity to support the Secretary-General in his effort to bring closely together, both at Headquarters and at field offices, the activities of the Department of Public Information and those of the United Nations Development Programme, particularly all the activities of the operational service programmes of the United Nations throughout the system.

19. Only in this way will the installed capacity of the available international machinery make it possible to meet the great popular demands for action from the United Nations. When the world public at large knows in greater detail about the economic, social and cultural work which constitutes 80 per cent of the activities of the United Nations system, the image of the United Nations is bound to improve and the Organization will appear in its true light as an instrument of peace, serving the development of peoples, in a genuine movement towards détente and the maintenance of peace and in an atmosphere of international coexistence, co-operation and justice.

20. The services of the Department of Public Information are bringing themselves up to date and adapting themselves to these new situations in which our Committee on Information has been acting as a political forum for the co-ordination of recommendations. Thus, we welcome the submission of reports on items relating to the true universality of the work involved, which should in turn reflect the growing universality of the Organization. I am referring to the geographical distribution in the staffing of the Department of Public Information and the balanced use of the official languages in the Department's publications and programmes.

21. For me, as a Latin American, aware of the significance of the close links between the countries of Iberian origin, which now comprise some 300 million Spanish-speaking and 150 million Portuguese-speaking people, the inclusion of these items is encouraging and signifies a further contribution to the strengthening of the world-wide dissemination of the work of the United Nations, as has already been pointed out here by distinguished spokesmen for the peoples of Africa and Asia.

22. We hope to be able to count at this session on the valuable contributions of the United Nations organizations which have worked so hard, particularly the contributions of UNESCO and ITU, as well as those of non-governmental organizations, the United Nations Correspondents' Association and the many information specialists of public and private organizations.

23. I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the Bureau, with whom we shall continue working enthusiastically and with dedication, as in past years. I would like to welcome the new representative of the African Group here, the distinguished Counsellor of the Mission of Morocco, Mr. Rachid Lahlou. I would also like to thank the Secretariat staff for their preparatory work, particularly the Secretary, Mr. Iqbal Riza.

24. Two hundred years ago, the precursor of Ecuadorian journalism, Eugenio Espejo,

advocated the promotion of development, health, human rights and freedom. To do all this, he had to be a medical doctor, a researcher, a scientist, a librarian, a conspirator and, of course, a journalist. He succeeded in publishing seven issues of his periodical First Manifestations of the Culture of Quito. And, in the last issue, which appeared on 29 March 1792, he appealed for a new social order which he called "Concordia", saying in his last line "se continuará" - "to be continued". For his anti-colonialist ideas and his love of freedom, Espejo went to prison, where he died one month later. But "to be continued" is the watch-word of Ecuadorian journalism. In the perpetually-beginning process in which this Committee, with its universal mission, is engaged, we are committed to the same end.

Notes

1/ For the statements of the Secretary-General and of the Chairman of the Committee, see annexes I and II.

2/ The Department of Public Information distributed supplementary information on this matter to the Committee.

3/ The proposed dates for the meetings of the Committee on Information in 1983 are as follows:

28 and 29 March 1983: organizational session
29 June to 8 July 1983: substantive session

4/ See the third part of the mandate of the Committee on Information (General Assembly resolution 34/182, sect. I, para. 2 (c)).

5/ See the second part of the mandate of the Committee on Information (General Assembly resolution 34/182, sect. I, para. 2 (b)).

6/ See A/AC.198/56.

7/ See A/AC.198/55.

8/ See the first part of the mandate of the Committee on Information (General Assembly resolution 35/182, sect. I, para. 2 (a)).

9/ See A/AC.198/45 and Add. 1.

10/ See A/AC.198/44.

11/ See A/AC.198/47.

12/ See A/AC.198/48.

13/ See A/AC.198/49.

14/ See A/AC.198/51.

15/ See A/AC.198/52.

16/ See A/AC.198/53.