



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NOWORYTA (Poland)

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AGENDA ITEM 79: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 79: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued) (A/43/21, 639, 670)

1. Mrs. SEVIGNY (Under-Secretary-General for Public Information) said that she did not believe that the inability of the Committee on Information to present agreed recommendations to the General Assembly at the current session should be seen as evidence of failure. Rather, the constructive and non-confrontational spirit that had led it to transmit various questions to the General Assembly for further consideration offered hope that the momentum would be maintained and that agreement on the issues before that Committee was now possible.
2. The recent and welcome improvement in the public's attitude towards the United Nations did not make the task of the Department of Public Information (DPI) any easier or the reform of public information practices any less urgent. On the contrary, the increased receptiveness required a more prepared response to the demand for information and offered an opportunity to highlight matters of priority to the Organization, such as the struggle against apartheid, the questions of Namibia and Palestine, economic and social development and human rights.
3. Describing the past year's exhaustive scrutiny by the United Nations legislative and expert bodies of the Department's structure, methods, programme and budget, which had resulted in proposed revisions to the medium-term plan and revised programme budget proposals that reflected the planned reforms, she assured the Committee that DPI intended to respond positively to the various recommendations addressed to it by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) and that it was committed to co-operating fully in the monitoring and evaluation of DPI performance by the General Assembly, as recommended by CPC. Indeed, she was gratified by the attention her Department's work commanded, for it revealed the conviction on the part of Member States that public information activities were of high political and practical importance to the Organization.
4. It was nevertheless true that the process had been difficult, coupled as it had been with the post-reduction exercise mandated by the General Assembly. No doubt further adjustments would be required in the light of experience. Yet she believed the time had come to proceed urgently to complete the implementation of the necessary reforms, so that attention could be devoted fully to the fulfilment of the DPI mandates.
5. A number of delegations had asked to be informed about the situation affecting the staff of her Department as a consequence of the restructuring and the post reductions. Following intensive consultations with staff representatives and the administration, a process had been agreed upon whereby staff occupying posts whose functions remained unchanged in the new structure had been confirmed in their posts. For all other posts - those with new or significantly different functions or those which would be reduced in number - a three-phase selection process had been inaugurated. Staff applications would be reviewed by a joint selection

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committee comprising departmental and staff-appointed representatives and representatives of the Office for Human Resources Management, with a further review of candidates at the P-5 and D-1 levels by the Appointments and Promotion Board. Either the special selection committee or the Board would then establish short lists of eligible candidates from which she herself would make the final selection. Of the 149 current staff members, 73 had been confirmed in continuing posts. Thirty-five others had been selected in the first round of the selection process. There were still 41 staff members not placed, but it was reassuring that there were 63 vacancies at Headquarters to be filled, plus others in the field. The main problem existed at the P-5 level, where there were more staff awaiting placement than available vacancies. Every effort, however, would of course be made to minimize adverse effects on serving staff. It was a tribute to the dedication of DPI staff that, during the difficult and stressful situation of the past year, the Department had been able to perform credibly in discharging its mandates.

6. DPI produced various types of material such as radio programmes, regular publications, television items or features, photographs, films and electronic mail dispatches, and such coverage activities had progressively been integrated into the major promotional campaigns on United Nations activities.

7. In her statement to the Committee on Information, which appeared as annex II to the Committee's report (A/43/21), she had given fuller details about the work of DPI in the past year, but she now wished to highlight some of the important promotional activities undertaken in recent weeks and months.

8. DPI material in the peace-making and peace-keeping area, especially in the wake of the publicity generated by the Nobel Peace Prize award, was being distributed throughout the world to the media, to the United Nations information centres, to non-governmental organizations and to all target groups of re-disseminators. DPI had sponsored a major international symposium on peace-keeping in September and held a round table for major francophone editors and media leaders focusing on the United Nations role in that area. It was also preparing a comprehensive information programme to highlight the Secretary-General's acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize in December.

9. DPI had developed three television co-productions in co-operation with the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and the Centre against Apartheid and had co-produced a film with the latter and prepared other materials on the anti-apartheid struggle. The Department was also making arrangements with the Walt Disney Company for the co-production of an educational film and a television special on the work of the United Nations.

10. On the question of Namibia, DPI was working on an integrated public information programme and was giving priority to improving United Nations publications on Namibia, particularly since many were being rendered obsolete by the changing situation there and could not simply be reprinted.

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11. The Department had continued energetically to implement the special programme on the question of Palestine by, for instance, helping to organize journalists' encounters and conducting field visits for journalists to the Middle East. In addition, DPI had worked out a comprehensive information programme for the launching of "Operation Salam", the United Nations humanitarian and economic assistance programme for Afghanistan.
12. With regard to development-related economic issues, the Department's major activities during the latter part of the year had included the release of the World Economic Survey and the Fourth Survey on Transnational Corporations in the World Economy, accompanied by press briefings; a press release on the Secretary-General's report on the external debt crisis; the preparation of materials on the widening gap between developing and developed countries and on the hearings to be held in Europe on the activities of transnational corporations in southern Africa; and research on two new publications dealing in part with the global negotiations and the new international economic order and on the development activities of United Nations agencies.
13. DPI was continuing to give special attention to the African economic crisis. While the periodical Africa Recovery remained the centrepiece of its activities, the Department had produced other special materials as well that had been widely reproduced in the major international media, and it would be organizing a journalists' tour of Senegal and Ghana in late November.
14. DPI was co-ordinating world-wide informational activities for the first World AIDS Day on 1 December 1988, in which the essential role of the United Nations system in the battle against AIDS would be emphasized. The Department would also be organizing a series of events in connection with its multi-media programme on human rights focusing on the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
15. One of the Department's major objectives was to help to develop the information and communication infrastructure of developing countries, in order to eliminate imbalances in information flows among countries. It was, for instance, exploring in conjunction with the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries ways of expanding DPI outreach in the developing region by increasing co-operation with various redistribution news agencies. In addition, 26 broadcasters and journalists from developing countries were currently assigned to DPI and participating in its intensive information programme, which might in future be expanded to include staff from less established news agencies, such as those from the African front-line States. She was continuing to seek extrabudgetary funding for regional, and ultimately interregional, training programmes for broadcasters and journalists.
16. With regard to the future work of DPI, she stressed that the new approach was based on the global nature of the issues dealt with by the United Nations requiring the identification of different target audiences and underscored the need to co-ordinate the various components of the information programme to achieve maximum impact. It was also essential to increase the Department's ability to measure the

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actual impact of its programmes. The new approach was designed to introduce a management system to deal with international issues in accordance with the mandates laid down by the General Assembly. She hoped to strengthen the Department's links with the various substantive departments, programmes and agencies, with which co-operation was essential. The public information aspects of mandated activities must be kept in mind. One of her objectives was to ensure that arrangements within DPI made it possible to judge what needed to be done in different parts of the world and to act in a timely and flexible manner.

17. In addition to pursuing efforts to improve professionalism and the quality of outputs, the need for updating equipment and facilities both at Headquarters and in the field must be stressed. Member States must ensure adequate funding for the mandated activities. It would not be inaccurate to describe DPI as over-mandated and under-budgeted. The last few years had been particularly trying when, as a consequence of the financial crisis, the actual allocations to the Department were far below the level of appropriations approved by the General Assembly. It was essential to have the necessary funds in order to be able to take speedy decisions to meet sudden needs. She sincerely hoped that in the future DPI would be able to plan and execute its activities in a more satisfactory manner.

18. Mr. BAALI (Algeria), reviewing the history of communication, said that, in the contemporary world, which was characterized by interdependence, communication should be for the benefit of all and therefore should belong to all. On the basis of that firm conviction, the third world countries had, a decade earlier, adopted the goal of gradually bringing about a new world information and communication order which would afford each person the opportunity to hear and be heard and to contribute to society.

19. The communication sector had for several decades been characterized by blatant inequities. A handful of concerns exercised total control over the production and dissemination of news, while the third world played an ever decreasing role. Meanwhile, with the prodigious growth of satellite broadcasting, data processing and teleprocessing, the technological gap between North and South was widening day by day and verging on the irreversible.

20. Ten years of persistent efforts by the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to change the existing state of affairs seemed to have led only to a hardening of positions. There was no other explanation for the gradual erosion of funds allotted to the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) and for the stagnation of assistance aimed at providing developing countries with communication infrastructures.

21. The first step towards resolving the existing problems was, of course, for the developing countries to take control of their communication media. Above all, however, it required regional and multilateral co-operation leading to an overhaul of current structures and mechanisms. The greatest danger now faced by the developing countries was not the impoverishment of their people, but their

(Mr. Baali, Algeria)

spiritual and cultural dispossession in the name of a misinterpretation of freedom of information.

22. His delegation had listened with great interest to the remarks by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information. Believing that the Department of Public Information should do everything in its power to discharge rapidly and efficiently the mandate conferred on it by the General Assembly and the Charter of the United Nations, his delegation had understood the need and urgency of reforms. It was essential, however, that certain fundamental political imperatives, which should guide the activities of the Department, should not be concealed or sacrificed. It was of the greatest importance that the Department's new structures should assume full and consistent responsibility for certain questions to which the United Nations assigned special priority, i.e., apartheid, Namibia and Palestine. A special effort should be made to strengthen the United Nations information centres, and to provide certain publications such as Development Forum with the necessary resources. Finally, it was imperative that, in restructuring the Department, due consideration should be given to an equitable geographical distribution of posts, especially at higher levels. Co-operation should be strengthened between the United Nations and developing countries in such areas as the training of journalists and communication experts and the dissemination of information through agreements between the Department and the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries.

23. At the last session of the Committee on Information, the members of the Committee, especially the States members of the Group of 77, had resolved to put aside sterile polemics and attempt to find an acceptable compromise. Despite the failure to agree on a common programme of action, the Group of 77 remained committed to the new approach. It would spare no effort to help ensure that the Special Political Committee could, during the current session, bring about a convergence of wills on the part of all Member States with regard to the new world information and communication order.

24. Mr. DHOUBHADEL (Nepal) said that the imbalance in news flows between North and South had attracted much attention, yet much remained to be done to correct the imbalances in news flows within the various regions of the South, including South Asia. A recent study originating in Bangladesh had established, for example, that only one fifth of all international news published in the region concerned events there. His delegation felt that the developed and the leading developing nations should co-operate in establishing the necessary infrastructure in the developing countries, and that there must be concerted efforts at the national and regional levels to set long-term information and communication policies.

25. In that context, the role of DPI assumed great importance. While the Department had recently streamlined its structures and activities, much remained to be done in the area of strengthening and promoting the national communication systems of the developing countries, as well as lessening the disparities in information and communication between their urban and rural sectors. That would make it possible to convey to the general public comprehensive information

(Mr. Dhoubhadel, Nepal)

regarding the United Nations system, including the principles and aims related to the new international economic order.

26. The International Programme for the Development of Communication and the regular programmes of UNESCO were clearly a valuable contribution. It was to be hoped that the criteria for selecting and awarding projects under IPDC would be further rationalized in order to benefit the least developed countries.

27. His delegation made the following suggestions for urgent consideration by the Committee: the United Nations information centres should be further strengthened and extended to the capitals of all Member States; the Asian unit of the United Nations Radio Service should include Nepali language programmes; and the DPI programme for training journalists from developing countries should be revitalized.

28. Mr. HAENSEL (German Democratic Republic) said that questions relating to information and communication were an integral part of the process aimed at promoting détente and disarmament and improving all areas of international relations.

29. As a result of the tremendous strides taken in communications technologies, transboundary information flows had assumed unprecedented proportions, thus making questions relating to information part and parcel of international relations. In the nuclear and space age, the possibility that States having different social systems might live together in harmony increasingly hinged on a wider and better-balanced dissemination of information and on a more truthful and comprehensive knowledge of each other. Information played a growing role in the implementation of universal humanist values, particularly the strengthening of peace, the safeguarding of democracy and human rights, the elimination of underdevelopment and poverty and the peaceful settlement of costly world conflicts. It could serve as a factor of stability and trust among States and peoples. Therefore, freedom of information must be accompanied by a sense of responsibility in the use of information and a guarantee that all countries could share in the exchange of information.

30. The German Democratic Republic was in favour of a free and balanced flow of truthful and responsible information, which was the goal of a new world information and communication order. To that end, his country was helping to train journalists from the developing countries and providing material support to them. It gave priority to co-operation with news agencies as centres of national communication infrastructures and to the principles of equality and respect for the sovereignty and national independence of all States. The General Assembly should reaffirm the central role of UNESCO in the field of information. His country welcomed UNESCO's achievements in improving communication infrastructures in the developing countries.

31. A new world information and communication order would reflect a larger measure of democracy and equality in that field and would be in keeping with the objectives set forth in the Charter.

(Mr. Haensel, German Democratic Republic)

32. In view of the increased international confidence in the United Nations, DPI now had additional responsibilities and tasks. It should endeavour to make its work more effective, particularly by developing information programmes leading to broad public support and deeper understanding of the Organization's objectives. The Department should be guided by such priorities as peace, security, disarmament, development, decolonization, the promotion of human rights and the struggle against apartheid and racial discrimination. His country would continue to be ready to take part in such efforts.

33. The Department's restructuring process would meet the demands made of the Secretariat if it was carried out in full accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/213 and took account of the global nature of the Organization's objectives. The possibility should be examined of the establishment of a group of experts composed of representatives from all regional groups. Such a group could have an advisory role in formulating effective information programmes. In addressing the tasks before the Committee, his delegation would be guided by the tenets of a secure peace, the rejection of confrontation and the promotion of co-operation in international relations.

34. Mr. TEKAYA (Tunisia) said that, in an age of space exploration and ongoing technological revolutions in communications, information required vast financial resources, which exceeded the developing countries' means. Those countries had recognized the inadequate and unbalanced flow of information which separated them from the developed countries, owing to the control of the means of information and communication by a small number of news agencies in certain industrialized countries. In urgently calling for a new world information and communication order, the developing countries endeavoured to exercise a legitimate right and to engage in a more effective international dialogue, based on equality and respect for universal values. As the idea of change was a cause for concern and unfavourable reactions in certain quarters, he reaffirmed that the new order would aim to achieve fuller North-South understanding and co-operation.

35. The fundamental North-South imbalances stemmed from a long historical process. Their elimination thus required considerable understanding and sustained efforts. Tunisia was convinced that sincere co-operation, based on solidarity and faith in a common future, would significantly help to achieve that objective. It welcomed the important role played by IPDC. As a token of international solidarity, some developed countries had contributed generously to that programme and to the financing of various projects of interest to the developing countries.

36. The increased number and diversification of information sources made for greater freedom of information. The acquisition of the necessary material and professional means would enable the developing countries to come closer to achieving that freedom. Tunisia had undertaken to safeguard the right of its citizens to freer information and to fuller participation in the process of democratization. It had also undertaken to ensure full respect for freedom of the press. The number of dailies, periodicals and magazines expressing various points of view and freely reflecting the positions of the various parties, organizations

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and political trends had substantially increased, thus providing equal opportunities to all political groups to be heard.

37. Tunisia particularly welcomed the human rights information programmes developed by DPI, the programmes undertaken as part of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 and those concerning the policies and practices of apartheid. It also welcomed the Department's activities regarding the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine and the programme of visits to the Middle East for international journalists.

38. The holding of the annual DPI conference for non-governmental organizations on conflict resolution, peace-keeping and global security had proven to be very timely and useful. It would certainly help to increase the influence of the United Nations and to strengthen its role. His delegation also noted with satisfaction the revival of co-operation between DPI and the Broadcasting Organization of the Non-Aligned Countries. It expressed the hope that the ongoing and future co-operation projects with the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries would be successful.

39. Tunisia had followed with interest the restructuring undertaken within the Department. The Department's activities should be rationalized and harmonized in full respect of the Charter and enable the Organization more effectively to reach all the peoples of the world in order to apprise them of its role in resolving issues of international peace, security, development and co-operation. Tunisia attached particular importance to the priority mandates entrusted to the Department by the General Assembly, and restructuring should facilitate the discharge of those mandates. The Department should benefit from the results of technological progress in information and communication with a view to accomplishing that task. It should be noted that some restructuring actions had given rise to concern on the part of several delegations. Such activities included the use of certain advertising agencies, the reduction of educational documentaries, the reduction of some radio programmes, such as those intended for the peoples of South Africa and Namibia, and the elimination of the Division for Economic and Social Information.

40. The Committee on Information played an important role in guiding the activities of DPI. The interest raised by the Committee on Information continued to increase, as evidenced by the requests to join it over the years. It would certainly benefit from the contributions of Zimbabwe, Hungary and Ireland.

41. At the previous session of the Committee on Information, the Group of 77 had shown considerable flexibility and genuine openness. The draft recommendations which it had proposed entailed concessions on its part. The Group had undertaken negotiations on the working non-paper in a spirit of co-operation. Despite its strong reservations concerning that document, the Group had endeavoured to consider how it could help to reduce the problems posed by that document without jeopardizing its principles and interests. Tunisia welcomed the atmosphere of co-operation and dialogue which had guided all the consultations and negotiations

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between the various groups and expressed the hope that such a spirit would help the Committee on Information to achieve successful results.

42. Mr. TARMIDZI (Indonesia) said that, while the establishment of a new world information order would be a long and arduous process, international relations and understanding in an increasingly interdependent world would suffer if such a vital issue was ignored. It was essential to recognize that the deep-rooted imbalances, inequities and injustices in the international political and economic order were formidable obstacles to dealing with the question of a new world information and communication order. It was particularly regrettable that certain powerful vested interests in a few advanced States had disparaged the sincere and viable proposals on the new world information order put forward by the non-aligned and other developing countries and supported by the vast majority of States. Although the tenth session of the Committee on Information had not succeeded in adopting a consensus report for submission to the General Assembly, it had not been an exercise in futility, as a genuine effort had been made to reach a compromise and there had been broad recognition of the basic premises and validity of a new world information and communication order and the need to forge a programme of realistic and practical measures to strengthen international co-operation in that field. He hoped that a generally acceptable agreement could be reached at the current session of the General Assembly. Indonesia was ready to co-operate fully with the members of the Special Political Committee in order to arrive at viable solutions to the remaining unresolved issues.

43. The information and communication industry continued to be dominated by a handful of countries which controlled 90 per cent of the production of information goods and services, amounting to over \$1,000 billion in 1986 alone. Accordingly, vast problems confronted UNESCO in its efforts to strengthen national, subregional and regional information and communication infrastructures. Indonesia could not but underscore its exasperation with the paucity of voluntary contributions to IPDC from the advanced States and their reluctance to recognize the serious vulnerability of the developing countries in that field. The non-aligned and other developing countries had thus undertaken programmes based on collective self-reliance in order to overcome the impediments to their wider interaction in international information and communication. The News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries, Eco-pool and the Broadcasting Organization of Non-Aligned Countries were among the tangible expressions of their commitment further to develop and expand the information and communication capabilities of their countries. In that regard, the thirteenth meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee of the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries, which Indonesia had had the honour to host, had achieved further progress in consolidating the work of the News Agencies Pool by promoting measures to reduce telecommunication tariffs, provide assistance to new news agencies in non-aligned countries, create more professional training opportunities, establish a more integrated telecommunications network and consider the establishment of a trust fund for professional training.

(Mr. Tarmidzi, Indonesia)

44. It was hoped that the reordering of UNESCO priorities and the reorganization of DPI activities would maximize their work in helping the developing countries to expand their capacity in the field of information. He appreciated the frank statement made by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information outlining the new approaches in the work of DPI. Although the austerity measures imposed on the Department required certain operational changes, it was difficult to understand how unprecedented cuts in activities and programmes could revitalize the Department. Rather than curtail its functions concerning key issues such as the decolonization of the media, the elimination of apartheid and self-determination for the Palestinian people, DPI should step up its activities in those fields as part of the new determination of the international community to bring about just and peaceful solutions. While his delegation was deeply concerned at the elimination of the anti-apartheid unit and the transfer of the Namibia and Palestine units, it appreciated the readiness of the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information to work with the Committee on Information to ensure that the Department continued to accord special priority to those issues. Lastly, he stressed that the international community must reaffirm its collective commitment to the effective functioning of DPI in order to sustain the renewed confidence in the Organization.

45. Mr. LAGORIO (Argentina), referring to the draft recommendations contained in annex VII of the report of the Committee on Information, said that they had proved to be the only reasonable and acceptable basis for a possible agreement. His delegation believed that the Special Political Committee, at the current session, should finally be in a position to reach unanimous agreement on a package of recommendations, especially in view of the prevailing favourable climate in international relations. In his delegation's opinion, paragraph 1 of the document constituted a basis of agreement on the fundamental issue on which Member States were divided - the new world information and communication order - by reconciling defence of the principle of freedom of information with the need to eliminate imbalances related to the progress of science and technology.

46. His delegation hoped that in the near future, DPI would be able to produce the information materials concerning the external debt of developing countries. His delegation also supported the idea, described in paragraph 35 of document A/43/639, of developing media profiles for all countries where the Department maintained information centres. It might also be useful to analyse the public opinion profiles of those countries. He wished to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information for her detailed presentation and to reiterate his delegation's support.

47. His delegation would make every effort to promote an agreement in 1988 on the definition of the new world information and communication order, taking into account the interests of all parties.

48. Mr. PERFILIEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the improved international political climate resulting from the progress in settling regional conflicts and in disarmament had created favourable conditions for broadening the exchange of objective information among countries and peoples. Owing to glasnost,

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large-scale, truly revolutionary changes were occurring in the field of information in the Soviet Union. Glasnost was promoting the cause of peace and co-operation, the creation of a non-nuclear and violence-free world and the establishment of civilized international relations.

49. Glasnost was based on common sense, norms of morality and the need for stability and socialist choice. The Soviet Union was integrating its own traditions and way of thinking with concepts shared by all mankind. The representative of the German Democratic Republic had put forward a useful analysis of the correlation between freedom of information and responsibility in disseminating information. In that connection, he stressed that commitment to one's principle concepts should promote the world-wide exchange of information. The values common to all mankind must take precedence over all others - regional, national or class values.

50. The time had come to reach agreement on a wide range of practical steps aimed at, for example, elaborating a world information programme under the auspices of the United Nations to acquaint peoples with one another. UNESCO could help set up such a programme through its own television and computer network. His country was prepared to provide support in that regard through Soviet national technical means.

51. The new political thinking must also be demonstrated in the field of information, particularly in promoting a normal exchange of information on the basis of mutual respect and understanding. Such thinking had so far been more in evidence in politics and diplomacy than in the mass media. There was, therefore, a real danger that the field of information might become one of the last areas of confrontation. That in turn might lead to a reappearance of confrontation at the political level. The time had come to abandon confrontational reflexes and recriminations. Information specialists should seek new forms of contact and interaction. The Soviet Union was fully prepared to promote such new approaches in information activities, inter alia, within the framework of a new information order which would make it possible to provide on a broad basis objective information on the work and priorities of the United Nations.

52. The Committee on Information could step up its work to enhance the importance of the information component of the work of the Organization. All important United Nations resolutions, particularly those adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly, had implications both with regard to financing and information. No calls for action could be effective if they were relegated to the archives. The inability of the Committee on Information to reach agreement was well known. In that connection, he felt that the draft recommendations in annex VII of the Committee's report could be the basis for an agreed text. Never before had the Committee on Information been so close to consensus. The Soviet Union was prepared to co-operate with all delegations in order to achieve that goal.

53. He hoped that the restructuring of DPI would promote increased effectiveness through structural improvements, the use of up-to-date technology and new forms of interaction with partners and consumers. The effectiveness of preparing and

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disseminating materials on important questions involving the United Nations was increasing. The work with international and national public organizations which shared the goals of the United Nations was valuable. The Department's activities in promoting the training of national personnel from developing countries was useful. DPI should always adhere strictly to the principle of equitable geographic distribution of posts. His delegation fully supported the statement made by the representative of Algeria in that regard. The Department's reforms should not be to the detriment of any regional publications, including the Russian-language version of the UN Chronicle. In order to ensure constructive interaction between the Committee on Information and DPI, a committee of experts made up of representatives of all regional groups and China could be established in order to consider specific problems affecting Member States and regularly discuss ways to solve them with the management of DPI. Such a committee, which could work between the sessions of the Committee on Information, could help to promote co-operation in the field of information among Member States and publicize interesting experience gained in using the mass information media to advance the ideals of the Organization.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.