



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/34/574
23 October 1979

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-fourth session
Agenda item 53 (c)

QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION

United Nations public information policies and activities

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 15	2
II. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION	16 - 77	6
A. Radio and Visual Services Division	16 - 31	6
B. Press and Publications Division	32 - 45	8
C. External Relations Division	46 - 67	10
D. Division of Economic and Social Information	68 - 77	14
III. PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES IN THE SECRETARIAT	78 - 139	17
A. Department of Political and Security Council Affairs	78 - 97	17
B. Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization	98 - 101	20
C. Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs	102 - 110	20
D. Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator	111 - 115	22
E. United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations	116 - 121	23
F. Office of the Chief Co-ordinator of United Nations Peace-keeping Missions in the Middle East	122 - 123	24
G. Regional Commissions	124 - 139	25
IV. CO-ORDINATION AND CO-OPERATION	140 - 149	28

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In his most recent report on the work of the Organization, 1/ the Secretary-General expressed his concern at the apparent inability of the United Nations to generate the kind of broad public support, confidence and understanding without which the objectives of the United Nations may not be achieved. He has called for renewed efforts to gain widespread support among the peoples of the world and to convince them that the struggle for peace, justice, equity and human dignity is very much their struggle, and that their support, understanding, and even criticism can make a difference to the outcome. If this challenge can be met, the Secretary-General added, the United Nations would be in a better position to ask the media to report more comprehensively and positively on the work of the United Nations in all its aspects.
2. It is clear that the membership of the United Nations shares the concern of the Secretary-General and is showing renewed interest in the role of public information and its ability to respond to a rapidly changing and complex world situation where maximum flexibility and shifting of resources must be accomplished on short notice. This is manifested by the establishment of the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, which has begun an examination of all possible ways and means of strengthening the public information services of the United Nations system and by the continuing debate and interest in a new world information order which has claimed the attention of several United Nations bodies over the past year.
3. For its part, the Department of Public Information is extremely sensitive to this major challenge and is presently engaged - in conjunction with the work of the Committee - in a critical analysis of its responsibilities for accurate and objective coverage of wide-ranging United Nations events and activities, for more meaningful and persuasive in-depth information, for better system-wide co-ordination and for adequately meeting the growing information needs of the developing world.
4. The Department also recognizes the need for its information output to become more creative and dynamic without, however, sacrificing objectivity and faithfulness to facts. Stress is being placed on the establishment of clearer priorities and on shifting resources - as recommended by the General Assembly in its resolution 33/115 C - away from obsolete, marginal or ineffective areas. First steps in this direction have already led to a more selective approach in press coverage, to a better use of field resources by combining the functions of United Nations Development Programme representatives and several United Nations information centres, and to reduced activity in the area of short-wave radio broadcasts.
5. The Department is aware of the emphasis that has been placed on achieving greater effectiveness and efficiency through careful planning, the targeting of audiences and the constant evaluation of impact resulting from its activities.

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/34/1), sect. X.

A limited evaluation process has begun and consideration has been given to the possible organizational implications of a better system of planning, with full recognition of the fact that much of the work of the Department is not susceptible to long-range planning but must remain flexible to meet unanticipated demands.

6. Another point influencing the work of DPI is the divergent views regarding the fundamental assumptions governing the over-all activities of the Department. On the one hand, the basic mandates handed down over the years are interpreted to mean that these activities should be more fact-and-information oriented, while on the other hand the Department may be urged to become more promotion-and-advocacy oriented, particularly in so far as economic and social information is concerned, but not excluding the political and other fields. Adding to the problem are the many specific information mandates adopted each year by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other organs.

7. While not wishing to inflate these conceptual differences, which may be no more than the difference in emphasis between a slightly more positive or more passive approach to our task, the time has perhaps arrived when consideration might be given to a possible consolidation of our basic mandates into a single text that would clarify information goals and policies in harmony with those of the Organization itself.

8. The first part of the present report - submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 33/115 C - contains a summary of recent developments and activities within the Department of Public Information. It is presented in four sections, representing the three media-based divisions and the one theme-or-function oriented division. There are the Radio and Visual Services Division, the Press and Publications Division, the External Relations Division and the Division for Economic and Social Information. These four organizational units are the consequence of expedient reaction to historical circumstances rather than the result of logical or conceptual definitions. Other combinations of tasks and functions can be conceived. The work of the Department cuts across organization lines and could thus be divided along themes and issues, along languages or along geographical regions served. Among others, it could also be divided between coverage activities and those related to information-in-depth. This is a subject which will be given further study in the future, taking into consideration the need for the most flexible use of our limited resources and the views already expressed by representatives in various United Nations bodies.

9. Another problem which is receiving most serious attention is the need for a better geographical balance among the staff of the Department, particularly at the policy-making level. Here, progress is admittedly slow due to the low rate of attrition of existing staff. But it is hoped to achieve a better balance in time, in conformity with the necessary highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

10. The second part of the report 2/ gives an account of those information

2/ Not included in the present report are references to the United Nations programmes and activities (such as the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, etc.) which are represented on the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and its subsidiary organ the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC).

activities carried out in co-operation with but outside the direct control of the Department of Public Information by other departments, offices, commissions and services. Here the report attempts to review the information services of a disparate group of such offices and services, some of which are engaged in ongoing extensive information programmes (such as the Centre against Apartheid), while others, perhaps no less information-oriented, operate without budget or staff for that purpose (the Division for Human Rights, for example). While the submissions provided by these services vary in length and detail, it is hoped that their inclusion will provide the Assembly with a clearer picture of the totality of the public information effort of the Secretariat as a whole.

11. Finally, there is a chapter on co-ordination and co-operation, a subject which is increasingly looked upon as presenting new opportunities for concentrating both talent and resources to better meet the requirements at the regional, subregional and national levels. One important element of this work is the need for a more balanced linguistic production of our information material. However, the Department's proposals for improved linguistic production in the coming biennium had to be set aside in the interest of budgetary stringency.

12. Another element of the problem is the mechanism for co-ordination within the United Nations itself and, in a broader sense, within the United Nations system as a whole. This last part of the report concentrates on system-wide co-ordination through the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) aimed at a unified approach and focus on given objectives, while respecting the administrative autonomy and independence of the various agencies and offices concerned.

13. One recent example of interdepartment and interagency co-operation was the drafting and publication of the booklet Image and Reality, which contains information in question and answer form on the management, finances and personnel of the United Nations system. The information given on these administrative and financial practices is a response to the views, questions and apprehensions of an often critical press and public. The booklet seeks to explain in facts and figures how the system works in order to counter many of those criticisms which may be based on ignorance, distortions or misinformation.

14. In a somewhat broader domain and as a modest contribution to a more balanced information and communication order, DPI plans to assist in a training programme of young journalists from the developing countries, carried out in this first instance with the use of extrabudgetary funds. The Department is also maintaining its links with the Press Agencies' Pool of Non-Aligned Countries and is alert to the study and promotion of methods for a greater sharing of the benefits of new communication technology by the developing countries.

15. As has been stated in the past, the image of the United Nations is inseparable from its performance. It is also related to the divergent expectations about the Organization. Recent studies indicate that support for the United Nations may not necessarily be related to the amount of information about its work. In any case, the aim of the Department of Public Information must be to foster informed understanding and support for the Organization among wider circles of the

population everywhere. With limited resources at the disposal of the Department, the role of redisseminators of information becomes vital. The Department must depend upon Governments, the press, national and international non-governmental organizations and on educational institutions and their leaders to produce the necessary multiplier effects of its limited efforts.

II. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

A. Radio and Visual Services Division

16. The growth in the number of people who can now be reached by the mass media, in particular the electronic media of radio and television broadcasting, has been so great that this audience now constitutes a very substantial share of the total world population. Against this background, there is an increasing emphasis on the part of the Department of Public Information to apply new formats of production in both radio and television, and a search has started for new forms of co-operation with television and radio networks.

17. An important new undertaking was launched in September 1979 under the name "Agenda for a Small Planet". This is a series of co-operative television productions co-ordinated by the United Nations (with assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency) which will result in the production of at least eight major television programmes on the subject of development. Each national network will produce one such documentary and will make it available to all other participating networks, while receiving from each of them programmes which it may offer its own national audience. The productions are intended to be broadcast in the closing months of 1980, and a further report on progress will be offered next year.

18. "Agenda for a Small Planet" constitutes an attempt to sensitize the television audiences of industrially developed countries to the needs and aspirations of the third world. If successful, the series may have a positive effect upon the climate which governs contributions to the various arms of the United Nations development cause.

19. Also in 1979, the Radio and Visual Services Division completed and released a documentary film entitled "The Big Village," produced with United Nations resources by a filmmaker from Bangladesh. The intention was to invite a professional creative filmmaker to show some aspect of the United Nations activity to viewers of his own region. In fact it may turn out that "The Big Village" will have its greatest impact in developed countries where audiences may acquire some insights into third world realities. DPI intends to continue in its search for eloquent third world filmmakers and to offer them the opportunity of portraying United Nations topics in the visual idiom of their own culture. The next such guest filmmaker will come from an African country.

20. Among other film productions released during 1979 are documentaries on the International Year of the Child, Namibia, apartheid and the rights of the Palestinian people. A short animated film on the arms race was co-produced with a noted documentary filmmaker in Czechoslovakia and entitled "BCOOM". It won a first prize at the International Film Festival in Cannes (France).

21. In order to facilitate integration of United Nations topics within existing programme formats in many countries, DPI now releases a series of short films, from 5 to 7 minutes in duration, which may be conveniently incorporated in current

affairs programmes, youth features, women's programmes and other "magazine" formats. Because these short United Nations films are distributed with "natural" sound, but without commentary, they are easily adaptable for any audience.

22. Satellite transmissions have become more commonly available and less costly. Television news rooms now routinely request satellite coverage of important overseas events, including United Nations developments.

23. Electronic cameras installed at Headquarters cover important meetings, and their output is made available to networks and news syndicators which together reach the overwhelming majority of the total world television audience. New and portable video cameras make it possible to cover United Nations developments wherever they take place. The Radio and Visual Services Division is making every effort to keep its store of equipment up to date and to maintain standards of technical quality in its output that will enable United Nations materials to be accepted readily by all television networks. Such equipment is in a constant state of evolution and the financial constraints upon DPI are rigorous.

24. Despite preoccupations with its own production, the Division is constantly aware of its first responsibility to brief and assist accredited correspondents representing news agencies, networks and broadcasting stations. In the audio-visual field there has been a welcome growth in the number of new organizations seeking access to the United Nations and requesting facilities. There has also been an increase in the number of applications for accreditation from developing countries.

25. The field of visual exhibits is one which claims an increasing share of attention. Intergovernmental bodies seem to be placing new emphasis upon the value of display materials, and requests are growing to install such exhibits, not only in the United Nations Headquarters building but also at the centres of the regional economic commissions and on the premises of the United Nations information centres. While many such exhibits deal with the economic and social programmes of the United Nations system, there is also evidence of the desire of several United Nations bodies to mount exhibits in support of such causes as the movements concerned with southern Africa and Palestinian rights.

26. The Radio Service has increasingly emphasized the production of material of a regional interest, in response to a preference frequently stated by national broadcasting organizations. Regional United Nations radio programmes are now produced at weekly or monthly intervals for all the major regions of the developing world. The hope is to place all such regional programmes on a weekly basis.

27. The series of United Nations-sponsored world conferences on major themes, which has been so notable a feature of intergovernmental activity in the 1970s, is likely to continue into the next decade. It has been found that radio is a most effective medium in covering such events. Effective coverage requires original reporting in at least four languages.

28. The production of daily radio programmes for broadcast into South Africa, initiated on the basis of General Assembly resolution 32/105 H of 14 December 1977,

has been intensified and expanded in response to Assembly resolution 33/183 I of 24 January 1979. Daily 15-minute programmes dealing with apartheid and related matters are currently produced in English, Afrikaans, Sotho, Tswana, Xhosa and Zulu and are placed at the disposal of over 20 national broadcasting organizations whose transmissions are heard in southern Africa. It is estimated that these programmes are being broadcast into South Africa at an aggregate rate of eight hours a day.

29. The Radio Service is closely following current developments in the area of short-wave broadcasting which suggest that there has been a resurgence of interest in this important medium of mass communication. The use of short-wave by the United Nations is periodically readjusted in order to ensure maximum impact with limited resources.

30. In response to a number of suggestions made in the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, the Radio Service is examining the feasibility and likely cost of undertaking FM broadcasts in New York City. Such broadcasts would appear to be one of the options available to counter the trend towards decreased coverage and less objective treatment of United Nations activities which has been evident recently in the Headquarters area.

31. The technical facilities of the Radio Service, the professional calibre of its staff and the international nature of its programming combine to make it a logical setting for a task which Member nations clearly wish to see accomplished: professional formation of broadcasters from developing countries. Numerous requests for assistance in training are received. On an ad hoc basis, the Department has accepted and helped a small number of candidates. The time has perhaps come to place such activity on a modest but regular basis.

B. Press and Publications Division

32. The Press Services is a basic operation of the Department, meeting the need for concise, accurate press releases, fair and balanced, carefully written and speedily produced. The releases, which include a great deal of background and feature material, are circulated widely in response to the demands of the information media at Headquarters, by United Nations offices and centres here and overseas, by delegations and by non-governmental organizations. They are also sent to United Nations information centres for dissemination in areas for which they are responsible.

33. While most of the output is in English, the French-language Service within the Press and Publications Division produces press releases in French and also prepares features and material for the Press Agencies' Pool of Non-Aligned Countries - a service which is growing steadily and to which the Department attaches great importance.

34. Meeting coverage is provided, in both English and French, of international conferences and other United Nations meetings held away from Headquarters, at the

request of the bodies concerned. The continuing increase in the number of such conferences and meetings, as well as in the number of meetings held at Headquarters, is causing a severe strain on the limited personnel resources available to the Press and Publications Division as it endeavours to provide the best services possible. Adding a provision for press coverage to the information components of future conference budgets is most important and will make it possible to augment the staff at peak periods.

35. During the past year, an experiment of selective coverage of meetings has continued, whereby the coverage of some bodies is limited to an advance release and, at the conclusion of the session, a summary of decisions taken. However, comparatively few bodies can be handled in this way. Moreover, there has been in recent years an increasing trend for budgetary reasons towards the elimination of summary records for selected conferences and meetings. Thus, the press releases take on an added role as the only source of information regarding those meetings that is available on a timely basis. The recent resolution 1979/69 of the Economic and Social Council by which it eliminated summary records for 15 of its subsidiary bodies will add further to this trend (A/34/3/Add.37, annex).

36. The use of word-processing machines to speed up the production of press releases is continuing and being extended.

37. Daily news briefings for the press continue to be given by the Director of the Press and Publications Division, who also serves as spokesman for the Secretary-General and for the United Nations as a whole. Special mini-briefings are also held whenever news developments warrant. Daily briefings for delegation press officers have also been instituted, and there is generally much closer co-ordination with delegations than ever before. Press conferences are also arranged for delegations. It is estimated that 500 press briefings will take place this year, up from 450 last year.

38. Emphasis has been put on ever faster dissemination of information on all the activities of the United Nations and on bringing together information from many sources, including other branches of the United Nations system, in order to provide a co-ordinated picture.

39. Another area in which the Division is adapting to changes in the world is in the organization of the programmes of the Editors' Roundtables, which are given each year by the Department of Public Information. They bring together top editors and officials from newspapers, news agencies and broadcast media from various countries for briefings by senior United Nations officials and informal discussions on political and economic issues of current concern.

40. The Roundtables were formerly held in different regions, but are now being held at United Nations Headquarters during the General Assembly session, giving participants an opportunity to meet the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and some of the government leaders attending the session. Participants have come this year from 13 countries, mainly third world developing nations.

41. This year, as a further innovation, a number of journalists have been invited from countries belonging to the Press Agencies' Pool of Non-Aligned Countries. The Department is co-operating with the Pool and assisting in a training programme for young journalists from the developing countries.

42. The Publications Service, meanwhile, continues to publish a series of standard periodicals and general reference publications: the Yearbook of the United Nations, whose 30 volumes constitute a unique record of the debates, decisions and activities of the Organization; the UN Chronicle, which, in accordance with the directive of the General Assembly at its thirty-third session was converted to a quarterly in 1979; Objective: Justice, which aims to promote better understanding of United Nations activities for self-determination, the elimination of racial discrimination and the advancement of human rights; the comprehensive Everyone's United Nations; the smaller Basic Facts About the United Nations; and UN Today, the annual guide for speakers issued on the occasion of United Nations Day.

43. Steps have been taken to reduce the delay in publishing the French and Spanish editions of the Chronicle and it is hoped to issue an Arabic edition in the 1982-1983 biennium. Since monthly production of the Chronicle ceased, there have been many queries from subscribers, and concern has been expressed at the absence of timely reporting of United Nations debates and decision in the Chronicle.

44. Booklets, brochures and leaflets dealing with specific activities or issues have made up the remainder of the output. Some of these publications have been issued in response to specific requests of the General Assembly or other organs. Many others were published locally by the United Nations information centres to meet demand in the area for information on a particular topic. Subjects covered in recent publications include disarmament, apartheid, Namibia, racial discrimination, the law of the sea and women. The Publications Service intends to assign as much as possible of its resources to meet the growing requests from information centres. Unfortunately, even the best efforts in this direction will meet only a small portion of the demand.

45. The United Nations computing centre has now completed its study of the feasibility of computerizing production of the Yearbook, Chronicle and Objective: Justice. It is anticipated that the savings to be realized would make it possible to undertake such a modernization of the present procedures and thus accelerate production of these publications.

C. External Relations Division

46. A major preoccupation of the Department has been the continuing need to strengthen and improve the network of the 59 United Nations information centres which form the principal channel for the global dissemination of information material on the United Nations.

47. The essential role of the information centres has been recognized not only in the discussions of the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, as well as its Ad Hoc Working Group, but also by the Joint

Inspection Unit which this year completed a comprehensive report on the information centre establishment (A/34/379). This report, together with the Secretary-General's comments (A/34/379/Add.1), is expected to provide the basis for specific improvements in the functioning and effectiveness of information centres.

48. Another important development has been the new impetus given to closer co-operation between the respective field establishments of the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), whose field offices, particularly in countries where no information centre is located, are contributing increasingly to the distribution of information materials to local media and other users. One result has been the formation of a small task force at Headquarters to consider concrete measures for better co-operation and joint use of resources on UNDP and DPI in the field.

49. One useful practice has been the briefings provided regularly by DPI officials at Headquarters for newly-designated UNDP resident representatives and their deputies in order to enlist their co-operation and inform them of the materials and services available for the dissemination of information about the United Nations.

50. Periodic regional meetings of information centre directors have also proven valuable in improving the effectiveness of United Nations public information work in Member States. Centre directors from the Asia/Pacific region met at Headquarters in September 1979 in order to exchange ideas and experience and to discuss ways of strengthening their activities.

51. In this connexion, one essential requirement is the increased production of DPI information materials in languages other than English. Furthermore, a significant proportion of the materials issued is not specifically adapted to the needs of local media, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions and other users in the field. Materials disseminated by information centres should ideally be available in local languages and should convey an objective and balanced description of the matters covered, while providing also a description of the problems addressed and their general context. Many years of experience show that not only language, but treatment and format are important elements in improving the effectiveness of information activities in the field.

52. As resources become available, it is hoped to improve the language balance in the production and field use of information materials by summarizing and adapting coverage and information-in-depth materials produced at Headquarters and translating them into one, two or more official languages common to a large number of Member States, such as Spanish, French and Arabic.

53. With a view to providing information centres with better policy and operational guidance, a policy and operations manual is being completed and will be distributed to all centres and, whenever necessary, to UNDP and agency offices in the field which are involved in the dissemination of information about the United Nations.

54. Greater attention is being given to the importance of information centre libraries in providing information on the aims and activities of the United Nations.

An updated "Manual for United Nations Information Centre Libraries", to be printed in English, French, Arabic and Spanish, will be distributed to all centres, United Nations depository libraries and other major users of United Nations documentation such as United Nations Associations. More centres will be provided with microfiche equipment and material to enable centre libraries to render better service to the public. Regional seminars for centre librarians are also contemplated in order to expand their knowledge and expertise in the handling of all types of United Nations documentation.

55. Efforts are also being made to improve the new monthly reporting procedure by which information centres now report to Headquarters on their activities and work programmes in a more frequent and comprehensive manner than before. The questionnaire format presently used for the monthly report will be improved to facilitate the work of information analysis and evaluation done at Headquarters regarding the effectiveness of the information centres in the use of the materials disseminated through them and local coverage of United Nations issues.

56. As emphasized in previous reports, non-governmental organizations are among DPI's most important partners in helping to inform broad segments of the public about issues and problems of concern to the United Nations. More than 330 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international as well as national, are associated with DPI at Headquarters, and national NGOs of many Member States are in close contact with their local United Nations information centre.

57. DPI undertakes a broad range of activities to assist and encourage NGO representatives to explain the complexities of United Nations programmes and activities in meaningful terms to their members and to the public. During 1979, nearly 400 representatives of NGOs attended an annual conference organized by DPI at Headquarters on the theme of closer co-operation between NGOs and the United Nations. Subjects discussed included disarmament, development and refugees where NGOs have a significant role to play, and such special programmes as the International Year of the Child which has generated unprecedented NGO support. Other services during the year include an orientation course for new NGO representatives and weekly briefings by senior Secretariat officials and members of delegations. Summaries of these meetings are distributed to NGOs in other countries through the information centres. Special interest has been shown in disarmament and the new international economic order, with six special briefings held on disarmament and two day-long conferences planned on specific issues of the new international economic order.

58. Lounges for representatives of non-governmental organizations are maintained both at Headquarters and in Geneva, where press releases, documentation and other materials on programmes and activities of the United Nations system are made available. The Geneva lounge was refurbished and relocated in larger quarters this year and is now staffed with a full-time professional.

59. Efforts have been made to strengthen co-operation between United Nations Associations and United Nations information centres and to encourage the formation of such associations in countries where none yet exist.

60. The importance of periodic regional conferences of NGOs has also been recognized as an effective means of reaching and stimulating more NGOs to build support for the United Nations at the grass roots level. Arrangements were made during 1979 for a three-day regional conference at the Palais des Nations in Geneva in October for NGOs from member countries of the Economic Commission for Europe. A similar conference is planned for 1980 in Africa.

61. In order to encourage and assist teaching about the United Nations in schools and other educational institutions, the Department of Public Information arranges an annual seminar under its Triangular Fellowship Programme for educators and policy makers in the field of education. Organized in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), these seminars are designed to train specialists in preparing improved methodologies and instruction material for teaching about the United Nations. The 1979 seminar in Mexico City is for curriculum specialists from Spanish-speaking countries.

62. Work began this year on a new collection of practical guides to teaching about the work of the United Nations system based on the experience gained from the Triangular Fellowship Programme and the UNESCO Associated Schools Project. The publication will include sample teaching units and projects which can be implemented in classrooms from pre-school through teacher training.

63. The Department also publishes annually, prior to United Nations Day, a student leaflet designed to suggest ways of teaching about subjects of special concern to the United Nations. The theme for this year's leaflet is the International Year of the Child. Two additional student leaflets are planned for 1979 with assistance from other departments of the Secretariat on the subjects of decolonization and apartheid.

64. Eighty-four young men and women from 43 countries - a record number in both cases - participated in the 1979 four-week Graduate Student Internship Programme which has been conducted annually at Headquarters during the past 30 years. The programme included briefings by senior members of the Secretariat, panel discussions, the provision of selected documents and publications and attendance at United Nations meetings. In addition, participants were assigned to work individually with United Nations staff members in various departments according to their respective fields of study. A summer study programme for graduate students was also organized in Geneva.

65. More than 23 million visitors have taken the guided tour of United Nations Headquarters since the operation began in 1952, and have been briefed by the guides on the aims and day-to-day activities of the Organization. Some difficulties were experienced by the guided tours and other services to visitors during 1979 because of reconstruction work at Headquarters and limitations on space as a result of the increased number of official meetings. Nevertheless, the upward trend in the number of guided tour visitors continued with an increase of 30,000 during the first nine months of this year over the same period in 1978.

66. Special programmes, involving not only a guided tour but also a briefing, film showings and tickets to official meetings, were arranged for visiting groups totalling 76,500 persons in 1978. Many of these groups were from schools, from religious, business and other non-governmental organizations. Arrangements have been made for United Nations officials to give speeches and briefings to public groups not only at Headquarters but also at other locations.

67. Requests for information from the general public, which now average approximately 7,000 per month, continued to be answered by the Public Inquiries Unit. Inquiries are made by letter, telephone or in person and cover the whole range of activities of the United Nations system.

D. Division of Economic and Social Information

68. Activities of the Department of Public Information relating to economic and social information, especially in the context of the new international economic order and the emerging concept of a new world information order, continue to be the responsibility of the Division for Economic and Social Information. Close liaison and co-ordination are maintained both at the departmental level and, through the mechanisms of JUNIC, at the interagency level.

69. In 1979, the Department developed information programmes for or co-operated with the information activities of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme's VISION HABITAT and the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, organized by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. Through this Division, the Department also continues to act as an information service for the World Food Council and as leader in the preparation and implementation of information programmes for conferences in the economic and social fields for which the United Nations Secretariat is responsible. Such a programme was recently implemented for the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, and planning has begun on similar programmes for future world conferences, including the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, the eleventh special session of the General Assembly to be held in 1980, the International Year for Disabled Persons, and for the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy. In each case, the information programme includes activities both before and after the event.

70. The Division continues to provide input to other DPI Divisions for press releases, cables and other informational material concerning economic and social matters. It also provides briefings to universities and other groups, participates in speaking tours, particularly on the new international economic order, and arranges briefings by senior United Nations officials to non-governmental organization groups and the press. It continues to represent the Department at international meetings and conferences on matters of economic and social information and on the new world information order.

71. Encounters for journalists were continued in 1979 in connexion with major United Nations conferences and events. Encounters are organized as seminars or discussion groups among journalists and experts on a given topic or before the opening of a major conference. An important feature of the encounters is the presence of journalists from developing countries who might otherwise not be able to cover the conference. These journalists are awarded fellowships to attend the encounter and to stay on for coverage of the conference.

72. It has now become routine to build into each encounter some measure of evaluation. At the conclusion of the encounter, a brief questionnaire is distributed eliciting the opinion of participants on (a) the adequacy of participation; (b) anticipated impact of the encounter on the coverage of the conference; (c) the quality of and interest in the discussions; and (d) organizational aspects of the encounter.

73. The General Edition of Development Forum, financed primarily through voluntary contributions, is currently published at the rate of 10 issues per year in English, French, German and Spanish with a circulation of 70,000 in 135 countries. An Arabic edition is being planned with the assistance of Arab countries. Additional financing of the General Edition is being sought through the sale of subscription to readers in developed countries. The readers of the General Edition include opinion-makers, educators, students and members of non-governmental organizations.

74. The Business Edition of Development Forum, launched in 1978, continues to be published twice a month. In addition to the traditional articles of economic and social development and on the related activities of organizations in the United Nations system, notices have been included concerning business opportunities arising from projects totalling more than \$11 billion financed each year by various international development finance institutions. The Business Edition is financed through paid subscriptions and deficit underwriting by the participating organizations, and by the Trust Fund for Economic and Social Information. Additional participants are expected towards the end of 1979 and the beginning of 1980.

75. Feature articles continue to be produced primarily intended for third world media and regional and local media in developed countries. In addition, booklets, pamphlets and leaflets and background notes on a wide range of economic and social subjects are published and disseminated in a number of languages. A special publication entitled "UN Handbook on the New International Economic Order" is proposed to include data and information about the new international economic order and its implementation.

76. Regular contact and co-operation continues between JUNIC members and national information officers. The yearly Development Information Meeting, bringing together representatives of industrialized countries and JUNIC members, organized by the Division of Economic and Social Information with the generous assistance of the authorities of the Government of Finland, was held in Helsinki from 5 to 7 September 1979. Through such co-operation, the Division continues to contribute to increased awareness of the development needs of the third world and to be in a

better position to tailor materials on economic and social subjects to specific audiences. A similar meeting with information directors of countries of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance will take place in the first part of 1980.

77. In co-operation with other organizations in the United Nations system, the Division is continuing its efforts to strengthen contacts with non-governmental groups at local levels. The purpose of the activity, carried out at Headquarters and in Geneva, is to reach out to special non-governmental groups in the industrialized countries interested in a wide range of economic and social information. In specific cases these non-governmental liaison services act as a cataclyst to bring together diverse NGOs interested in current economic or social problems, such as the Northwest Regional Conference on the Emerging International Economic Order, held at Seattle (Washington) in March 1979, and the Mid-Continent Dialogue on the Changing World Economy, held at Minneapolis (Minnesota) in September 1979.

III. PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES IN THE SECRETARIAT

A. Department of Political and Security Council Affairs

1. Security Council and Political Committees Division

78. Professional staff members of the Division are frequently called upon to give briefings or lectures to groups of visitors to the United Nations, to interns participating in United Nations programmes and to public programmes held in outside locations.

79. The Division generally receives one or two interns participating in programmes organized by DPI or by the Office of Personnel Services, and seeks to familiarize them with the operations and procedures of the Security Council and its subsidiary organs. It also assists UNITAR in conducting its seminars and information programmes for members of delegations or interested groups.

80. Staff members of the Division assigned to follow the substance of issues considered by the Security Council or by political organs of the General Assembly prepare material covering these matters for inclusion in the annual volumes of the Yearbook of the United Nations published by DPI. The Division also provides the Departmental co-ordinator who receives, edits and forwards Yearbook material prepared throughout the Department.

81. For the 1977 Yearbook, 24 articles, totalling over 600 manuscript pages, were prepared by the Department.

2. Centre for Disarmament

82. In line with general developments in recent years, the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament has been considerably strengthened and its activities have expanded accordingly. The recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament, 3/ which were endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 31/90 of 14 December 1976 and have been fully implemented since then, have contributed significantly to this trend. Subsequently, the holding of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, greatly helped to consolidate it.

83. In the sphere of public information the General Assembly, at its tenth special session, clearly stated the following: in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session (resolution S-10/2, para. 15):

"It is essential that the peoples of the world recognize and understand the dangers in the present situation. In order that an

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 36 (A/31/36).

international conscience may develop and that world public opinion may exercise a positive influence, the United Nations should increase the dissemination of information on the armaments race and disarmament with the full co-operation of Member States.¹¹

84. The Programme of Action, contained in section III of the Final Document, identified some of the particular areas in which the extended responsibilities would have to be met in the present and in the future. In addition to general information to be provided on the arms race and disarmament, they include, inter alia, printed publications, audio-visual materials, dissemination of results of disarmament studies, increased contact with non-governmental organizations and specific projects like the yearly observance of Disarmament Week (the week starting 24 October). Subsequent resolutions adopted by the Assembly at its thirty-third session entrusted new tasks to the Secretary-General and, specifically, to the Centre for Disarmament.

85. At present the Centre prepares and publishes the Disarmament Yearbook and a periodical entitled Disarmament. It also prepared annually the disarmament chapter of the United Nations Yearbook. In 1978, as a supplement to the Disarmament Yearbook, the Centre published a volume on the Status of Multilateral Arms Regulation and Disarmament Agreements, which will be updated periodically, as required.

86. The Centre is also engaged in the preparation of a model for national observance of Disarmament Week and will contribute to UNESCO's World Conference on Disarmament Education, to be held in 1980.

87. The Centre provides information and contributes special disarmament-related studies to major United Nations conferences such as the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology held at Vienna in August 1979, and to bodies of the United Nations system, for example, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Preparatory Committee for the New International Development Strategy, etc.

88. The Centre provides oral and written information, documentation, guidance and lectures for a growing number of NGO conferences and meetings, for briefings organized by the Visitors Section of the United Nations and other Secretariat services, at the request of universities and other institutions.

89. It also co-operates with the Department of Public Information in the realization of the disarmament-related activities of DPI. This involves participation in the Department's Task Force on Disarmament, professional advice in planning and carrying out occasional specific projects, notably publications, films, exhibits, NGO activities, etc.

90. As to the future, in order adequately to meet the expanded public information programme envisaged by the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the Centre will need increased staff resources and financial support. Successful implementation of the programme will also require an increased measure of co-ordination with the rest of the Secretariat and with the United Nations system as a whole.

3. Outer Space Division

91. The Division helps in the dissemination of information in regard to launchings of space objects into outer space, as provided under the terms of Assembly resolution 1721 B (XVI), as well as under the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (resolution 3235 (XXIX)) which came into effect in 1976. It also provides Member States with information on activities of the United Nations in the area of practical applications of space technology, including assistance to the developing countries. This information is given annually in the report of the Secretary-General under the title "Co-ordination of Outer Space Activities within the United Nations system".

4. Political Affairs Division

92. This Division continues to co-operate with DPI by providing speakers, as requested, for interested public groups and especially for students visiting the United Nations. It has also participated in the DPI intern programme, having placed three such interns this past summer. On the average of twice a month college groups visiting headquarters are briefed by senior officers of the Department. These are a part of continuing programmes covered in general terms as applicable to the entire Secretariat.

5. Centre Against Apartheid

93. In co-operation with the Department of Public Information, the Centre is involved in the production and dissemination of a wide range of publications and audio-visual material on the subject of apartheid.

94. The Centre produces annually some 40 to 50 issues of Notes and Documents in both English and French, and several pamphlets on specific topics for distribution to churches, trade unions, student and youth movements, etc. Many of the articles appearing in Notes and Documents, as well as special studies produced by the Centre, are reprinted or adapted for use in the DPI publication, Objective: Justice. In addition, selected publications of the Centre are issued each year in a dozen or more languages through United Nations information centres. Many of these and other activities carried out with the DPI support are often the subject of planning and co-ordination by the DPI Task Force on Apartheid.

95. In co-operation with the specialized agencies and NGOs, the Centre arranges for the production and dissemination of information kits, slides, posters and other publicity material. The Centre staff members undertake speaking engagements at Headquarters and other locations, and respond to inquiries from the public on apartheid in South Africa and efforts of the United Nations for its eradication.

96. In consultation with the Special Committee against Apartheid, the Centre administers the Trust Fund for Publicity against Apartheid. The Fund was established in January 1975 and is financed by voluntary contributions from Member States. It is used principally for the printing of publications in various languages for wider distribution, and for grants to appropriate NGOs and institutions for the reprinting and re-dissemination of information material on apartheid and for the production of audio-visual material.

97. Pledges and contributions to the Fund, as of July 1979, amounted to \$99,806.00

B. Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization

1. Unit of Studies and Information on Decolonization

98. The main informational activities of the Department are carried out by the Unit of Studies and Information on Decolonization established in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 3164 (XXVIII). That resolution requested the Secretary-General to establish a Unit within the Department for the purpose of collecting, preparing and disseminating, on a continuous basis, basic materials, studies and articles relating to the problems of decolonization. The Unit, which is part of the Information and Co-ordination Section attached to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, consists of one Professional officer and two General Service staff members. It publishes monographs and studies on decolonization questions in a series entitled Decolonization, which are distributed in English, French and Spanish, mainly through the United Nations information centres, to a list of some 4,000 addressees composed mainly of colleges, universities, non-governmental organizations and individuals concerned with decolonization questions. A sum of \$80,000 was allocated for the printing of these publications in the budget for the biennium 1978-1979.

99. The Unit maintains close contact with the DPI Thematic Task Force on Decolonization and, when requested, provides policy guidelines for those activities undertaken by DPI in the sphere of dissemination of information on decolonization.

100. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3031 (XXVII), the Secretary-General is also charged with publishing the Namibia Bulletin, which is prepared by the Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia and approved by the United Nations Council for Namibia. The Bulletin is published quarterly in English, French, Spanish and German and is distributed basically to those on the same mailing list as is used for the circulation of Decolonization. A sum of \$29,700 was approved for external printing in the biennium 1978-1979.

101. In addition to a DPI programme of information activities concerning Namibia proposed and approved by the United Nations Council for Namibia, the Council has at its disposal a sum of \$300,000 to be administered by the Council in support of its programme of activities related to the International Year of Solidarity with the People of Namibia.

C. Office of the Under-Secretary-General for
Political and General Assembly Affairs

1. Special Unit on Palestinian Rights

102. The Special Unit was created under the terms of General Assembly resolution 32/40 B and its mandate is contained in that resolution and in Assembly

resolution 33/28 C. Thus, the Assembly requested the Special Unit to prepare, under the guidance of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, studies and publications relating to (a) the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people; (b) relevant resolutions of the Assembly and other United Nations organs; and (c) the activities of the Committee and other United Nations organs in order to promote the attainment of those rights.

103. The Special Unit was also asked to promote maximum publicity for such studies and publications through all appropriate means and to organize, in consultation with the Committee, commencing in 1978, annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

104. In the course of 1978, the Special Unit issued five studies and two issues of periodic bulletins. The bulletins were continued on a monthly basis during 1979 (12 issues) in addition to which five pamphlets on subjects relating to Palestinian rights were published.

105. In 1978, in co-operation with the Special Unit, DPI undertook the production of a film on Palestinian rights and mounted an exhibition on the subject for display at Headquarters and at Geneva on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, 29 November. In addition, the Special Unit's studies and bulletins were given wide publicity through DPI's network of information centres, many of which also assisted in the observance of the International Day of Solidarity. A pamphlet on the work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights was also published by DPI. The estimated cost of issuing the studies and bulletins was \$214,200 in 1978 and \$127,100 in 1979. The cost of the DPI film was estimated at \$80,000.

106. The Special Unit has four professional staff members and three General Service staff members.

2. Division of Human Rights

107. Public information for the human rights programme is handled as part of the activities of the Department of Public Information. The Division of Human Rights has no information unit of its own. Co-operation and co-ordination between DPI and the Division of Human Rights is the result of joint Task Forces both at Headquarters and at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

108. In addition to the activities of DPI the Division of Human Rights assists in the field of public information in the following four main ways:

(a) By publications, such as the Human Rights Bulletin (published quarterly) and the Yearbook on Human Rights (published biennially).

(b) By its advisory services programme wherein it holds annually a seminar and/or a training course in the field of human rights;

(c) By helping to disseminate information material prepared by DPI;

(d) By holding press briefings and briefings for the representatives of specialized agencies and NGOs and by addresses to academic and other institutions by members of the Division.

109. The Division has been facing a severe lack of manpower, particularly in view of its increased responsibilities. So far, no posts have yet been accorded to the Division for public information purposes. The Division performs complementary activities of the four areas described above within its existing resources.

110. The Commission on Human Rights, at its thirty-fifth session, adopted resolution 23 (XXXV) calling for the enhancement of public information activities in the field of human rights. This is a matter on which the Division and DPI have been in contact and which requires further discussion in future. The Division believes that the best manner of developing an information component in the field of human rights would be for DPI to designate a human rights information officer to work in collaboration with the Division (and, perhaps to be attached to the Division).

D. Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator

111. UNDRO has no full-time public information officer. Nevertheless, the matters with which the Office deals are of considerable general interest. Particularly when a disaster has just occurred, many inquiries both from the media and from the public as a whole are received. Television and radio interviews and meetings with the press are frequently arranged on such occasions by the Information Service of the United Nations Office at Geneva. Similar interviews are also given in New York. Special care is taken to ensure that the spokesmen for the Secretary-General receive up-to-the-minute news on disasters and action by the United Nations and UNDRO.

112. Press releases are prepared by UNDRO staff members and processed and issued by the Information Service at Geneva. These deal with disasters and relief assistance, contributions by Governments to UNDRO's Trust Fund, meetings, etc. While some progress has been made in issuing these releases at Headquarters also, it is felt that distribution from Headquarters of disaster-related releases received from Geneva could be improved.

113. Financial resources have not permitted the preparation of a large quantity of public information material on UNDRO. With this in mind UNDRO has been discussing with the Geneva Information Service the production of a film which would show how UNDRO works in disasters. Considerable progress has been made in drafting an outline. At present, action is held up while ways of financing the film (estimated to cost \$110,000 to \$120,000) are being considered.

114. The basic UNDRO public information paper is the leaflet Ten Questions on UNDRO. The Office also publishes the UNDRO Newsletter and the UNDRO Monthly. The Newsletter and the Monthly are compiled and edited by a Publications and Reports Officer on the basis of contributions prepared by various UNDRO staff members. This same officer is also responsible for seeing the various technical publications of the Office through the press.

115. The financial implications of UNDRO's public information activities are somewhat difficult to establish because, as mentioned earlier, a number of staff members give part-time attention to them. Sometimes this creates problems because of the heavy pressure of the regular operational work of these staff members which prevents them from giving the time that is really required to produce public information material. If the time actually spent now on public information activities were expressed in man-months, it would amount at least to 12 full-time man-months at the Professional level and 12 at the General Service level.

E. United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations

116. One of the main objectives of the programme of work carried out by the Centre on Transnational Corporations is to further an understanding of the nature and the political, legal, economic and social effects of the activities of transnational corporations, and one of the important components of this work, as has been set out by the Commission on Transnational Corporations, is a comprehensive information system. The Centre, therefore, is disseminating information to individual Governments, other interested parties and the public at large on a broad range of issues relating to transnational corporations. The Advisory Services of the Centre are one of the chief conduits of dissemination of information to Governments. Specific requests for information on the activities of transnational corporations addressed to the Centre are also answered by the Information Analysis Division. Results of the research of the Centre, as well as progress on the work on the formulation of a code of conduct and an international agreement on illicit payments, are given wide dissemination.

117. Regarding specific information provided to the public, the following activities are undertaken by the Centre: publication of The CTC Reporter, a periodical issued three times a year with a circulation of 9,000 copies; replies to specific requests addressed to it by the public; public addresses to general or specialized audiences; and publication of articles in a variety of journals.

118. The CTC Reporter is a periodical of 32 to 36 pages distributed through regular United Nations channels, the Sales Section and a mailing list which includes governmental institutions and officials, transnational corporations, trade unions, universities, research groups and individual researchers and other prominent figures in this field. It contains a succinct review of the activities of the Commission and the Centre, particularly on the work towards the formulation of a code of conduct, an international agreement on illicit payments, advisory services, research, and the establishment of a comprehensive information system.

119. The periodical is prepared by the staff of the Centre on a part-time basis; one General Service staff at the G-4 level is assigned on a full-time basis on this project. An average of \$2,500 per year is spent for editorial and content assistance. As necessary, the Centre also consults on the preparation of The CTC Reporter with the Department of Public Information and particularly with the Department of Economic and Social Information.

120. The information system of the Centre which collects, analyses and disseminates

information on individual corporations, industrial sectors, laws and regulations, contracts and agreements, trends in investment and bibliographical information, is responsible for providing information to Governments and other users including the press and the general public. There is also a wide range of information activity in response to requests received by telephone and mail. Approximately 5,500 such replies were prepared by staff members in 1978. In terms of staff resources, approximately 10 work months were devoted to dissemination of information to the public. Staff members have served as guest lecturers at universities and interviews with staff members have appeared in such publications as The Financial Times of London, and Business Week, as well as on television in several countries. A film by the United Nations on transnational corporations was produced with input from the Centre.

121. The Centre maintains close co-operation with various units of the Secretariat, including the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, the Electronic Data Processing and Information System Service, the Statistical Office, the Office for Science and Technology, and UNCTAD. Co-operation is also maintained with a number of specialized agencies.

F. Office of the Chief Co-ordinator of United Nations
Peace-keeping Missions in the Middle East

122. The Office of the Chief Co-ordinator of United Nations Peace-keeping Missions in the Middle East has one post of Chief Information Officer. This officer, seconded by the Department of Public Information, serves as Spokesman for the Chief Co-ordinator and assists in all matters concerning coverage of United Nations activities in the area. In particular, he serves the foreign correspondents based in Israel and those visiting the area, as well as the local media. This has included the preparation and distribution of press releases about the activities of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine, the United Nations Emergency Force, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, making arrangements for visits by correspondents to the areas of operations of the Forces and maintaining liaison with the information services of the Israel Defence Force and a number of government agencies.

123. The Chief Information Officer also prepares daily cables summarizing reactions in Israeli media to United Nations activities, especially in connexion with the peace-keeping forces. These cables are sent to Headquarters in New York, the Force Commanders, the information centres in the area and other concerned parties. In the performance of his duties the Chief Information Officer has the co-operation of a freelance translator who provides summaries of full texts of pertinent articles or editorials appearing in the Hebrew press.

G. Regional Commissions 4/

1. Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA)

124. The substantive public information services originating at ECLA headquarters in Santiago are carried out by the United Nations Information Service in its dual capacity as the Information Service for the Economic Commission and as United Nations Information Centre for Chile. As an information service for ECLA, UNIS Santiago produces and distributes various materials dealing with regional economic and social development matters reflecting the substantive activities of the Commission itself. A bi-weekly newsletter, Notas sobre la economía y el desarrollo de América Latina (Notes on the economy and development of Latin America), has been published since 1968 and is distributed to all news media in the region. Mailing lists of this publication presently cover some 14,500 addresses in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as other geographical areas.

125. The Information Service also prepares press releases and special information material related to ECLA activities, co-operates with United Nations specialized agencies and regional intergovernmental organizations in public information matters, and collaborates in the promotion of ECLA publications. In addition, the Service also covers meetings, seminars and conferences held under ECLA auspices and is responsible for establishing and maintaining working contacts with the information media of Latin America and with the Department of Public Information at Headquarters in matters relating to the dissemination of information material dealing with economic and social development.

126. In its capacity as United Nations Information Centre for Chile, the Service produces a weekly newsletter, Micronoticias. It is aimed at publicizing current United Nations activities in all fields and is distributed to the information media, universities, and other interested institutions and individuals in Chile. The Service also distributes material received from Headquarters and the specialized agencies, and provides information support to the substantive divisions of the Commission on regional and global issues of United Nations concern.

127. The Service also carries out various other activities in connexion with audio-visual materials, radio and television, public inquiries, guided tours and exhibits. As reflected in quarterly reports to Headquarters, the scope of these and related information functions has increased significantly in recent months placing new demands on the Service, particularly in the areas of public liaison and co-operation with educational and academic institutions requesting information and guidance on United Nations activities.

128. As a consequence of new mandates and current regional needs, the work programme of ECLA has also expanded in recent years. New emphasis has been placed on such subjects as science and technology, the integration of women into the

4/ Material on the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Western Asia was not available in time for inclusion in this report.

economic and social development process, natural resources and energy, among others. UNIS Santiago continues to face problems resulting from these expanded activities, particularly as regards staffing. It should be noted that the reduced staff assigned to the Service (two Professionals and three General Service) fails to meet the need for implementing a better organized and co-ordinated work programme.

2. Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

129. The United Nations Information Service in Addis Ababa is also a two-fold operation: it serves as the United Nations Information Centre for Ethiopia, disseminating information on the United Nations system as a whole and on those agencies of the system located in the Ethiopian capital; and it serves as the information arm of the Commission itself by publicizing its programme and activities. The latter is by far the more detailed and critical operation, since it involves coverage, research and study into a wide variety of subjects which are the concern of ECA and disseminating this material in the form of press releases, feature stories and articles, or in the form of radio features or television programmes.

130. Apart from material specially prepared or of regional interest and sent to media throughout Africa and elsewhere for their own treatment and use, ECA has a number of house publications, the material for which is carefully distilled from official sources and prepared for non-specialist consumption. These include the quarterly magazine African Target and the periodic Priorities which focuses on one particular topic, in in-depth presentation for popular readership and researchers' needs.

131. While there is an increasing demand for material from the Information Service it is not possible to meet this demand fully for a number of reasons. The staff situation, which at present consists of only the Chief of the Service and one other Professional staff member, with an additional junior information assistant, severely restricts any possibility of expanding activities to increase information output in terms of more publications and prepared material, or of stepping up print orders to cope with increased demand.

132. Literacy levels are rising very significantly in Africa, from which ensues a very natural tendency to know more about the continent generally and about development programmes that will mean a better standard of life for its peoples, in particular. It is thus important to satisfy this developing need for more meaningful information and to provide development support communication on United Nations economic projects in Africa.

133. Although the development of newspapers is slower than desirable, there is growth in this area and more information from sources such as ours is vital to encourage its development. Meanwhile, there is very rapid expansion of the electronics media, particularly radio (the transistor has made a tremendous impact) and television, both of which call for a constant flow of information material for educational programmes and visual presentation.

134. As these trends become more apparent, the media organizations very naturally turn to organizations like ECA for the relevant facts and details on which to plan

their programmes and information projects. Added to this are the demands of official government and non-governmental organizations that conduct seminars, workshops and other special projects to interpret their own participation in over-all Africa-wide projects and to convey to their audiences how these activities are affecting their progress and advancement at the national and international levels.

135. It will thus be seen that the demand not only exists but is escalating daily, and this creates a situation in which ECA must be able to respond in order to satisfy this need for factual material, and in sufficient volume to ensure that the needs of all areas of the media are adequately met.

136. The point has been reached where some crucial decisions have become imperative if the Information Service is to keep its place as a media operation working in close co-operation with national, regional and global media of mass communication, and as an authoritative disseminator of specialized information expertly prepared and presented for the specific needs of the African region. This will only become possible if due consideration is given to upgrading the Information Service in Addis Ababa to a level, in terms of material and human resources, that will enable it to discharge its information commitments effectively. This must be seen as a priority commitment.

3. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

137. The Information Service for ESCAP is at the same time an Information Centre serving six countries and one territory: Democratic Kampuchea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and Hong Kong. The workload of the Information Service is extremely heavy throughout the year, covering approximately 60 meetings of ESCAP and other United Nations bodies, producing and distributing press releases, features, booklets and pamphlets as well as radio and television programmes and photos for the mass media. Liaison and promotional activities include briefings for news personnel, visits to editors, liaison with radio and television broadcasters in the region, mounting exhibitions on the work of ESCAP and other United Nations activities, conducting tours of the ESCAP buildings and background briefings for students and visitors. Services are also provided to educational institutions, NGOs and the Thai community. Documents, publications and other information material may be requested from schools throughout Thailand - the so-called "2,000 member" schools - with which the Information Service maintains contact.

138. In addition to its normal services to the media and coverage of the ESCAP annual session and other meetings, UNIS Bangkok was heavily involved during the first half of 1979 with visits of the Namibia mission and the Secretary-General. An updated version of ESCAP in Brief, a 43-page booklet illustrating the work of the Commission, was produced in time for the annual session, and work continued on another booklet, United Nations in Thailand, scheduled for production before the end of the year.

139. The staff resources of the Information Services at present consist of one

professional (P-3) officer and four General Service staff members. In this connexion, two additional posts, the Chief of the Service and one information officer, were recently vacated and have not as yet been replaced. With the exception of one post of information officer, the budget for the UNIS is provided entirely by ESCAP.

IV. CO-ORDINATION AND CO-OPERATION

140. Interagency co-ordination and co-operation in the field of public information continues to be one of the major preoccupations of the Department of Public Information. Regular contacts toward this end among the public information services of the United Nations system as a whole take place within the framework of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), a subsidiary organ of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information and serviced on a continuing basis by the Division for Economic and Social Information.

141. JUNIC assumes the responsibility for developing a common public information approach covering all aspects of the activities of the organizations within the United Nations system. The ultimate objective of this system-wide action is not only to promote more efficient productivity and economical use of the public information resources of the many components of the United Nations system but also to develop, whenever possible, the joint planning and the co-ordinated execution of public information activities, with particular attention to economic and social information.

142. JUNIC members have recently recognized that they should extend their co-operation in order to focus more on the need to co-ordinate strategy and policy. In this field - while respecting the administrative autonomy and independence of the various organizations of the United Nations system - it should be possible to aim at an even more unified approach so that the total effort of the United Nations system might be made more effective.

143. Moreover, members of the United Nations system have recently encountered a number of new problems and new situations concerning their public information policies that could be solved more easily if approached in a joint fashion. In particular, they have been confronted with the question of their respective image as well as the over-all image of the United Nations system in the mind of the general public. This important question, now being studied by JUNIC, will be discussed during the Committee's seventh session to be held at Nairobi in February 1980. Subsequently, JUNIC will present a report on the subject to ACC.

144. Apart from its regular annual session, JUNIC continues to deal with a number of common problems as well as to determine and implement specific co-ordinated activities through its various ad hoc Working Groups. As reported previously, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Audio-Visual Matters, chaired by DPI's Radio and Visual Services Division, is presently working on the production of a joint United Nations system film catalogue and on common pricing policy for all United Nations system films; the Ad Hoc Working Group on Development Education, chaired by

UNICEF, is considering projects in the field of formal education and adult and out-of-school education; the Ad Hoc Working Group on International Press Relations, chaired by the World Bank, is studying the possibility of a joint newspaper clipping service, the use of journalists from third world countries in the coverage of United Nations system activities and the assistance in the development of mass communications infrastructure in developing countries. The question of the role of the United Nations and of the organizations of the United Nations system in the establishment of a new world information order will also be taken up by this latter group.

145. Co-ordinated or joint public information activities related to special observances and international events, such as international years or conferences, have been made through small JUNIC task forces which meet before, during, and after the event itself and function as long as necessary to ensure that the related activities identified for joint action are implemented. Thus, JUNIC task forces either are presently functioning or have assisted in planning for such events as the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology Development; preparations for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace; preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on development and international economic co-operation to be held in 1980; and for the International Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy to be held in 1981.

146. JUNIC has also continued to use the concept of "lead agency", i.e. giving an individual JUNIC member the over-all responsibility for co-ordinating and managing projects related to a given field of activity. UNICEF, for example, is the lead agency for Development Education, and the DPI Division for Economic and Social Information is the lead agency for the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly on development and international economic co-operation as well as for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace.

147. Co-ordination and joint action has also continued to take the form of interagency projects established under JUNIC auspices and jointly financed by certain JUNIC members. There are now three such interagency projects: (a) the Non-Governmental Liaison Service in Geneva, jointly financed by DPI/Division of Economic and Social Information, UNDP, UNICEF, and the United Nations Fund for Population Control (UNFPA), with support from FAO/Action for Development; (b) the Non-Governmental Liaison Service in New York, jointly financed by DPI/Division of Economic and Social Information, UNDP, UNFPA and the World Bank; (c) the development Education Exchange Service, financed by FAO/Action for Development, with assistance from UNESCO.

148. JUNIC continues to prepare and adopt each year a joint plan of action on one or more specific themes in order to strengthen the over-all process of system-wide co-ordination and co-operation. Further to a decision by JUNIC at its 1979 session in New York, future plans of action will attempt to present possibilities for joint activities on a two-year basis, it being understood that such activities would be related to a limited number of selected projects jointly undertaken and financed and concerned with specific events of high priority such

as the special session of the General Assembly on development and international economic co-operation in 1980, or the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women.

149. Apart from the above, a number of other activities of a more general nature, but also of system-wide concern, are being undertaken on a regular basis under the JUNIC auspices. These include in particular:

(a) Binder on United Nations system activities: under UNDP's guidance, JUNIC members will study the possibility of publishing jointly a sort of directory/guide/binder of United Nations system activities to provide concise and up-to-date information on useful and successful projects carried out by United Nations system member organizations. Such a binder could be used for distribution to policy decision-makers and influential personalities in the media, parliamentary circles, leading international and national NGOs and the like.

(b) Catalogue of United Nations system publications: The draft catalogue of publications, prepared by ITU, will be used as the basis for a more complete and comprehensive catalogue to be published under JUNIC auspices.

(c) Audio-visual matters: projects include (i) a film project on transport and communications in Africa for which DPI will take on the production responsibility in consultation with the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, UNDP, the Universal Postal Union and possibly the International Telecommunication Union; and (ii) a joint United Nations system film catalogue (the first edition will be published in English and French towards the end of 1979).

(d) Study of audiences and targets of information materials, distribution and mailing lists: these matters will be studied in future by the JUNIC Ad Hoc Working Group on Distribution, which JUNIC decided to revive under the chairmanship of UNDP.

(e) Co-ordination of public information activities in the field and the question of feedback: these matters will be studied further by the JUNIC Ad Hoc Working Group on Co-ordination of Public Information in the Field and will also be on the agenda of the next session of JUNIC.

(f) Reportage missions, press tours and seminars for journalists: the UNDP Office in Geneva will continue to serve as a focal point for exchange of information regarding reportage missions and press tours organized by JUNIC members.
