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REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 21 (A/38/21)



UNITED NATIONS

New York, 1983

NOTE

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

[22 August 1983]

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly decided to maintain the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, established under Assembly resolution 33/115 of 18 December 1978, which would be known as the Committee on Information, and to increase its membership from 41 to 66. In its resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979, the Assembly requested the Committee on Information:

"(a) To continue to examine United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order;

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

"(c) To promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly;"

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

2. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and the recommendations of its Ad Hoc Working Group, 1/ reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in Assembly resolution 34/182, decided to increase the membership of the Committee from 66 to 67 and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session (resolution 35/201). The Committee on Information agreed, at its organizational session in 1980, that the principle of geographical rotation would be applied to all the officers of the Committee and that this principle would be applied for two years.

3. At its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and its recommendations, 2/ reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in resolution 34/182 and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (resolution 36/149 B).

4. At its thirty-seventh session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and all its recommendations 3/ and urged their full implementation, reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in resolution 34/182 and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-eighth session (resolution 37/94 B).

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

Algeria
Argentina
Bangladesh
Belgium
Benin
Brazil
Bulgaria
Burundi
Chile
Colombia
Congo
Costa Rica
Cuba
Cyprus
Denmark
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
German Democratic Republic
Germany, Federal Republic of
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
India
Indonesia
Italy
Ivory Coast
Japan
Jordan

Kenya
Lebanon
Mongolia
Morocco
Netherlands
Niger
Nigeria
Pakistan
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Singapore
Somalia
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Syrian Arab Republic
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Venezuela
Viet Nam
Yemen
Yugoslavia
Zaire

6. The Committee held its organizational session on 28 and 29 March 1983 and its substantive session, the fifth session of the Committee, from 20 June to 8 July 1983.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

A. Opening of the session

7. The Committee held its organizational session at United Nations Headquarters on 28 and 29 March 1983. It held two meetings.

B. Election of officers for 1983-1984

8. In accordance with the agreement of the Committee at its organizational session in 1980, the Committee unanimously elected the following officers for the period 1983-1984:

Chairman: Mr. Luis Moreno-Salcedo (Philippines)
Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Miguel A. Albornoz (Ecuador)
Mr. Rachid Lahlou (Morocco)
Mr. Willi Schlegel (German Democratic Republic)
Rapporteur: Mr. Mario Bondioli Osio (Italy)

C. Organization of work of the Committee

9. The Committee agreed to a proposed list of questions to be considered by the Committee, which formed the basis of the agenda of the substantive session:

- I. To continue to examine United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order

Priorities and programmes of the Department of Public Information in this area include:

- 1(a) Implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Information;
- (b) Report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Information;
2. Co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with the regional news agencies of developing countries;
3. Question of the acquisition of a United Nations communications satellite, studying alternatives and analysing costs;
4. Question of the viability of a world-wide United Nations short-wave network;
5. Various aspects of the regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division;

6. Enabling the African Unit to undertake programming at a meaningful level in French and major regional languages;
7. Measures for the possible expansion of the Caribbean Radio Unit so that it may offer effective programming in French and other sub-regional languages;
8. Maintenance and enhancement of the functions of the Middle East and Arabic Radio Unit;
9. Ways and means to enhance the role of United Nations information centres within the structure of the Department of Public Information;
10. Reports from United Nations information centres on their activities in countries of concurrent jurisdiction;
11. Documented factual summary account of the coverage by widely representative world media reviewing developments affecting the Palestinian people from June to December 1982;
12. Development of systematic evaluation procedures for the activities of the Department of Public Information;
13. Redressing the geographical imbalance in the staff of the Department of Public Information;
14. Various aspects of the publication of Development Forum;
15. Public information activities in connection with the International Youth Year.

II. To evaluate and follow up the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications

1. Presentation of the report on public perceptions of the United Nations system;
2. Progress report on the activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee.

III. To promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information:

The organization, in close co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), of a round table on a new world information and communication order.

IV. Report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.

10. It was decided by the Committee that oral reports will be presented regarding those of the above sub-items for which written reports have not been prepared.

III. SUBSTANTIVE SESSION

A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

11. The substantive session, the fifth held by the Committee on Information took place at United Nations Headquarters from 20 June to 8 July 1983. The Committee held 15 meetings.

12. At its opening meeting, the Committee adopted the following agenda (A/AC.198/59/Rev.1):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Statement of the Chairman.
4. Consideration of substantive questions.
5. Adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.

13. The Committee agreed, on the basis of the decision of the Committee at its organizational session, that the consideration by the Committee of items 4 and 5 of its agenda would proceed along the following schedule proposed by its officers:

A. 20 to 22 June

Consideration of the following sub-items:

Item 4 (a) Promotion of the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information;

- (i) The organization, in close co-operation with UNESCO, of a round table on a new world information and communication order.

B. 23 to 28 June

Item 4 (b) Continuation of examination of United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order:

- (i) a. Implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Information;
- b. Report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Information;

- (ii) Co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with the regional news agencies of developing countries;
- (iii) Question of the acquisition of a United Nations communications satellite, studying alternatives and analysing costs;
- (iv) Question of the viability of a world-wide United Nations short-wave network;
- (v) Various aspects of the regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division;
- (vi) Enabling the African Unit of the Radio Service to undertake programming at a meaningful level in French and major regional languages;
- (vii) Measures for the possible expansion of the Caribbean Radio Unit, so that it may offer effective programming in French and other subregional languages;
- (viii) Maintenance and enhancement of the functions of the Middle East and Arabic Radio Unit;
- (ix) Ways and means to enhance the role of United Nations information centres within the structure of the Department of Public Information;
- (x) Reports from United Nations information centres on their activities in countries of concurrent jurisdiction;
- (xi) Documented factual summary account of the coverage by widely representative world media reviewing developments affecting the Palestinian people from June to December 1982;
- (xii) Development of systematic evaluation procedures for the activities of the Department of Public Information;
- (xiii) Redressing the geographical imbalance in the staff of the Department of Public Information;
- (xiv) Various aspects of the publication of Development Forum;
- (xv) Public information activities in connection with the International Youth Year.

C. 28 and 29 June

Item 4 (c) Evaluation and follow-up on the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications:

- (i) Presentation of the report on public perceptions of the United Nations system;

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

D. 30 June to 4 July

Item 5. Drafting of the report of the Committee.

E. 5 July to 8 July

Item 5. Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee.

14. The Committee decided to establish an open-ended working group consisting of the officers of the Committee and the representatives of Argentina, Bangladesh, Congo, Denmark, Jordan, Nigeria, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

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

Austria	Malaysia
Canada	Nicaragua
Cape Verde	Sweden
Madagascar	

The Holy See and the Palestine Liberation Organization also took part in the session as observers.

16. In addition, representatives of the following bodies of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system attended the session:

World Food Council (WFC)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

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

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

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

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

United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Bank

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

17. At the Committee's 3rd meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information announced the withdrawal of document A/AC.198/67 for editorial reasons.

18. At its 15th meeting, the Committee adopted by consensus its report and recommendations to the General Assembly (see sect. D, recommendations).

19. At the same meeting, the representative of Belgium made a statement on behalf of some countries of the Western Group expressing the wish to be associated with the qualifications made by the delegation of the United States of America in respect of those recommendations which may have financial implications beyond the level of existing resources.

B. Statement by the Chairman

20. The Chairman of the Committee on Information made a statement at the opening meeting of the substantive session (see annex below).

C. Consideration of substantive questions

1. Promotion of the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information

(Item 4 (a))

Item 4 (a) (i). The organization, in close co-operation with UNESCO, of a round table on a new world information and communication order

21. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information made a statement at the opening of the debate in which he spoke of some of the concrete steps the Department of Public Information had undertaken in promoting a new world information and communication order. They included, for example, a seminar on the subject being organized in co-operation with UNESCO at Innsbruck, Austria, the Department's series of world mass media leaders' round tables, its training programme for broadcasters and journalists and the strengthening of ties with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies. He explained that the Department had made progress in organizing its work along thematic lines while, at the same time, giving importance to producing material of a general nature about the Organization, which was so important for a correct perception of its work. He saw the role of the Department of Public Information as supplementary to the efforts of national and other agencies of information. At the same time, it was also engaged in positive information efforts of its own and, in some cases, was able to play a catalytic role in stimulating the media to co-operate with the United Nations in producing information programmes, as was the case with the consortium of television organizations, An Agenda for a Small Planet. He emphasized that the Department

adhered to objective reporting and faithfulness to facts as a principal guideline for all its activities. It was also necessary for the Department to be positive and purposeful and, on occasion, promotional in its information programmes when the mandates of the political bodies of the Organization called for it to do so. In his remarks concerning United Nations information centres, he spoke of a new function which had been given to them to follow and report on developments in Member States which were relevant to the work of the United Nations and would facilitate the responsibility of the Secretary-General under Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations. He outlined steps that had been taken to improve the Department's internal evaluation, its programming and planning, the geographical balance in its staff, and linguistic balance in its production. The Under-Secretary-General noted that the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) had considered the report on public perceptions of the United Nations system 4/ at its April meeting in Vienna, as well as a draft proposal for a common strategy for system-wide public information activities related to operational activities for development. He also said JUNIC was moving forward from co-ordination to joint programming on projects such as the Development Forum, the World Newspaper Supplement and the Non-Governmental Liaison Service.

22. Many delegations participated in the discussion of item 4, and stated or clarified the positions of their Governments on a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order and other issues pertaining to the mandate of the Committee, as expressed in General Assembly resolution 34/182, section 1, paragraph 2.

23. Many delegations emphasized the increasing importance of information in the conduct of international relations. They reiterated their commitment to the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order, based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and the urgent need to change the dependent status of the developing countries in the field of information and communications, and aimed at strengthening international peace and understanding, as an important element in the efforts to establish a new world economic order. Many delegations stressed the importance of a better balanced flow of information in the struggle for economic and social development.

24. A number of delegations underlined the important role the mass media and United Nations information activities would play in strengthening international peace, easing tensions, curbing the arms race and promoting understanding among peoples. Channels of information could be a powerful means for promoting human rights and the abolition of racism and apartheid. Some delegations stressed the importance of respect by the information media of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and decried the use of radio for what they characterized as unlawful propaganda offensives by some States against others. They advocated the orientation of mass media towards understanding among peoples and co-operation between States, and towards the extension of people's knowledge by true and unbiased information about facts.

25. Many delegations reaffirmed the basic importance of the principles of freedom of opinion, freedom of information and the free circulation of ideas and news regardless of frontiers, which they characterized as basic human rights, in conformity with article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the importance of freedom of the press. A number of delegations also expressed the view that those freedoms must be tempered with responsibility and that each nation

should respect the right of every other nation to retain its own political system, ideology, culture and national identity. Several delegations underlined the role of the mass media in scrutinizing abuses of power, deplored the curtailment of the free flow of information for political ends, such as censorship and arbitrary expulsion of journalists, and stated their opposition to any form of State control over journalists, as well as to the formulation of a code of conduct for their activities. The need for journalists to have free access to information sources was stressed.

26. A number of delegations pointed to the predominant role of Western news agencies and emphasized the urgent need to eliminate the dependent status of developing countries and to strengthen their sovereignty in the field of information and communication. Many delegations stated that efforts must be made to bring about a better balanced flow of information, and that all nations would benefit from a flow of information that was multidirectional, thus increasing information from developing countries. Most delegations emphasized the importance of having adequate and viable communications infrastructures in all nations, and stressed the urgent need for the development of human resources and the improvement of these infrastructures in developing countries. One delegation also referred to the appearance of new forms of imperialism in the modern era of informatics and called for the Committee on Information to be aware of this phenomenon.

27. Many delegations underlined the central role of UNESCO in promoting a new world information and communication order, and expressed appreciation and support for its International Programme for Development of Communications (IPDC). They also favoured continuing and increased co-ordination between the United Nations, UNESCO and other specialized agencies in the establishment of a new world information and communication order, as well as on various information matters.

28. Many delegations expressed their adherence to the provisions of the Declaration of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries concerning information. Some delegations referred in their statements to the Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racism, Apartheid and Incitement to War, 5/ adopted by UNESCO in 1978, and stressed the need to express support for this important document. They drew attention to the passages relating to information in the Political Declaration of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, 6/ adopted in January 1983, stressing that it called for the dissemination of truthful information and condemned the use of the mass media for spreading falsehoods, militarist propaganda and racism and chauvinism. Some delegations also emphasized the importance of the International Convention concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace of 1936 7/ and called upon all States to ratify it. Other delegations recalled the principles enshrined in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe of 1975. 8/

29. Several delegations reiterated that the Department of Public Information should structure its work around the priority areas which the General Assembly had defined for the Committee on Information in its resolution 34/182, which included international peace and security, disarmament, peace-keeping and peace-making operations, decolonization, the promotion of human rights, the struggle against apartheid and racial discrimination, economic, social and development issues, the integration of women in the struggle for peace and development, the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and

communication order, the work of the United Nations Council on Namibia, and programmes on women and youth. Some delegations advocated that, if the Department of Public Information were to work in a consistently effective manner, it would be necessary for the Committee to establish an order to the priorities in terms of their relative importance.

30. Some delegations suggested that the Department of Public Information produce and dissemination core basic information explaining the structure, evolution and organization of the United Nations so that the public would understand the premises upon which it was based and the framework within which its activities were carried out. A number of delegations pointed to the need to emphasize the economic and social work of the United Nations system, which could serve to enhance the image of the Organization. One delegation said the Department should undertake an effort to promote an informed understanding of the work of the United Nations in the area of international terrorism as this could constitute an effective means of combating it.

31. A number of delegations drew attention to World Communications Year and encouraged support for the work of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) as the co-ordinating body for the activities undertaken with regard to it. It was also suggested that the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations be an occasion to focus attention on the Organization throughout the world. Some delegations stated that the Department of Public Information should pay the requisite attention to the role of youth in the world, particularly in view of International Youth Year which would be celebrated in 1985.

32. Several delegations stated that the Department of Public Information should always strive for the highest quality in its production and maintain standards of impartiality and objectivity, reflecting divergencies of opinion where these occurred.

33. Several delegations suggested more effective evaluation of the work of the Department of Public Information, including improved feedback analysis, and stressed the importance of the Department's identifying target audiences. Some delegations pointed to the need for greater co-ordination between the production and dissemination of the Department's output. One delegation said the Department should confine its activities to reporting and not engage in propaganda. Many others stressed the promotional role assigned to the Department under the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly with respect to the most important issues before the Organization and the international community.

34. Many delegations supported the round table for editors which the United Nations was organizing, in close co-operation with UNESCO, at Innsbruck, Austria, in September 1983, and the contribution it could make to a greater understanding of the problems and aspirations of the developing countries with regard to a new world information and communication order. A number of delegations expressed their wishes for the success of the meeting and hoped that the level of participation and the topics discussed would justify the expectations placed in the meeting.

35. Many delegations stressed that the co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with regional news agencies of developing countries, constitutes a concrete step towards a more just and equitable world flow of information, thus contributing to the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

2. Continuation of examination of United Nations public information policies and activities in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international information and communication order

(Item 4 (b))

- Item 4 (b) (ii). Co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with the regional news agencies of the developing countries

36. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information presented an oral report to the Committee, in which he mentioned several concrete measures already taken to strengthen co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, in accordance with recommendations of the Committee.

37. These included establishment of a direct electronic keyboard link between United Nations Headquarters and the Pool, through a word processor which feeds United Nations news dispatches by telephone line to the Tanjug satellite channel between the United States and Belgrade, made available by the Tanjug News Agency for communication of the Department of Public Information with the Pool. This makes it possible to supply the Pool with news within minutes of its availability at Headquarters. In this regard, some 10 to 15 daily dispatches in English, French and Spanish are sent by the Department to the Pool and practically all of those dispatches are retransmitted to the Pool's 84 client agencies, which in turn supply their local and regional redisseminators with United Nations information.

38. In addition, correspondents from developing countries have been invited by the Department of Public Information to cover several international United Nations Conferences in Vienna, Paris, Belgrade and Nairobi, and the Department has invited four Pool correspondents (Burundi, Colombia, Kuwait and Zambia) to participate in the current year's training programme for broadcasters and journalists which will take place during the forthcoming session of the General Assembly.

39. A large number of delegations welcomed the increased co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Pool. They stated that it was an important step forward in the creation of a new world information and communication order. One delegation, however, pointed out that, while expansion of the Pool was encouraging, its output was still only about 40,000 words daily, as compared to that of an established news agency, which was far greater.

40. A number of delegations emphasized the necessity of strengthening the training programmes for journalists from the developing world. A suggestion was made that the training period should be six weeks at Headquarters, rather than the present seven weeks, with one week spent in one of the developing countries for the purpose of acquainting themselves with the ways in which information on the United Nations is received and utilized.

41. Other suggestions were that the Chairman of the Pool's Co-ordinating Group be invited to attend sessions of the Committee on Information and that Pool correspondents be invited to cover major United Nations Conferences.

42. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information emphasized that co-operation between the Department and the Pool was no longer ad hoc, but a regular, and everyday, affair with daily dispatches sent by a Professional staff member in the Department. He found that the suggestion that the Department act as a clearing house for information regarding non-aligned countries to be beyond its mandate of providing information on United Nations activities. In respect of increased training facilities for journalists from developing countries, he said the Department would examine the feasibility of various suggestions, bearing in mind possible additional cost for implementation.

Item 4 (b) (iii). Question of the acquisition of a United Nations communications satellite, studying alternatives and analysing costs

43. A representative of the Office of General Services provided an oral summary of an interim report on the item which had been prepared by consultants of the International Telecommunication Union. The interim report examined the technical and financial implications of a single-satellite system serving North and South America, Africa, the Middle East and Europe, as well as a two-satellite system which would also cover Asia. The interim report concluded that the financing of either alternative would involve major budgetary increases and would impinge on other allocations. Other alternatives to a satellite system owned and operated by the United Nations appeared preferable at the present stage, at least on financial grounds. The final report was to be completed by 31 October 1983.

44. In the discussion, some delegations supported the views expressed in the interim report. Other delegations felt the concept of a United Nations satellite also had political and cultural dimensions and should not be abandoned solely for financial reasons. They criticized the report for being fragmentary and tendentious, and indicated that it was concerned with a satellite programme at the service of the entire structure of information, informatics and telecommunications of the United Nations, including the Secretariat and all the agencies of the system. They asked that the study analyse the real possibilities of acquisition and the various possibilities of financing. They called attention to the difficulties which the United Nations has with reference to renting services on existing systems. Still other delegations requested that the leasing of channels on existing satellites should be explored as an alternative. Some delegations felt that the matter should be submitted to the Special Political Committee.

Item 4 (b) (iv). Question of the viability of a world-wide United Nations short-wave network (A/AC.198/63)

45. Introducing the item, the Under-Secretary-General stressed the interim nature of the report, with a final report to be submitted in 1984. A number of delegations emphasized the importance which they attached to the possession by the United Nations of its own short-wave network to enable it to fulfil its global mission, and, meanwhile, to the renting of transmission time on a daily basis throughout the year. It was suggested that Bahasa Malaysia should be included among the languages of the Asian segment of the network. They emphasized the conclusions in document A/AC.198/63 that a world-wide United Nations short-wave network from a technical and legal point of view appears to be entirely feasible and viable. Other delegations regarded the idea of a short-wave network owned and operated by the United Nations as financially not realistic and questioned also the existence of a sufficient audience for such a network. It was requested that the final report in 1984 should compare the option of a United Nations network with that of renting transmission time from national short-wave broadcasters, and that it should also evaluate the relative effectiveness of short-wave broadcasts and taped programmes.

Item 4 (b) (v). Various aspects of the regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division (A/AC.198/62)

46. Introducing the item, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information stated that the present separation between the Radio Service and the Visual Service, and within the Visual Service between television production and film production, should be maintained. At the same time, efforts should be made to diversify further the output of regionally targeted television news magazines. It was also reported to the Committee that responses to the regional magazines produced in 1982 were in general quite favourable, especially from French-speaking countries in Africa and from Latin American countries. As far as the Arabic magazine was concerned, its use by television organizations of the receiving countries was about 35 per cent. A survey was being conducted on the possibility of producing the weekly television magazines in all the official languages throughout the year. The Committee was informed that one clear indication of interest had come from Chinese television. Reactions from other regions were still awaited.

47. Most representatives who spoke on the item agreed that a restructuring of the Radio and Visual Services Division was not warranted by technical and professional considerations and might even be counter-productive. Other delegations favoured, in varying degrees, the introduction of audio-visual regional structural elements. The view was also expressed that further thought should be given to the matter at some time in the future. A delegation called for the implementation of the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 35/201 and 36/149 B, concerning the regionalization of the Radio and Visual and Services of the Department of Public Information, and presented a series of proposals on this matter.

Item 4 (b) (vi). Enabling the African Unit of the Radio Service to undertake programming at a meaningful level in French and major regional languages (A/AC.198/64)

48. The report on this item was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information. In the discussion, there was wide support for strengthening the programming capability of the African Unit, with particular emphasis on Portuguese and French. The view was also expressed that any redeployment of staff to the African Unit should not reduce radio services to Europe. Some delegations stressed the need for strengthening rather than weakening the European Unit. Other delegations called for special attention to be given to the working conditions of the Anti-Apartheid Programmes Section of the Radio Service.

Item 4 (b) (vii). Measures for the possible expansion of the Caribbean Radio Unit, so that it may offer effective programming in French and other subregional languages (A/AC.198/65)

49. Following the introduction of the report on this item by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, a number of delegations supported the provision of radio programming to the Caribbean in French/Creole and in Dutch/Papiamentu at a meaningful level.

Item 4 (b) (ix). Ways and means to enhance the role of United Nations information centres within the structure of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/61)

Item 4 (b) (x). Reports from United Nations information centres on their activities in countries of concurrent jurisdiction

50. The item was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, who referred to the importance which the Secretary-General and he, himself, attached to the crucial role of the United Nations information centres. Special reference was made to a new function to be given to the centres arising from the Secretary-General's responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations. Attention was given to the guidance and administration of the centres through the External Relations Division of the Department and especially to the information flow from Headquarters to the field and feedback from the field to New York. Special consideration was also given to the question of staff resources and equipment for the centres.

51. A large number of delegations welcomed the document entitled "Study on ways and means to enhance the role of the United Nations information centres within the structure of the Department of Public Information" (A/AC.198/61), and stressed the important role of the centres as the most useful instruments of the Department of Public Information for dissemination of public information on the United Nations. Several delegations directed attention to the priority issues of the centres as mandated by the General Assembly, such as disarmament, peace and international security, decolonization, the struggle against racial discrimination and apartheid, Namibia, the implementation of human rights, and economic and social issues.

52. Many delegations stressed the need for a more rational allocation of human and financial resources in the Department of Public Information in order to increase the effectiveness of the work of the information centres, which should be examined, in the view of some delegations, in an evaluation study by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). Other delegations, referring to a study that had been already prepared and discussed by JIU on the work of the information centres, felt that restraint should prevail in the requests for new surveys.

53. The necessity of a higher degree of operational flexibility of the work of the centres and its better adjustment to local conditions were underlined by several delegations; however, in the view of some other delegations, this should be properly counterbalanced by the External Relations Division's central guidance.

54. Some delegations noted with appreciation the activities of the Department of Public Information which were aimed at eager young people in order to familiarize them with the main tasks of the United Nations. Special reference was made to the graduate student intern-programme and the education information programmes conducted by the External Relations Division, in particular because of the cost-effectiveness in implementing those programmes.

55. A number of delegations raised specific questions related to the reporting system from the centres to Headquarters and stressed the need for streamlining and simplifying the reporting demands by Headquarters.

56. The urgency to fill existing vacancies in the posts of information centre directors was expressed by several delegations. However useful may be the co-operation of the Department of Public Information with the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP) and other offices in the field, it should be the policy of the Department, in the opinion of some delegations, to strengthen its own position and to rely upon staff and of other offices only temporarily in order to ensure the proper political and professional guidance of the information centres. Many delegations expressed the view that the professional quality of the centre directors should be improved. Some delegations stated their concern over the lack of universality in the geographical representation at the level of directors' posts. A stronger representation at that level of personnel from developing countries was requested also in centres located in developed countries.

57. The delegation of Indonesia conveyed the invitation of its Government to the Department of Public Information to establish an information centre in Jakarta. A large number of delegations supported the establishment of such a centre.

58. One delegation and an observer stressed the need that the German Information Service in Vienna be adequately staffed.

59. One delegation underlined the excellent co-operation between the centre in Prague and the German Democratic Republic.

60. The specific importance of the public information activities of the centres was emphasized by several delegations in view of the changed public image of the United Nations in certain countries. The information centres could play a crucial role in redressing this situation through close co-operation with governmental and non-governmental institutions, mass media, educators and all other constituencies, whose support the Department of Public Information is requesting.

61. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information recognized a diversity of views with regard to the question whether to expand the network of information centres. The limited resources of the Department do not permit establishing centres in every country, but improvements should be possible through redeployment. As to the co-operation with UNDP, the Department would keep the consideration in mind that it was not always appropriate to have a part-time centre director. The Under-Secretary-General stated that he had noted the concerns expressed by some delegations related to budgetary consideration, as well as those expressed by others related to the need for sufficient resources for the centres. Referring to the reporting systems from the centres to Headquarters, he stressed the need for its streamlining and simplifying. With regard to the debate on the degree of decentralization of the centres' network, the Under-Secretary-General said that the United Nations Information Centres Manual, which gives substantive guidance for directors, will be revised very soon. The necessary balance between central guidance by the Department of Public Information and flexibility of the Centres will be maintained. Action had been taken already by the Department to establish the category of national information officers and to fill vacancies in the posts of centre directors.

Item 4 (b) (xii). Development of systematic evaluation procedures for the activities of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/60)

62. Introducing document A/AC.198/60, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information said that he could confidently state to the Committee that the monitoring system of the Department of Public Information, initiated last year, was working well and for the first time programme managers had, on a quarterly basis, a comprehensive and detailed picture of what was going on in the entire Department,

including the information centres. Two quarterly reports had already been produced. The next step was to determine which activities warranted internal in-depth evaluation as envisaged in the second and third stages of the evaluation process described in document A/AC.198/53.

63. The Under-Secretary-General also referred members of the Committee to the Secretary-General's report to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) (E/AC.51/1983/7). He welcomed the report and the comments and recommendations to be made by the Committee on Information, which would help the Department of Public Information in improving its work. On the questions of audience targeting, distribution of information materials and their impact, he said that most materials were intended for information redisseminators, particularly the media and non-governmental organizations. While efforts were made to produce materials for specific audiences, for practical reasons such materials would continue to be of limited application because of limited resources and the diversity of audiences world-wide. On the question of distribution, the Department needed to look carefully into the situation. On the assessment of end-users as well as the impact of public information materials, he referred the members of the Committee to last year's document (A/AC.198/53) and assured them that end-user's reactions would be included wherever possible in future evaluation studies.

64. Most delegations expressed satisfaction with the initial steps taken by the Department. They supported sustained continuation of monitoring and evaluation efforts. Several representatives stressed the necessity for defining target audiences.

65. Some delegations felt that, parallel to the in-house Department of Public Information evaluation effort, the Joint Inspection Unit should be asked to undertake a linear evaluation of the products and performance of the Department over a period of several years, basing its studies at least in part, on the data the Department would be collecting, and supplementing that data base from other and independent sources as might be required. Some delegations suggested that the usefulness and effectiveness of the United Nations information centres should be a subject of evaluation.

66. A suggestion was made that the newly established monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should provide accountability on the cost-effectiveness of public information materials.

67. Most delegations recognized the need for clear definitions of goals for evaluation. One delegation congratulated the Department for having begun discussions with the computer services in order to facilitate the collection, updating, retrieval and analysis of data. For the record, one delegation stated that the Department was not being asked to evaluate the impact of its materials. What was requested was information on whether the materials were being utilized by the targeted users.

68. The dispersal of information resources to other departments and offices, as pointed out in paragraph 75 of the Secretary-General's report to CPC (E/AC.51/1983/7), was an issue suggested for further discussion by the Committee at a later date.

69. In his response, the Under-Secretary-General assured the members of the Committee that the Department would vigorously pursue the monitoring and evaluation of its activities. The procedures were being streamlined and simplified, but would nevertheless ensure that all necessary data would be sought in the revised forms.

70. On the question of accountability on cost-effectiveness of information materials, the Under-Secretary-General said that current United Nations accounting procedures did not allow for cost accounting. He suggested that the matter should be raised in an appropriate committee.

71. Regarding paragraph 75 of the report to CPC, the Under-Secretary-General explained that, although the General Assembly had designated the Department of Public Information as the focal-point for co-ordination and implementation of the information activities of the United Nations, at the same time, the General Assembly had, and continued to provide, information functions and resources to other departments and offices. While he assured the members of the Committee that the Department would endeavour to maintain the focal role, the exercise of that role had to be interpreted with due regard to the various mandates.

72. He told the Committee that every two years CPC received a programme performance report from the Department. The next such report would cover the biennium 1982-1983 and would be based on the quarterly monitoring reports now being produced. He suggested that the Committee might wish to receive that report.

73. Affirming the Department's full co-operation with any external evaluators which the Committee or any other relevant intergovernmental body might request, he nevertheless pointed out the need for the Committee to examine future evaluation requests with a view to establishing some order, realistic expectations and clearly defined objectives.

Item 4 (b) (xiii). Redressing the geographical imbalance in the staff of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/66)

74. In introducing the item, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information noted that the Department had made a concerted effort, in co-operation with the Office of Personnel Services in response to General Assembly resolutions 35/201, 36/149 B and 37/94 B, to improve the geographical composition of the staff of the Department over the last three years. Although progress had been achieved as indicated in the report, he was aware of the need to continue his efforts in that area.

75. Several delegations, while noting the improvement shown by the statistics provided in the report, stressed the need for greater representation for developing countries, especially at the senior levels. Others noted that the group of Eastern European countries and the group of Western European and other countries were under-represented and emphasized the need for adequate representation of those groups. Still others stated that the Department should strive not only for balance among nationalities but also for linguistic balance.

Item 4 (b) (xv). Public information activities in connection with the International Youth Year

76. In introducing this item, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information recalled that the General Assembly had recommended that expenses related to information activities for the International Youth Year should be absorbed by the regular budget of the Department of Public Information or funded from voluntary contributions. The Department was prepared to make all the necessary efforts to that effect. There was, however, a limit to what could be undertaken within available resources. The activities planned included a film on youth, a series of

radio programmes already in production, pamphlets and other printed materials. It was hoped that additional funding which would permit other activities such as press kits, newsletters, journalist encounters and study tours would become available.

77. Many delegations agreed that International Youth Year was an important event and that every effort should be made at the international, regional and national levels to ensure that the Year would be a complete success. They commended the Department for its preparation for specific action for the observances of the Year and stressed that publicity for the Year and for the activities related to its celebration should be as wide as possible. Within the context of budgetary restrictions, zeal and imagination should be exercised. In particular, the Department should make full use of its facilities in New York and Vienna as well as through the network of information centres.

78. A number of delegations stressed that the international community should promote the training and encouragement of youth to take part in the solution of the world's problems and in furthering progress. International Youth Year would therefore provide an excellent opportunity to educate youth about the United Nations and its activities and would also provide the United Nations with an opportunity to give greater attention to the role of youth itself in world affairs, more specifically in development matters. They also stated that activities concerning International Youth Year should remain a priority for the Department.

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

(Item 4(c))

Item 4 (b) (xiv). Various aspects of the publication of Development Forum

79. In introducing the item, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, the Chairman of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), stressed that during the period under review JUNIC had remained very conscious of the need to keep under close scrutiny its objectives, approaches and methods of work. It had thus conducted major reviews of its activities in the sphere of the public perceptions of the United Nations system, as well as in the more narrowly defined context of operational activities for development, in order to ensure that its joint deliberations would produce complementarity of action and avoidance of duplication.

80. The Under-Secretary-General recalled that the report on public perceptions of the United Nations system (see A/AC.198/68), prepared by JUNIC over the past two years, was reviewed and given its final form at JUNIC's ninth session, held in 1982, and then submitted to the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) at its third regular session of 1982. The report sought to analyse some of the underlying causes of the present public view of the United Nations system, suggested what role the information services of the United Nations system might play in the circumstances and made specific proposals for follow-up action involving a number of joint efforts on the part of the information services. ACC had taken a decision on the report about which the Committee had been advised. JUNIC had returned to the matter at its recently concluded tenth session, held in April 1983 at Vienna. It considered again a number of the specific recommendations

made in the report and concluded, in effect, that additional resources would not be required to implement most of them. In those cases where additional resources did seem necessary, JUNIC would be recommending to ACC that those proposals should not be implemented at the present time.

81. At its tenth session, JUNIC also considered a preliminary report on the implementation of ACC decision 1982/27, which called for consideration to be given as to the feasibility of carrying out a special programme of public information activities in order to maximize public awareness of the valuable work being done by the United Nations system in the area of operational activities for development. Emerging from this review was an agreement to undertake a common strategy for system-wide public information activities related to development assistance but within the context of existing resources on the basis of reordering, refocusing and re-emphasizing current projects and activities. At the same time, JUNIC felt that the recommendations contained in both the reports on public perceptions and on the common strategy were clearly interrelated and decided that, in order to make a coherent presentation to ACC and to the Committee on Information, and also later on to facilitate implementation by JUNIC, a single synthesis paper should be prepared. The synthesis paper would link the JUNIC report on public perceptions of the United Nations system and the draft common strategy report as reviewed at the tenth session of JUNIC.

82. With regard to Development Forum, JUNIC had noted once again the importance of long-term financing for the publication and recognized that new efforts should be made to obtain commitments from the sponsors of Development Forum and from other possible contributors.

83. On the basis of the recommendations of the Development Forum Project Group, JUNIC had decided to transfer Development Forum from Geneva to New York with effect from January 1984. At the present stage, JUNIC had felt that that important step should provide Development Forum with the opportunity to look forward to a more assured budgetary situation at least during the forthcoming biennium.

Item 4 (c) (i) Presentation of the report on public perceptions of the United Nations system

84. During the course of the prolonged debate on the report on public perception of the United Nations system (see A/AC.198/68), delegations expressed their views concerning, in particular, its analyses and findings.

85. Many delegations stated that, on the whole, the report presented an accurate picture of how the United Nations was perceived in today's world. They commended the professional methodology used and analyses contained in the JUNIC report. They agreed with JUNIC that, because so much of United Nations economic and social activities went unreported in the mass media, the developing countries, where the effects of such activities were directly felt, had a more positive perception of the United Nations than did other countries. They also recognized that there was a sustained lack of adequate coverage and support of the United Nations by the mass media and Governments of certain countries. The focus of future activity of the United Nations information system must be to remedy this situation.

86. Several delegations were of the view that the analytical section of the report on public perceptions contained a lack of balance that might harm the credibility of the Organization itself. They considered it unsupported by facts and inaccurate in many parts. In particular, they could not agree with the criticisms directed at the mass media of one group of countries whose function, in any event, was not to

rally support for the work of the United Nations system but to report on it. Clearly, the information activities of the United Nations had a role to play in improving public perceptions. However, no miracle could be expected, and resources for information activities would have to be allocated with prudence.

87. Other delegations said the report on public perceptions was thorough and realistic in its depiction of the ways in which public opinion was shaped in different countries. Its conclusions were irrefutable. Part of the problem came from the fact that political circles and the mass media in certain countries referred to in the report did not wish to accept the progressive changes taking place in the world and in the United Nations itself.

88. One delegation stated that the self-critical analysis in the report should be beneficial and its recommendations were largely responsive to perceived inadequacies. However, the report created its own context which completely lacked substance. Basic definitions and criteria were not clear. The Committee on Information should not give it more consideration than it deserved.

89. Most representatives who spoke agreed with the report that it was natural for international organizations to attract public scrutiny and criticism and that such attention was inevitable and might even at times be beneficial. They commended the report's frankness in acknowledging inadequacies in the public information activities carried out by the United Nations system. They agreed in general with the proposals concerning the role of the information services. The recommendations for future action received general support. However, it was stressed that these recommendations should be implemented without involving additional expenses from the regular budget of the United Nations.

90. A proposal was also made for the adoption by the Committee of a recommendation appealing to all Member States to give wider and more objective dissemination of information on the activities of the United Nations.

Item 4 (c) (ii). Progress report on the activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee

91. A number of delegations expressed their satisfaction with the activities undertaken by JUNIC, or under its auspices, as described in its progress report. They stated once again that they considered JUNIC as an essential instrument for inter-agency co-ordination in the field of public information. They stressed that JUNIC should continue to place its emphasis on joint action and on long-term planning and stressed that its activities should also be aimed at the establishment of a new world information and communication order. Some delegations stressed the fact that JUNIC should give more emphasis in its future activities to development issues.

92. A number of delegations underlined once more the high quality of Development Forum and stated that it should continue to be a joint publication of the United Nations system, issue-oriented and independent in its outlook. They approved the relocation of the Development Forum from Geneva to New York, but stressed that the move should not affect the editorial independence of the publication. They appealed to members of the Committee to give priority attention to the financial situation of the publication in order to ensure its future on a sound basis.

93. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the work of the Non-Governmental Liaison Services in both New York and Geneva. In that connection, they referred to the relevant parts of the JUNIC report on public perceptions of the United Nations system and to the report on the activities of the Services. They supported the JUNIC recommendations designed to ensure the continued support of the operations as "test cases" depicting how members of the United Nations family co-operated. Taking into account the important role the Services played, these delegations recommended that expenditures for the Services should come from the regular budget of the United Nations.

D. Recommendations

94. The Committee on Information submits the following recommendations, which were adopted by consensus, to the General Assembly:

- A. 1. The 43 recommendations of the Committee on Information approved by the General Assembly in resolution 37/94 B of 10 December 1982, as well as all provisions of the resolution, are reiterated. Those recommendations pending implementation should be implemented in full, taking into account the views expressed by delegations at the 100th plenary meeting of the thirty-seventh session of the Assembly on 10 December 1982.
2. The mandate of the Committee on Information should be renewed as set forth in General Assembly resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979 and reaffirmed in Assembly resolutions 35/201 of 16 December 1980, 36/149 of 16 December 1981 and 37/94 of 10 December 1982.

Promotion of the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information 9/

3. All countries, the United Nations system as a whole, and all others concerned, should collaborate in the establishment of a new world information and communication order based, inter alia, on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information, guaranteeing the diversity of sources of information and free access to information, and, in particular, the urgent need to change the dependent status of the developing countries in the field of information and communication as the principle of sovereign equality among nations extends also to this field, and intended also to strengthen peace and international understanding, enabling all persons to participate effectively in political, economic, social and cultural life, and promoting understanding and friendship among all nations and human rights.

4. An appeal should be addressed to the international media to obtain their support for the efforts of the international community towards global development and, in particular, for the efforts of the developing countries for their own economic, social and cultural progress.

5. An appeal should be addressed to the whole United Nations system to co-operate in a concerted manner, through its information services, in promoting the development activities of the United Nations and, in particular, the improvement of the conditions of the lives of the people of the developing countries.

6. Such appeals should be aimed at achieving a more comprehensive and realistic image of the activities and potential of the United Nations system, in all its purposes and endeavours, as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations.
7. The need should be noted for the creation of a climate of confidence in relations among States as a means of easing tension and, in this context, an appeal should be addressed to all States and mass media to help promote the purposes of strengthening peace and understanding.
8. Reaffirming the primary role which the General Assembly is to play to elaborating, co-ordinating and harmonizing United Nations policies and activities in the field of information and recognizing the central and important role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the field of information and communications, the co-operation between the United Nations and UNESCO in promoting the establishment of a new world information and communication order should take more regular forms, especially at the working level, through which the contribution of the Department of Public Information to the efforts of UNESCO should be maximized.
9. The Department of Public Information should disseminate as widely as possible information on the activities of UNESCO in the establishment of a new world information and communication order and on the work of the Committee on Information in that field.
10. The Committee on Information, noting the valuable effort of UNESCO in the promotion of a new world information and communication order, recommends that the Department of Public Information take steps to avoid any overlapping of its activities on this subject with those of UNESCO, while stressing at the same time the ever-growing significance of the close working co-operation between the United Nations and the latter organization.
11. All countries, the United Nations system as a whole, and others concerned, should be called upon to give UNESCO adequate support and assistance in the field of information and communication. The fifth anniversary of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racism, Apartheid and Incitement to War, 5/ adopted by UNESCO in 1978, should be marked by the General Assembly.
12. The Secretary-General should be requested to present to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session the report of the round-table discussion on a new world information and communication order to be held in Innsbruck, Austria, in September 1983.
13. An appeal should be addressed to the whole United Nations system and the developed countries to co-operate in a concerted manner towards strengthening the information and communication infrastructures of the developing countries in accordance with the priorities attached to such areas by the developing countries. In this regard, full support for the International Programme for Development of Communications (IPDC), which constitutes an important step in the development of these infrastructures, should be emphasized.

14. The Department of Public Information should further strengthen its co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with regional news agencies of developing countries as this co-operation constitutes a concrete step towards a more just and equitable world flow of information, thus contributing to the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

15. The United Nations system, particularly UNESCO, should aim at the provision of all possible support and assistance to the developing countries, with regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to actions already adopted within the United Nations system, including, in particular:

(a) Assistance to developing countries in training journalists and technical personnel and in setting up appropriate educational institutions and research facilities;

(b) The granting of favourable conditions to provide access to developing countries to such communication technology as is requisite for the establishment of a national information and communication system and correspondent with the specific situation of the country concerned;

(c) The creation of conditions that will gradually enable the developing countries to produce the communication technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, specifically for radio and television broadcasting, by using their own resources;

(d) Assistance in establishing telecommunication links at subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries, free from any kind of conditioning.

16. All the information activities of the Department of Public Information should be guided by, and carried out in conformity with, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the aspiration for a new world information and communication order, as well as conforming to the consensus reached among States in resolutions 21 C/4/19, 21 and 22, as adopted at the twenty-first session of the General Conference of UNESCO.

17. The Secretary-General should be requested to ensure that the activities of the Department of Public Information, as the focal point of the public information tasks of the United Nations, should be strengthened, keeping in view the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and along the lines established in the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly and the recommendations of the Committee on Information, to ensure a more coherent coverage of, and a better knowledge about, the United Nations and its work, especially in its priority areas, such as those stated in section III, paragraph 1, of Assembly resolution 35/201, including international peace and security, disarmament, peace-keeping and peace-making operations, decolonization, the promotion of human rights, the struggle against apartheid and racial discrimination, economic, social and development issues, the integration of women in the struggle for peace and development, the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order, the work of the United Nations Council for Namibia and programmes on women and youth.

Continuation of examination of United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order 10/

18. The Department of Public Information should ensure that the daily dispatches of the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies which it receives are appropriately utilized in the performance of the public information tasks of the United Nations.

(a) With a view to further promotion and development of a functional and mutually beneficial co-operation between the Department and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, the existing arrangements in the Department for the conduct of this co-operation should be established on a more regular basis;

(b) Having in mind the successful joint coverage by the Pool of important conferences and other events within the United Nations system, this practice should be continued and further strengthened;

(c) The Department should consider the possibility of utilizing the dispatches received from the Pool to establish a data base on the information and communication facilities in the non-aligned countries.

19. In connection with the training programme for journalists and broadcasters from developing countries that the Department of Public Information organizes every year, the possibility of allocating the last week of the programme for their visit to one of the developing countries for the purpose of acquainting themselves with the ways in which information on the United Nations is received and utilized, should be considered.

20. The Secretary-General should be requested to make available to the Committee on Information, at its next substantive session, a report on the outcome of the activities conducted by the International Telecommunication Union with regard to the World Communications Year.

21. The exchange of information between the Committee on Information and the Commission on Transnational Corporations in matters pertaining to the mandate of the Committee should be encouraged.

22. The Secretary-General should be requested to present to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session the final report on the acquisition of a United Nations communications satellite, in the manner outlined in paragraph 20 of General Assembly resolution 37/94 B of 10 December 1982.

23. The Secretary-General should be requested to implement fully the request, in paragraph 14 of Assembly resolution 36/149 B, that present United Nations short-wave broadcasts over rented transmitters be placed on a daily schedule throughout the year, to the extent that this can be accomplished through more effective utilization of existing resources.

24. The Secretary-General should be requested to continue the co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Union of National Radio and Television Organizations of Africa, as well as with radio stations which are members of that Union, in order to broadcast United Nations radio programmes on those radio stations, and further requests the Secretary-General to co-operate with the national radio broadcasting organizations in Africa for wider broadcasting of United Nations radio programmes.

25. The Secretary-General should be requested to present to the next substantive session of the Committee on Information a comprehensive report on the viability of a world-wide United Nations short-wave network, taking into account the views expressed at the present session of the Committee.

26. The Secretary-General should be requested to implement fully the proposals contained in his report regarding programming in the Portuguese language in the African Unit of the Radio Service and to take immediate steps for the strengthening of programming in the French language.

27. The Secretary-General should be requested to maintain the functions of the Middle East/Arabic Unit as the producer of Arabic television and radio programmes, and to strengthen and expand this unit through the redeployment of existing resources to enable it to function in an effective manner, and to report to the next substantive session of the Committee on Information on the measures taken in implementation of this recommendation.

28. In view of the importance of United Nations broadcasting for the European region, steps should be taken to maintain and enhance the functions of the European Unit in the Radio Service through redeployment of existing resources.

29. (a) The inclusion of Bengali and Indonesian among the languages of the Asian Unit of the Radio Service for the purpose of undertaking programming at a meaningful level, as approved last year, should be implemented in full.

(b) Bahasa Malaysia (Malay) should also be included among the languages of the Asian Unit of the Radio Service for the purpose of undertaking programming at a meaningful level, through redeployment of available resources.

30. (a) Whereas, the French Language Production Section of the Press and Publications Division hardly has available the means to provide press releases in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of the numerous delegations from all geographic areas wishing to use French as their working language, the Committee requests that the Secretary-General provide that Section with the appropriate means through better and more equitable use of available resources.

(b) The Committee recommends to the Department of Public Information that it make appropriate use of the official languages of the General Assembly in documents and audiovisual materials, in view of the need to disseminate more broadly and effectively information on the activities of the United Nations to the greatest cross-section of the public and using the greatest number of communications media.

31. United Nations information centres should continue to assist press and information media in their respective countries, and, inter alia, promote the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

32. While the co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the field should be promoted to the maximum extent, it is also important to bear in mind the intrinsic functions of United Nations information centres as distinct from those of the United Nations development activities. The United Nations information centres should redouble their effort to publicize the activities and achievements of operational activities for development, including those of UNDP, taking into account the priorities determined by the General Assembly.

33. In countries where the size, population, the state of media and non-governmental and other organizations, or the role being played by their Governments in the United Nations affairs warrant it, separate United Nations information centres should be established, as and when resources become available. In other cases, the resident representatives or resident co-ordinators of UNDP may be entrusted with being Acting Directors of United Nations information centres, provided that they are periodically briefed and evaluated by the Department of Public Information with regard to their information tasks and provided that appropriate local staff and equipment can be allocated to them within available resources.

34. The Committee on Information takes note of the "Study on ways and means to enhance the role of the United Nations information centres within the structure of the Department of Information" (A/AC.198/61) and recommends that the effectiveness of United Nations information centres should continue to be improved:

(a) Through the continued review of the extent of decentralization which can be achieved within the overall guidance of the Department of Public Information;

(b) Through better training of centre directors and their personnel;

(c) Through improved feedback and reporting system;

(d) Where appropriate, through reallocation of available resources for local reproduction and other necessary expenditures;

(e) Through appointing the best qualified persons with professional experience from all different geographical regions to the posts of centre directors, in view of the increased importance of the work of the United Nations information centres network, taking into account Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

(f) Through filling existing vacancies at the level of information centre director without further delay in order to assure the continuation of the work of the centres under the necessary professional guidance of the Department of Public Information;

(g) Through enabling the External Relations Division of the Department of Public Information to fulfil its important role of management, guidance, supervision and monitoring of United Nations information centres in order to ensure that the universal character of the United Nations and the manifold mandate of the Department be duly reflected in the work of the information centres;

(h) Through strengthening the capacity and improving the services rendered by the centres within the existing resources of the Department of Public Information so that the centres can play their indispensable role of fostering an informed public opinion about the United Nations throughout the world.

35. The Department of Public Information should focus on, and give wider coverage to, the economic, social and development activities throughout the United Nations system aimed at achieving a more comprehensive image of activities and potentials of the United Nations system, taking into account the priorities set by the General Assembly. The United Nations information centres, among others, should play an important role in this regard. The Department of Public Information should encourage the organization of round-table discussions between chief editors for press, radio and television services of different countries.

36. The Department of Public Information should promote an informed understanding of the work of the United Nations in the area delineated in General Assembly resolutions 34/146 of 17 December 1979, 36/109 of 10 December 1981 and 37/108 of 16 December 1982.

37. The Committee on Information notes with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on United Nations information centres (A/AC.198/61). The Secretary-General should be requested to present at the next substantive session of the Committee a detailed report containing concrete proposals in respect of the suggestions presented in paragraphs 44 to 46 of the report.

38. The Secretary-General should be requested to ensure that United Nations information centres orient their activities to disseminate information on questions according to the mandates and priorities of the Department of Public Information established by the General Assembly.

39. Urgent steps should be taken to ensure that the United Nations Information Service in Vienna will give, as a matter of priority adequate service in the German language in order to act as information centre for Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany. Such steps, which are to be taken within existing resources, may involve redeployment of posts, including those originally assigned to UNIDO-UNIS (United Nations Information Service). The Committee should be informed about the implementation of this recommendation at its next substantive session.

40. Taking into account the request of the Government of Nicaragua for the opening of a United Nations information centre in Managua, the Secretary-General should be requested to take the appropriate steps for the prompt establishment of the centre, through the redeployment of existing resources.

41. The United Nations information centres should be requested to intensify direct and systematic communication exchange with local information and educational communities in a mutually beneficial way, especially in areas of particular interest to host countries.

42. A detailed and well documented factual summary account of the coverage by widely representative world media, reviewing developments affecting the

Palestinian people from June to December 1982 should be prepared, within existing resources, and be submitted at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

43. The Committee, noting with appreciation the Secretary-General's report on the proposals for the development of systematic evaluation procedures for the activities of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/60) and the Secretary-General's report entitled "In-depth evaluation of the work of the Department of Public Information" (E/AC.51/1983/7), encourages the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to develop a system for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the activities of the Department, particularly in the priority areas determined by the General Assembly. This systematic evaluation process should be pursued and a progress report should be presented to the Committee on Information at its next substantive session. The Committee looks forward to receiving in due course the progress report on the implementation of decisions taken on the basis of document E/AC.51/1983/7 which is to be presented to the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its twenty-sixth session.

44. Future reports of the Department of Information to the Committee on Information and to the General Assembly, in particular on new programmes or expansion of existing programmes, should contain:

(a) More adequate information on the output of the Department in respect of each topic included in its work programme, which forms the basis of its programme budget;

(b) The costs of the activities undertaken in respect of each topic;

(c) More adequate information on target audiences, end-use of the Department's products, and an analysis of feed-back data received by the Department;

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

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

45. The Committee notes the steps taken by the Department of Public Information in redressing the imbalance in the staff of that Department, particularly in the Radio and Visual Services Division. The Department should continue to intensify its efforts to that end, and, until equitable geographical distribution is achieved, the Secretary-General should take urgent steps to increase the representation of under-represented groups of countries, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolutions 33/143, 35/201, 36/149 and 37/94 B; in this regard, the Secretary-General is requested to submit a report to the Committee on Information at its next session.

46. Member States should be called upon to make voluntary contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Economic and Social Information.

47. The General Assembly should note document A/AC.198/62 on item 4 (b) (v) concerning various aspects of the regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division and examine it in the light of its resolutions 35/201 and 36/149 B.
48. The World Disarmament Campaign should give full consideration to the role of mass media as the most effective way to promote in world public opinion a climate of understanding, confidence and co-operation conducive to peace and disarmament, the enhancement of human rights and development. Within the World Disarmament Campaign and Disarmament Week, the Department of Public Information should fulfil the role assigned to it by the General Assembly by utilizing its expertise and resources in public information to ensure its maximum effectiveness.
49. Quality, usefulness and coverage of the daily press releases and the weekly news summary issued by the Department of Public Information in all working languages should be further enhanced and improved in view of the important public information tasks which they can perform. The Department of Public Information should continue to co-operate closely with and provide assistance to the United Nations Correspondents Association. Services provided at the Press Section of the Department of Public Information booth for the media and the delegations should be improved.
50. The Committee recommends, in view of the importance of graphic presentation for a variety of public information activities, including posters, exhibits and publications, that the Secretary-General should consider re-deploying a post of graphic designer from the Department of Conference Services to the Department of Public Information.
51. The role of the Department of Public Information, as defined by the General Assembly in several relevant resolutions, as the focal point for the formulation and implementation of information activities of the United Nations should be re-emphasized, and the Secretary-General should be requested to study the full implications of this matter and present a report to the Committee on Information at its 1984 substantive session.
52. The operations of the Non-Governmental Liaison Services (Geneva and New York) as inter-agency projects reaching specific target audiences in the industrialized countries on international development issues should be continued on a stable financial basis through the United Nations participation in these services. The Committee further recommends that the Secretary-General should be requested to urge all United Nations specialized agencies to make long-term contributions to the financing of these services, thereby stressing their inter-agency characters.
53. The Department of Public Information and UNDP, as important elements of the United Nations information and development activities, should be requested to co-operate more closely with each other, both at Headquarters and in the field, in order to concentrate their resources, avoid duplication and effectively foster the process of development.
54. The Joint United Nations Information Committee, as the essential instrument for inter-agency co-ordination and co-operation in the field of public information should be enhanced and given more responsibility, thus

improving its co-ordination and cost-benefit efficiency on the public information activities of the entire United Nations system.

55. The Joint United Nations Information Committee should continue to strengthen its activities in the fields of development education and development-support communications.

56. The recommendations contained in the report of the Joint United Nations Information Committee on public perceptions of the United Nations system (see A/AC.198/68) should be implemented. An appeal should be addressed to Governments and mass media to transmit accurate information on major activities of the United Nations, especially those listed in Article I of the Charter of the United Nations.

57. The Joint United Nations Information Committee should continue to report on its programmes and activities to the Committee on Information for guidance and support.

58. Since Development Forum is the only inter-agency publication of the United Nations system which concentrates on development issues, the Secretary-General should continue, in accordance with pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly, to support its publication from the regular budget while intensifying his efforts to secure a sound and independent financial basis for its continued publication. All the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system should be urged to contribute to the financing of this system-wide publication, thereby recognizing the inter-agency character of this publication.

59. Having taken note of the report on the relocation of Development Forum, the Committee recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to ensure that Development Forum will retain its editorial policy of intellectual independence, thus enabling this publication to continue to serve as a world-wide forum in which diverse opinions on issues related to economic and social development can be freely expressed.

60. The Secretary-General should be requested to present a report to the Committee on Information on the current status of financial arrangements for the publication of the World Newspaper Supplement project.

61. In view of the fact that, as is pointed out in the report on the in-depth evaluation of the work of the Department of Public Information (E/AC.51/1983/7), the production of the UN Chronicle is administratively separate from its distribution and sales, thus adding to the problem of its wider and more effective dissemination, it is recommended that the Secretary-General consider transferring the sales activity of the UN Chronicle to the Department of Public Information.

62. The importance of the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace 11/ should be noted and Member States called upon for its implementation.

B. The following recommendations, which may have financial implications beyond the level of existing resources, were adopted. Their implementation will be decided upon by the General Assembly in the light of statements on their financial

implications. The delegation of the United States of America cannot agree to these recommendations pending certification from the Secretary-General that they can be implemented within existing resources.

1. Immediate steps should be taken to enable the Caribbean Unit in the Radio Service of the Department of Public Information to begin a meaningful work programme as outlined in the relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/65), in particular, by the introduction of full programming in French/Creole with limited programming in Dutch/Papiamentu.

2. The Secretary-General should be requested to take necessary measures to ensure that the regional television news magazines are produced for national broadcasting organizations which request them and undertake to broadcast them on a regular basis, taking into account the priorities set by the General Assembly.

3. In view of the decision of the Government of Indonesia to invite the Department of Public Information to reopen the United Nations Information Centre in Jakarta which was closed in 1965 due to prevailing circumstances at that time, steps should be taken as a matter of priority, to reopen this Centre as soon as possible.

C. The following proposals were considered, but agreement on them could not be reached.

1. The Secretary-General should be requested to submit to the Committee on Information at its next substantive session the findings of the Centre for Transnational Corporations relating to the questions considered by the Committee.

2. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) should be requested to carry out a linear evaluation of the activities of the Department of Public Information, including considerations of cost-effectiveness, assessing these activities over a span of several years. The evaluation should be carried out over a period of several years as well, examining a different component of the Department's activities each year. The Committee recommends that JIU first evaluate, during 1984, the activities and effectiveness of the United Nations information centres, taking into account the relevance of the activities of the centres, for the end-users. This report from JIU should be presented to the seventh substantive session of the Committee on Information, together with the comments of the Secretary-General. After the Committee has reviewed the report of JIU, and the Secretary-General's comments, it should make additional recommendations to the Secretary-General on further action.

3. The Department of Public Information should be requested to improve its data collection procedures with regard to the actual use made by disseminators of materials distributed by the Department and its information centres. The Department report, including submission of revised data collection forms, should be submitted to the Committee on Information at its next substantive session, on progress made in this area.

4. The Joint Inspection Unit should be asked to evaluate, during 1984, the activities of the Visual Service of the Department of Public Information with a view to finding and elaborating ways to improve the cost effectiveness and

quality of its production. The report from JIU should be presented to the substantive session of the Commission on Information in 1985, together with the comments of the Secretary-General.

5. The Department of Public Information should be requested, in conformity with the relevant United Nations resolutions, to cover adequately the policies and practices which violate and affect the human rights of the populations in the Arab territories occupied in 1967, especially those which frustrate the speedy accomplishment of self-determination by the Palestinian people on its national soil.

6. The General Assembly should recognize the importance of the International Convention concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace 7/ and to call upon States which have not done so, to adhere to that important instrument.

7. The importance of General Assembly resolution 37/92 entitled "Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use of States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting" should be emphasized.

Notes

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/35/21), annex.

2/ Ibid., Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/36/21).

3/ Ibid., Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/37/21 and Corr.1).

4/ See A/AC.198/68.

5/ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Records of the General Conference, Twentieth Session, vol. I, Resolutions, pp. 100-104.

6/ See A/38/67-S/15556 and Corr.1, annex.

7/ Cmd. 5714 (London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1938).

8/ Cmnd. 6198 (London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1975).

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

10/ See the first part of the mandate of the Committee on Information (General Assembly resolution 34/182, sect. I, para. 2 (a)).

11/ See General Assembly resolution 33/73 of 15 December 1978.

Statement by the Chairman of the Committee on Information at
the opening meeting of the substantive session for 1983

[Original: English]

1. We face once again the task of complying with the mandate entrusted to our Committee by the General Assembly, in its resolution 34/182 which is:

"(a) To continue to examine United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order;

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

(c) To promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly."

2. By addressing ourselves earnestly and creatively to these goals during the last four years, our Committee has demonstrated that the United Nations is indeed a forum where countries of differing political and social systems can meet and resolve controversial issues.

3. The General Assembly, in its resolution 37/94 B, approved the Committee's 1982 report, a/ and approved and urged the implementation of all the Committee's recommendations therein.

4. In this connection, I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, for the timely circulation of the documents relating to the implementation of Assembly resolution 37/94 B. We shall be considering these documents in the course of our discussion of the items of our agenda.

5. The last four years have not been easy ones for this Committee and the weeks ahead will require our patience, understanding and, above all, goodwill. This is because our mandate involves not only the bridging of the economic and technological gap between developed and developing nations - which is one of the leading causes of the global imbalance in information and communication - but also with human values and attitudes that have the proclivity to resist change, even when such a change is for the good of mankind.

6. As our Committee begins a new phase in its substantive tasks, may I share with you some thoughts concerning key points which, in my view, have a direct bearing on its mandate:

7. First is the recognition that information and communication play a crucial role in human affairs. The content of information, its accuracy and mode of dissemination are essential in the promotion of understanding and mutual trust amongst peoples, nations and societies. Conversely, distortions and lapses in information sow fear, misunderstanding and distrust, and contribute to tensions and insecurity in international relations.

8. This is all the more so now because we are in the midst of one of the most powerful and pervasive revolutions known to man. Speaking of the same, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country, General Carlos P. Romulo, in his address before the Asian Mass Media Leaders' Round table in Manila last May, said:

"'Revolution' rather than 'progress' would perhaps better describe the changes that have taken place in the collection and dissemination of information during the 30-odd years since the establishment of the United Nations ... The last three decades have witnessed quantum advances in the speed of transmission, scope of reach and sheer volume of information available in the world. And we are just in the initial stages of the technological revolution in the field of communications which have brought about these changes."

9. Minister Romulo warned of a gap between the old, deeply-ingrained attitudes and the technological advances in communications, which require new standards for disseminating information, and a higher sense of social responsibility on the part of the owners and managers of the mass media. He thus posed the following questions:

"Will the new tools be used to perpetuate old quarrels and foster discord among nations in a new and more dangerous cold war? Or will they be enlisted in the service of truth and peace, to promote the security and well-being of a world that has become truly interdependent?"

10. Second: Timely and vigorous efforts are required to rectify the erroneous impression that the United Nations is an ineffective instrument for world peace, security and development. It is regrettable that certain sectors of the mass media persist in unduly high-lighting mostly politically-oriented stories about the World Body, when the Organization's work has equally to do with social, cultural and economic matters. When the political content - which accounts for not more than 20 per cent of the United Nations' activities - is given more weight and importance than the Organization's equally substantial, meaningful and successful endeavours in the socio-economic field, the consequence is the distortion of the Organization's image in the eyes of the world.

11. The United Nations has, in accordance with its Charter, the capacity to provide adequate mechanisms for the resolution of the conflicts and disputes that affect our troubled world. These mechanisms or means for peace-making should be correctly perceived by the world at large. Otherwise, the image of the United Nations as an instrument of peace cannot be fostered and governments will be reluctant to resort to it.

12. In this regard, we have before us several reports that focus on measures that could be agreed upon to improve the public image of the United Nations.

13. I refer in particular to the report of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) entitled "Public perceptions of the United Nations system", b/ and to the "Study on ways and means to enhance the role of the United Nations information centres within the structure of the Department of Public Information". c/

14. Third: Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations which defines the purposes of the Organization, includes "promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion". I stress this basic purpose of the Organization because I think it necessary for all of us to clarify in our minds the basis of the information activities in the United Nations family, and, in particular, in the United Nations itself.

15. Since the Organization's creation more than 30 years ago, the shape and structure of the international community have been, through the great historic movement of decolonization and emancipation, completely transformed. The moral force of the international community exercised through the instrument of the United Nations has no doubt been an important contributory factor in this process. And in this role the Organization has merely been fulfilling its promotional role as defined in the Charter. I should add that in examining and reviewing the information activities of the Organization, in our capacity as members of its deliberative and legislative organs, we should continue to apply the standards laid down in the Charter.

16. Fourth: Discussions on the political and social functions of the mass media cannot be divorced from the overall problems of development - including the need for the establishment of adequate communications infrastructure in the developing countries. Development is inevitably linked to information, in our discussions, because the so-called "information gap" between the North and the South is in reality an economic-technological gap. Recognition of this reality is the primary reason why efforts to establish the new international economic order are inextricably linked to efforts to establish a new world information and communication order.

17. It is a task and a moral responsibility which we cannot evade. In our interdependent world, mankind cannot long permit a situation to continue where 20 per cent of its numbers live in virtual islands of affluence amidst a widening sea of poverty.

18. Fifth: The principle of freedom of information, on the basis of the free circulation and the wider and better balanced dissemination of information, with the diversity of information sources and the freedom of access to such sources being guaranteed, should be reaffirmed.

19. I have indicated the focal points of perception and understanding which, in my view, have guided the Committee in the past, and which should continue to guide us in the pursuit of the Committee's mandate. May I add that, far from duplicating the efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to promote the establishment of the new international information order, I see the relationship between this Committee and UNESCO as complementary and supportive of each other.

20. Distinguished Representatives: Almost 200 years ago, the renowned German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, predicted that a new world order would come into being, either through an act of will, born of moral and intellectual insight, or through a holocaust. Fortunately, we still have the opportunity to make a choice. Hence, our objective must be to consolidate our gains into a meaningful contribution to the efforts being made in the United Nations system, as well as in other forums, to strengthen the United Nations and promote the establishment of a new information and communications order. It behooves us to achieve progress in the realization of our objectives. In the same vein, we must strengthen public awareness of the common destiny that binds humankind. Our failure to act decisively, and in concert, will only delay the hard decisions that must be made if our world is to be a better place to live in.

Notes

a/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/37/21 and Corr.1).

b/ See A/AC.198/68.

c/ See A/AC.198/61.

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