



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NOWORYTA (Poland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 115: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/SPC/43/L.4)

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that he had drawn attention to the letter addressed to him by the President of the General Assembly transmitting a letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee concerning programme planning and the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/SPC/43/L.4). In that connection, he wished to inform the Committee that he had received a communication from the representative of Tunisia conveying the views of the Group of 77 on the subject, which would be forwarded to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee and circulated as a document of the Special Political Committee.

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

2. Mr. FISCHER (Uruguay) stressed the importance which his country attached to freedom of opinion and expression as laid down in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That right was inseparable from other freedoms which formed the basis for democracy. His delegation had studied very carefully the recommendations aimed at establishing a new world information and communication order. The international situation in the field of information was characterized both by revolutionary technological advances and the powerful concentration of such technology in the most industrialized countries. The predominance of the industrialized countries in that regard was reflected in the one-way flow of information, images and messages, which gave distorted, selective and erroneous perceptions of the situation in other countries. The developing countries rightly wished to preserve their cultural identity. The free circulation of information, which Uruguay fully supported, must not be used to perpetuate the existing imbalances or be to the detriment of the weaker nations.

3. In Latin America in recent years, the exercise of freedom of the press and freedom of thought had advanced and had encouraged internal processes leading to a restoration of other freedoms and a return to democracy. The modern communication media should be used to promote the growth and modernization of societies. Joint and far-reaching efforts must be made to overcome the technological gap in that field and guarantee the most productive exercise of freedom of information and communication. In that connection, he stressed the need for equitable participation in the free flow of news, images, ideas and knowledge on the basis of mutual respect for cultural identity. The time had come to take advantage of the improved international climate in order to expand international co-operation in that field and gradually eliminate the existing imbalances. Rules should be laid down and co-operation expanded in the field of information in the same way as in international political and trade relations.

4. The establishment of a new information order did not involve the imposition of protective arrangements and coercive international planning of the use of communication media. It was necessary to strengthen the technological

(Mr. Fischer, Uruguay)

infrastructures and training programmes in the weaker countries and increase resources to enable them to broadcast their own messages and opinions on a more equitable basis.

5. The discussion of the question of information in the Organization had served to identify the disparities and imbalances in the field and create an international public awareness of the situation. The United Nations system, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Department of Public Information (DPI) should play an important role in meeting the technological challenge in the field of communication and ensuring the implementation of the principles laid down in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

6. The Committee had made constructive efforts to achieve a consensus on the recommendations put forward. That consensus should serve as the starting point for promoting multilateral co-operation in the field of information and communication. His delegation sought to encourage those efforts and was prepared to help to reconcile divergent views.

7. Mr. NOGUES (Paraguay) said that the Committee on Information, in spite of its difficult task, had made progress towards achieving its objectives. His delegation generally supported all the recommendations contained in its report (A/43/21). Paraguay shared the view of the developing countries that the establishment of a new world information and communication order was necessary in view of the serious imbalance in the field of information, which was dominated by the developed countries. The main international news agencies and mass communication networks demonstrated a bias and a lack of responsibility in disseminating information. Greater access on the part of the developing countries to information sources was essential in order to improve living standards and promote understanding among peoples. His Government had achieved extraordinary progress in developing communication through the National Telecommunication Administration (ANTELCO). Paraguay had thus been able to enter the modern age of space communication with a well-developed national telecommunication system.

8. The regional and national information centres should continue to disseminate information on United Nations activities to foster the support of world public opinion for the purposes and principles of the Organization. Those centres should be strengthened and international agencies which promoted development should consider projects for transferring communication technology and training in general information management.

9. His delegation also appreciated the work of UNESCO in co-operating with developing countries and urged it to continue to search for new ways to facilitate their acquisition of modern communication technology in order to establish a new world information order, which was essential in order to safeguard freedom of information on the basis of unimpeded access to information sources.

10. Mr. SHERMAN (Liberia) said that the freedom of communication should no longer be limited to those who owned or controlled the media and stressed the need to promote greater variety and diversity in news sources. The establishment of a new information order was the best way to redress the existing imbalances in the flow of information. The new information order should begin at the national level through the building of the necessary infrastructures and the training of personnel. His Government had embarked on the development of an effective communications programme, a major component of which was an integrated rural network reinforcing a domestic system linked to regional and major communication centres.

11. His delegation recognized the key role of UNESCO in the dissemination of information and attached particular importance to the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), which was relevant to the needs of the developing countries. He hoped that increased contributions would be made to the Programme to enable it to achieve practical results. Liberia felt that DPI should strengthen international support for the United Nations and welcomed the Department's ongoing restructuring exercise aimed at improving its activities. Nevertheless, he shared the concern that such restructuring should not have a negative effect on priority programmes relating to peace, security, disarmament, development, decolonization, the promotion of human rights and the struggle against apartheid and the illegal occupation of Namibia. It was hoped that those programmes would continue to receive special attention and that the principle of equitable geographic distribution of posts would be observed, particularly at the higher levels in the Department. His delegation commended the expanded programme of co-operation between DPI and the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries and hoped that it would be broadened further. Liberia appreciated the Department's efforts to keep international attention focused on Africa's economic crisis and felt that Africa's debt crisis should receive similar attention.

12. Mr. NGAC (Viet Nam) said that despite the fact that the Committee on Information had been in existence for 10 years, little progress had been made towards the goal of establishing a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order. The existing order fell far short of the international community's expectations regarding equal and balanced exchanges of information. As other speakers had already pointed out, over 90 per cent of the current production of information was controlled by a handful of press agencies of industrialized countries. The developing countries, who accounted for only 5 per cent of world expenditure on information technology, continued to be passive recipients of information. Such serious imbalances meant that a sense of responsibility in the dissemination of information was more necessary than ever.

13. The existing order must be rectified and the dependent status of the developing countries changed. The new world information and communication order should be regarded as an integral part of a new order of international, political and economic relations. His delegation fully shared the view that the principles of sovereign equality and national independence in exchanges of information should be strictly respected.

(Mr. Ngac, Viet Nam)

14. In order to redress existing imbalances in the dissemination of information, the information and communication infrastructures of the developing countries must be strengthened and improved. In that regard, his delegation greatly appreciated the contribution of UNESCO to the development of adequate mass media infrastructures in the developing countries through IPDC. That programme had demonstrated the central and significant role of UNESCO in promoting the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

15. Over the past year, DPI appeared to have worked effectively in publicizing the activities of the United Nations and mobilizing people throughout the world to further the noble goals and principles of the Organization. His delegation supported the efforts of the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information to rationalize and streamline the structure and work of the Department and welcomed the Department's efforts to develop the information and communication infrastructures of developing countries and expand co-operation with the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries. He expressed the hope that such efforts would continue.

16. In conclusion, he reiterated his delegation's support for the admission of Hungary, Zimbabwe and Ireland as members of the Committee on Information. Their participation would enhance the future work of the Committee.

17. Mr. APOSTOL (Romania) said that full use should be made of the information sector to deal with major problems affecting mankind and to strengthen ties of understanding and friendship among peoples. The question of information and the communication media should be considered in close conjunction with the fundamental concerns of countries, and above all with the urgent need to maintain international peace and security. In the current international situation, with its continuing conflicts and increasingly serious problems of economic development, the mass media could make a major contribution to the development of sovereign equality of States, with a view to strengthening peace, international understanding and friendship among peoples, and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

18. The dissemination of information should also be used to promote the principle prohibiting the use or threat of force in international relations and respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, so as to increase the participation of all peoples in political, economic and cultural life.

19. The Department of Public Information should concentrate on keeping world public opinion properly informed of the United Nations peace-keeping efforts and programmes, of the dangers of nuclear war, and of United Nations efforts to achieve total and complete disarmament.

20. As his delegation had already stated in the Committee on Information, the establishment of a new international information order was an important phase in the process of creating a new economic and political order. The gap between the developed and developing States was not limited to the area of economic development. It extended also to the area of information. All countries were

(Mr. Apostol, Romania)

aware that inequalities and imbalance affected the flow of information. The new world information order should be based on the wider and more balanced dissemination of news. At the same time, sources of information should be diversified.

21. His Government was concerned at the way in which the development efforts of the developing countries were reported by the major information agencies in the developed countries. Economic and social issues and political events in the developing countries were frequently misrepresented or overlooked by the major press, radio and television agencies. That situation was in urgent need of change.

22. The common desire of all peoples for better mutual understanding could be achieved only through the wider and more balanced dissemination of information, ideas and knowledge, the diversification of information sources and respect for the concerns and aspirations of all nations. First consideration should be given to information from authorized national sources.

23. The mass media should provide objective information on events in other countries, with a view to promoting understanding and mutual respect among nations. Each State was responsible for the information that it circulated on the internal and international activities of other countries. The primary obligation of the mass media in all circumstances was to present the facts without resorting to disinformation or reporting on situations which they did not fully understand. Consequently, journalists should be held responsible for the information disseminated.

24. His delegation fully supported the United Nations information programmes and would work for the strengthening of the Organization's role. The measures adopted by the General Assembly regarding the access of developing countries to communications technology and the strengthening of co-operation between the United Nations and national and regional agencies in developing countries were of major importance. Information on acute problems in all parts of the world and, in particular, on the critical economic situation in Africa, should be given the widest possible circulation.

25. In order to improve its effectiveness, DPI should concentrate its attention on information on the priority issues discussed in the United Nations, such as peace, security, disarmament, decolonization of information and democratization of world communications. His delegation was convinced that, given mutual understanding, those noble aims could be achieved.

26. Mr. TEEHANKEE (Philippines) said that his delegation commended and supported the efforts of the Department of Public Information to improve and enhance the image of the United Nations throughout the world.

27. The information gap between developed and developing countries continued to widen, with the communications industry in the developed countries producing 90 per cent of news and information. The consequence of such dominance was that

(Mr. Teehankee, Philippines)

many of the countries represented in the Committee, including his own, had at some point experienced unfair and inaccurate reporting by major Western press agencies on developments in their respective societies.

28. It was that glaring imbalance in the flow and dissemination of information which had led the developing countries to call for a new world information and communication order permitting the free, wider and better balanced dissemination of information and guaranteeing diversity of sources and free access to information. Such an order required urgent change in the dependent status of developing countries in communications and information through enhancement of their media infrastructures. To achieve that objective, communication and information infrastructures must become competitive, and professional competence must be developed.

29. His delegation's support for a new world information and communication order should not be interpreted as reducing his Government's deep commitment to freedom of speech and the press, as embodied in the Constitution. The muzzling of the Philippine press for 14 years had allowed a dictator to take over the entire country as his personal fiefdom and commit unmitigated plunder of the national treasury. His Government strongly believed that press freedom remained the best guarantee against such abuse of power and corruption and that freedom of information was a fundamental human right.

30. His delegation was gratified at the apparent progress towards a broadly based agreement on the recommendations to be made to the General Assembly on information questions, including the definition of a new world information and communication order. It was to be hoped that the concessions made by all regional groups during the regular and resumed sessions of the Committee on Information would lead to a consensus.

31. Over the years, the Group of 77 had made a number of concessions to accommodate the difficulties of other regional groups, particularly the Western countries. It was worth remembering that the principles contained in draft recommendation 1 of the Group of 77 (A/43/21, annex III) arose from the just and legitimate desire to participate in the production and transmission of information. It was quite natural for peoples to wish to inform others about themselves from the viewpoint of their own political and socio-cultural values and aspirations. His delegation believed that, given the improved international climate and with a constructive effort to accommodate the views of all groups concerned, progress could be achieved towards a consensus on a new world information and communication order and on United Nations future information policies and activities.

32. The improvement of the information and communications infrastructure was a priority goal of his Government and called for domestic, bilateral and multilateral efforts. In that regard, his delegation welcomed UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication and the financial support which it had provided to the training programmes of the Philippine Press Institute.

(Mr. Teehankee, Philippines)

33. He welcomed efforts to increase the developing countries' capability in the production and dissemination of information, such as DPI's training programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries. His delegation urged the Department to continue and expand that programme and eagerly awaited the results of its efforts to find extrabudgetary resources for the support of regional training programmes.

34. At the tenth session of the Committee on Information, his delegation had indicated its willingness to give the new approaches and principles outlined by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information a chance to yield results, provided that the mandates handed down by the General Assembly were complied with. It had been gratifying, therefore, to hear the Under-Secretary-General's assurance that the Department would respond positively to the various recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) concerning the Department's reorganization and working methods. The innovative approaches and principles introduced by the Under-Secretary-General could be credited in some measure for the effective information programme on the Geneva agreements on Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq conflict and the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces.

35. The series of successes by the Secretary-General in negotiating solutions to a number of seemingly intractable regional conflicts had further demonstrated the need for DPI to be fully prepared to respond to the demand for information on such priority questions as Namibia, Palestine, apartheid, economic and social development and the forthcoming fortieth anniversary of the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

36. His Government would continue to participate actively in directing the United Nations public information programme towards the achievement of the lofty goals of the Organization.

37. Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana) said that the three reports under consideration by the Committee had given his delegation an appreciation of the work of the Department of Public Information. The Department, under the direction of the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, had seriously endeavoured to comprehend the Organization's needs in the field of information. The Under-Secretary-General was to be commended for her willingness to engage in an ongoing process of consultation and co-operation and to work closely with the Committee on Information in maximizing the role of the United Nations in that vital area.

38. The Organization's reputation was now in the ascendant owing to its recent diplomatic successes in various parts of the world. Its capacity for peace-keeping could receive no greater acknowledgement than the award of the 1988 Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces. It was a sad irony, however, that the Organization was forced to undergo severe financial constraints precisely at the time when its utility had been recognized. The Committee on Information and DPI had come up with several ingenious ideas for circumventing those difficulties,

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

which his delegation, in the interest of continuing productivity, was willing to contemplate; it was uneasy, however, at some of the proposals for attracting extrabudgetary resources and wished to be assured that their use would not harm the integrity of DPI or of the system as a whole.

39. As a Caribbean nation and a member of the Committee on Information, his country was especially interested in the preservation and strengthening of the United Nations regional radio unit and information centre. Those agencies attempted to project the Organization's image across a Caribbean region which was geographically, culturally and linguistically diverse. Because of inadequate resources, however, they did not reach as wide an audience or have as great an impact as they should have. If they were to encompass the non-English-speaking Caribbean, programmes in French Creole and Dutch Papamiento would have to be introduced. Although pilot projects had been undertaken in that area, the response, according to the Department's report, had not been sufficiently positive to allow their implementation. It would be a pity if the needs of the Caribbean were not addressed on the ground that either interest or money were lacking; rather, programmes must be adapted to the particular needs and demands of receiving States. Restructuring should not ignore those realities but should instead seek to ensure optimum programme delivery within the available resources.

40. His delegation wished to see an intensification of the activities of DPI to promote public awareness of the important causes upheld by the United Nations, such as economic and social issues, improvement of the status of women, the dismantling of apartheid, the liberation of Namibia and the fundamental rights of the Palestinians. The renewed commitment given by the head of DPI to the sustained publicity of those issues was welcome in that connection. DPI could do much to strengthen the information and communication infrastructures of the developing countries, which would help to provide a more balanced flow of information. His delegation therefore urged its continuing co-operation with UNESCO and other relevant agencies, such as the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries.

41. Mr. NEZERITIS (Greece) speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that the current debate underlined what the Twelve regarded as self-evident concepts: first, the importance which all Member States attached to the question of information; and second, that the free exchange of information within the Committee itself reflected the subject of its deliberations, namely, ensuring that the citizens of the world had the opportunity to make informed judgements on the basis of full, impartial and comprehensive information.

42. As outlined in General Assembly resolution 59 (I) of 1946 and article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, freedom of information was a fundamental human right and a basic tenet of the societies of the European Community. It was against that background that the Twelve viewed the work of the United Nations in the field of information, including in particular efforts towards a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process. The Twelve recognized the legitimate concern of all countries, but especially of the developing countries, at trivialization and distortion. However, they opposed

(Mr. Nezeritis, Greece)

proposals which could lead to restricted access to information under the claim of greater fairness. Creating obstacles to the free flow of information would only serve to increase the existing imbalances in the field of information and communication. Those of the Twelve within UNESCO supported a large number of programmes aimed at developing resources for communication and information in many regions of the world, and would continue contributing to those efforts.

43. The Twelve were also looking forward to the submission to the Committee on Information, at its eleventh session in 1989, of the study undertaken by Management Advisory Services on the consolidation and co-ordination of all public information activities within the United Nations, with specific reference to the financial implications as well as the effectiveness of DPI. In that context, the Twelve reaffirmed their continuing support to the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information in their efforts towards the goal of an efficient Department. The task was a difficult one, in view of existing financial constraints, but the Twelve believed that it was possible to carry it out successfully.

44. The Twelve were disappointed that the Committee on Information had been unable to arrive at mutually agreed recommendations during its two recent sessions, and would do their utmost in the forthcoming deliberations to assist efforts aimed at reaching a consensus. In their opinion, the prime task of the Committee on Information was to develop guidelines for DPI. Instead of formulating excessively selective and costly priorities, the Committee on Information should help the Department by streamlining its own recommendations. Furthermore, the Committee should avoid selectively focusing on issues on which its membership was divided; that enhanced neither the effectiveness of a United Nations information policy nor the image of the Organization. DPI should, within its specific mandate, continue its efforts to strengthen understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations.

45. Mr. OUNTANA (Burkina Faso) said that information was still the monopoly of a few developed nations which imposed their views of the world and their ways of life on the majority, the developing countries. The latter had been excluded from the beneficial effects of the progress of science and technology in recent years. Under those circumstances, the call for a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process, was a consequence of the realization that the marginal situation in which the developing countries found themselves was untenable. There was a need for more balanced information which would enable the developing countries to benefit from communication infrastructures; in that way, they could overcome their dependency. The United Nations could play a crucial role in the establishment of that new order.

46. His delegation welcomed the efforts undertaken by UNESCO through the International Programme for the Development of Communication, which had led to the carrying out of valuable training and technical co-operation projects in many developing countries. It also welcomed the strengthening of co-operation between DPI and the Broadcasting Organization of Non-Aligned Countries, and the publication

(Mr. Ountana, Burkina Faso)

of information on the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, apartheid and the situation in the Middle East and Palestine.

47. The United Nations information centres should pursue without restrictions their task of enhancing public awareness of the various activities of the United Nations. The centre in Burkina Faso, which also covered Mali, Niger and Chad, had helped to bring about a more positive view of the Organization's role, especially with regard to safeguarding international peace and security and development assistance. It was worth mentioning that a panel discussion on disarmament had been organized in June 1988 under the auspices of the Ouagadougou information Centre.

48. There was unanimity within the Committee on the need to work together to establish a more balanced information and communication order. That encouraging state of affairs, however, had not prevented the eruption of difficulties which were still a serious obstacle to the conclusion of a basic text. None the less, the statements made at the current session by nearly all members of the Committee as to their desire to co-operate in a spirit of compromise had done much to mitigate his delegation's scepticism and fears. In any event, the Group of 77 had already shown proof of its willingness to pursue negotiations with all other parties, taking into account the interests of each.

49. Mr. AL-OTAIBI (Kuwait) said that his delegation appreciated the close and fruitful co-operation between the Department of Public Information and UNESCO, on the one hand, and between both those bodies and the news agencies of the non-aligned and developing countries on the other. The assistance provided to developing countries by UNESCO through the International Programme for the Development of Communication deserved particular acknowledgement. It would also be useful if the Department of Public Information were to take advantage of the current positive trends in international relations to mobilize public opinion in support of United Nations activities.

50. As a strong supporter of the establishment of a new world information and communication order, his country believed that it was essential to break the monopoly of the industrialized countries' news agencies over news and information and to close the information gap between the industrialized and the developing countries by helping the latter to build up and improve their media. It also felt that emphasis should be placed, when addressing human rights issues, on the principle that all men were equal and urged that particular priority should be accorded in United Nations information activities to the struggle against apartheid, to Namibia and to Palestine. With respect to the latter topic, the United Nations had a direct responsibility to disseminate full and accurate information on the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East, and particularly on the uprising of the Palestinian people, in order to contribute to the maintenance of peace and security in that vital region.

(Mr. Al-Otaibi, Kuwait)

51. In conclusion, he wished to refer to the First Islamic Conference of Information Ministers, held under the chairmanship of his country at Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 11 to 12 October 1988. Among the issues discussed by ministers at the Conference had been the establishment of an Islamic information strategy to conform with the new world information and communication order and the need for members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to help in the establishment of that order.

52. Mr. BELLINA (Peru) said that it was of fundamental importance to re-establish a consensus within the Committee on Information as a proof of its support for the positive trend in international relations. He therefore referred to the ideas expressed by the representative of Argentina. The Group of 77 had made great efforts, which could perhaps be termed concessions, to accommodate the demands and requirements of the other regional groups. In his opinion, such actions were not a sign of weakness, but of willingness to accept a political compromise commensurate with the circumstances.

53. His country was a firm defender of freedom of information, a principle which was enshrined in its democratic Constitution. However, freedom of information must be just, equitable and above all, beneficial to all mankind. A series of measures were being taken through the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to establish an effective news agencies pool which would compensate for the lack of interest on the part of the major news agencies in certain events of significance to the Latin American countries. As an example he cited a recent meeting in Uruguay of the seven democratic Latin American Presidents, who had issued a declaration on problems, such as the external debt and drug trafficking, which were not only important to the region but to the entire world. None the less, there had been virtually no news coverage of that meeting. It was for such reasons that his delegation and others argued for a more democratic conception of news and information. It was necessary for the developed countries to be aware not only of disasters and tragedies, but also of the aspirations of developing countries and the efforts being made with their scarce resources to further the well-being of their people. Freedom of information was not at issue; rather, it was to be hoped that all countries could exercise that fundamental right under conditions of equality.

54. Having taken note of the report presented by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, his delegation attached great importance to the expanded coverage by DPI of problems related to the external debt and drug trafficking. The latter was one of the most serious problems now facing mankind. It was therefore essential that DPI should launch a publicity campaign concerning the forthcoming Conference in Vienna at which a draft convention against illicit traffic in drugs would be adopted. To that end, DPI must have sufficient staffing and financial resources.

55. Mr. FRANCIS (Jamaica) said that, in the light of the limitations of staff and resources imposed by decisions of the General Assembly, it was difficult to argue with the logic of the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, as reflected in her statements to the Committee on Information and to the Special Political Committee. Only time would tell whether the measures proposed were the most efficient and would lead to the desired results.

56. It was regrettable that no detailed examination of DPI's proposals had been carried out in the Committee on Information and that no clear recommendations had been made on them to CPC, the Department's proposals having been transmitted virtually unchanged to that body. It had been in CPC that a number of refinements had been made. It was true that, as stated by the Under-Secretary-General, consultations had taken place prior to the meetings of the Committee on Information, including two meetings with the Group of 77. He wondered what other consultations had been held prior to the formulation of the reorganization plan.

57. With regard to CPC's recommendation that the reorganization of DPI should be kept under review, his delegation was concerned that, unless the review was carried out by the Committee on Information, it would be based on the financial and programme concerns of the Organization, rather than on technical aspects. The monitoring of the Department was the responsibility of the Committee on Information, whose recommendations should be acted upon by CPC, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and the Fifth Committee. Consequently, his delegation proposed that the question should be put on the agenda of the next substantive session of that Committee and that, in order to assist consideration of the question, the Secretary-General should be requested to submit an updated report on the reorganization of the Department.

58. In the absence of information to the contrary, the proposals of the Under-Secretary-General should be given full support, and the availability of resources should match requests for services. If adequate resources were available, mandated programmes should be carried out in a timely fashion. In addition, regional and subregional concerns should be respected and accorded the same priority.

59. The English-speaking Caribbean States had been assured by the Secretariat that the unit responsible for their programmes would be maintained. His delegation took that to mean that outputs approved and budgeted for would be fully implemented. He recalled that, in its resolution 42/211, the General Assembly had emphasized that programme outputs should not be adversely affected by reorganization measures.

60. His delegation welcomed a number of programmes undertaken by DPI, including its collaboration with other agencies and world-wide media in a number of special projects. The range of activities undertaken should provide a useful basis for assessing the effectiveness of the restructured Department. He expressed the hope that, if, as the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information had stated, the United Nations financial crisis was only a reflection of a credibility crisis, the Department would correct the credibility factor and thus help to return the Organization to financial health.

(Mr. Francis, Jamaica)

61. Since the deadlock on the definition of the new world information and communication order had become an issue, there had been virtually no movement by one side in the negotiations, and, in fact, there had even been an escalation of demands. The solution to that problem must take into account the fact that achieving a more balanced flow of information was not only a technological matter, but also a question of changing the paternalistic approach by the established media towards developing countries. The new information and communication order must be a two-way process in which the developing countries received training and equipment and the international news media in those countries reflected in a more accurate and timely manner the economic, political and cultural situation there. He noted with satisfaction the timely assistance provided by UNESCO to developing countries in the field of information and the work carried out, particularly in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Jamaica sought to help overcome the deadlock which had prevented achieving a consensus on that question.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.