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UNITED NATIONS PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Secretary-General, in recent reports to the General Assembly on the work of the Organization, has repeatedly referred to the continuing problems of communication with the public and has stated his conviction that a representative political institution cannot function effectively unless its work and its problems are understood at all levels of the society for which it works.

2. This concept reflects the basic principles governing the public information activities of the United Nations laid down by the General Assembly in resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946 and reaffirmed with minor modifications in resolution 595 (VI) of 4 February 1952.

3. These principles in summary state that the basic policy of the United Nations in the field of public information is to promote to the greatest extent possible, within its budgetary limitations, an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the Organization among the peoples of the world; that to this end, the Department of Public Information should primarily assist and rely upon the services of existing public and private agencies of information, educational institutions and non-governmental organizations and should not engage in "propaganda"; that the Department of Public Information should undertake, on its own initiative, positive informational activities to supplement the services of existing agencies; and that it should pay particular attention to the needs of regions where information media are less well developed.

4. The basic public information mandates were further developed in General Assembly resolutions 1335 (XIII) of 13 December 1958, 1405 (XIV) of 1 December 1958 and 2897 (XXVI) of 22 December 1971 which, among other things, requested the Secretary-General to place greater emphasis on enlisting the co-operation of Member States, the mass media, non-governmental organizations and educators in the programme of informing the peoples of the world on United Nations activities; to place greater emphasis on the operations and effectiveness of the United Nations information centres and establish such new information centres as appeared necessary and practicable; and to ascertain the publicity and promotional needs of the various bodies of the United Nations which undertook universal causes approved by the Assembly so that budgetary requirements to meet those needs could be taken into account.

5. On the latter subject, following the General Assembly's detailed consideration of the Secretary-General's report on the review and reappraisal of United Nations information policies and activities in 1971 (A/C.5/1320/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1), the Secretary-General, in a further report to the Assembly in 1972 (A/C.5/1452), emphasized the need for the Office of Public Information - in addition to fulfilling its reportorial functions - to adopt a more dynamic and energetic role in promoting the universally recognized causes to which the Organization is committed. In practice, this has meant a gradual reorientation of the Office of Public Information away from its traditional media-based approach towards a more effective thematic approach permitting greater flexibility in the use of staff and other resources, the elimination of duplication in research, the elaboration of

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basic concepts and programmes on any given theme among and within the various divisions of the Office of Public Information and greatly increased co-operation and co-ordination between the Office and the numerous United Nations bodies which address public information mandates to it.

6. Increased effort has also been directed to the different interests and concerns of the many audiences served by the Office of Public Information, including the varying economic, social, cultural, linguistic and other specific circumstances existing in different parts of the world. In practical terms, this has meant a greater reliance on the field establishment of the Office.

7. In recognition of this, the Secretary-General undertook a thorough review, completed in 1976, of the whole system of United Nations information centres (A/C.5/31/14) of which the General Assembly took note at its thirty-first session. The principal conclusion of this review was that the centre system was extremely important and indispensable for the performance of a number of tasks and that the network needed much strengthening if it was to perform fully effectively. While the situation described in the 1976 report remains virtually unchanged owing to current budgetary limitations, the need to strengthen this sector of the United Nations public information programme and activities is still recognized.

8. In resolution 3535 (XXX) of 17 December 1975, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to make new efforts in the field of information activities and convey to the general public comprehensive information regarding the political, economic, social, cultural and humanitarian achievements and undertakings of the United Nations system, including the principles and aims related to the new international economic order. The Secretary-General was requested to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session on the activities of the Office of Public Information. The present report has been prepared in response to that request.

9. The report is organized under the following main headings: "Introduction", including a brief summary of Office of Public Information mandates; "Issues", a selective analysis of some of the current principal concerns of the Organization and their effect on the Office; "Activities", describing the response of the Office under its present structure to the various mandates; "Co-ordination and co-operation", within the United Nations system and within the United Nations itself; and "Future trends". In some respects, the present report represents a further elaboration of the chapter on public information in the medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983 (A/33/6 (Part 12)) and therefore should be read in conjunction with that document. On the other hand, because of its eclectic nature, the present report is organized along the lines of selected concepts rather than the subprogrammes on which the medium-term plan is based.

II. ISSUES

10. Before considering in greater detail the activities of the Office of Public Information, it is necessary to look at the major issues, political, economic and social, which confront the United Nations today. These issues create the international context of news and opinion in which the Office must carry out its various mandates, and therefore they shape the existing and planned information activities of the Organization.

11. All issues that come before the United Nations are in greater or lesser degree political, but few of the major issues today can be termed purely political in the traditional sense. Whether the question is disarmament, the law of the sea or apartheid, the economic and social aspects are increasingly important. Despite this interlinked nature of political, economic and social problems, the present report makes a distinction between political issues on the one hand and economic and social issues on the other. The division is made for the sake of clarity, to facilitate the discussion of the specific activities of the Office of Public Information.

A. Political issues

12. The political issues that colour the global atmosphere are as various as the Member States involved, but a few of them have persisted for a longer time and more vividly than others. The involvement of the United Nations in these matters is thus greater than in others and the Office of Public Information has had to contend with problems and situations particular to each issue. Some of these issues are geographically localized - in the Middle East, southern Africa and the eastern Mediterranean, to name three focal points of attention - but their significance to world peace and security raises them to global status. Other issues - such as disarmament and human rights - are in themselves global issues. The large concern with international security embraces all these questions and is, of course, the broader context in which all issues before the United Nations are inevitably viewed. During the last few years the relaxation of international tensions has given rise to increased expectations about the process of disarmament. The work of the Office of Public Information has amply reflected this concern.

13. In each of the geographically localized issues the involvement of the United Nations differs, and thus also the task facing the Office of Public Information. In southern Africa as a whole the problem is decolonization, compounded by the inhuman system of apartheid, the question of Namibia and the growth of armed hostilities in the entire region. The difficulty of communicating with the local population or recording its distress directly are problems which the Office of Public Information shares with all other sections of the United Nations. On the other hand, in recent years world opinion has been informed and its awareness heightened to a greater extent than ever before on the problems of southern Africa. The economic aspects of the situation in South Africa are increasingly being focussed upon both in the Security Council and in other bodies, such as the Special

Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Commission on Transnational Corporations, and this has been reflected in the work of the Office of Public Information.

14. The unanimity of opinion with which the world condemns apartheid and the racist minority régimes in southern Africa does not however always prevail with regard to other major political problems confronting the United Nations. In relation to the complex problems of the Middle East, for instance, the Office of Public Information has increased efforts to contribute to the presentation of a full picture of all relevant developments. This includes activities within the Security Council and the General Assembly, the efforts of the Secretary-General and the role of the United Nations peace-keeping forces. The need to project the over-all United Nations role with clarity is basic to the substantive involvement of the Organization in this area. The close involvement of the Secretary-General in efforts to work out a peaceful solution to the question of Cyprus, and the presence there of United Nations peace-keeping forces pose special tasks for the Office of Public Information. These include the deployment of field coverage and liaison staff as well as efforts to disseminate up-to-date and factually correct information to world media.

15. Other issues usually considered under the broad umbrella of political questions, such as disarmament, the law of the sea or human rights, make their own distinctive demands on the Office of Public Information. All three, however, require a long-term, educative approach, and all three have important economic and social aspects. In some matters of human rights, such as the status of women, for instance, economic and social considerations are so predominant and the need to change popular attitudes so widely recognized that the role of the United Nations, and thus of the Office of Public Information, involves actively espousing change.

B. Economic and social issues

16. Economic and social issues have been a central concern of the United Nations from its inception: the promotion of social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom is an end set forth in the Preamble to the Charter. But in the decade of the 1970s these issues came increasingly to be seen by the mass media as politically important and thus became "news-worthy". The manner of this transformation explains some of the major problems faced by the Office of Public Information in dealing with issues in this area.

17. Two trends brought economic and social issues into sharp focus in the early 1970s. One was the nearly completed process of decolonization of former colonies which, by the third post-war decade, created the preponderant majority of the membership of the United Nations. Their most urgent priority after political independence was the economic and social progress of their peoples, and this naturally became one of the highest priorities of the Organization.

18. The second trend was the growing perception of global problems that affected or would affect all countries; problems which could be handled only by co-operative action. The production and distribution of food, the growth of population, the spread

of technology and industry, the supply and price of energy, the human impact on the environment, the questions of where and how people live, the effect of it all on individuals' rights and dignity - all became areas of critical concern in the 1970s.

19. The interaction of these two trends was evident at a series of major United Nations conferences including those on the human environment, food, population, industrial development, raw materials and development, labour, human rights and the structures of world trade and monetary relationships. The majority of developing countries at these world conferences offered analyses and points of view substantially different from those of industrially developed countries. In every major area the status quo was questioned and new directions were suggested. Most comprehensively, at the sixth special session of the General Assembly, the developing countries proposed a draft resolution that was adopted unanimously as resolution 3201 (S-VI) on 1 May 1974, albeit with reservations, calling for a new international economic order.

20. For the Office of Public Information, the events of the early 1970s posed problems at the operational and policy levels. The increasing political importance of economic issues imposed new demands on the Office for technical knowledge and competence. Unlike those political issues on which the Office was usually called upon to report the positions taken by States, economic and social issues required a more active approach. The Office had the task of explaining the most complex economic and social issues, of making clear the inadequacies of structures created after the Second World War and the necessity of a new world order.

21. Policy problems have been more difficult to handle and they have yet to be fully resolved. The process which brought economic issues to the forefront has been replete with controversy. In diverse forums around the world, the negotiations set off by the demand for a new international economic order have seen conflict between the positions of developing countries and those of developed countries. Resolutions have often emerged from these negotiations that represent a consensus about which individual States have numerous and strong reservations. Yet the Office of Public Information, with its mandate to "mobilize public opinion for development", has been asked to espouse change. However, the lack of any clear agreement among Member States on the exact direction of change has resulted in charges from one side that the Office of Public Information was involved in propaganda, and from the other that its activities were inadequate. Perhaps this is unavoidable in the prevailing situation, but it is necessary to keep it in view.

22. In light of the above-mentioned political, economic and social issues, the policy problems confronting the Office of Public Information have assumed a new dimension. In the continuing dialogue between certain developed and developing countries, the latter have complained that their views and their problems are not adequately covered by international mass communications media which are owned and operated predominantly by agencies in certain developed countries. Developing countries have also voiced their dissatisfaction with the operations of the existing international system of news flow, because it constrains their efforts to increase co-operation among themselves. They complain that a developing

country must depend on communications media owned and operated by developed countries to share information with another developing country. They have pointed out that in the production and distribution of magazines, books, telecommunications programmes, documentary and feature films - in every sphere of information activity - the developed countries dominate. Demands for a change in this system have been voiced repeatedly in recent years, and a variety of initiatives are under way. Several developed countries have seen in some of these initiatives a threat to the freedom of the global press and have declared their opposition. This has made the heretofore technical process of communicating information to global media a matter of policy. How this will affect the role and functions of the Office of Public Information remains to be seen.

III. ACTIVITIES

23. As mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the political, economic and social issues occupying the centre of world attention at any given time carry with them a concomitant responsibility for the Office of Public Information. More and more in recent years this responsibility has been expressed in terms of resolutions of the General Assembly and other organs specifically calling upon the Secretary-General to take all possible action to acquaint world public opinion with, or to gain maximum publicity for, particular causes, programmes or observances. Many of these requests are of an urgent nature and thus must be given priority, often with the result that work on other less urgent (but perhaps no less important) information projects may have to be delayed or postponed.

24. During the current year it has been particularly difficult for the Office of Public Information to meet the many demands placed upon it. In addition to its regular work load, the Office has had to provide information coverage of three special sessions of the General Assembly (devoted to funding of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, the question of Namibia and disarmament), two sessions of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, the World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the meetings of the United Nations Council for Namibia in Lusaka and information support for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

25. While the Office of Public Information has continued to meet its basic mandates and special responsibilities, described below, increased emphasis has been given to maintaining and improving contacts with important redisseminators of information - private and public agencies of information, governmental and non-governmental organizations, journalists, editors, commentators, radio and television outlets and other representatives of the mass media.

26. The Secretary-General has continued his practice of holding press conferences regularly and has increased his contacts with leading publishers, editors, journalists, media representatives and governmental and non-governmental organizations as part of his continuing efforts to keep abreast of public attitudes in various parts of the world on the issues confronting the international community.

27. Each year the Secretary-General convenes the 26-member Consultative Panel on Public Information established by him in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 1405 (XIV) of 1 December 1959 and 2897 (XXVI) of 22 December 1971. These meetings cover a broad range of public information problems and provide constructive counsel to the Secretary-General and to the senior officials of the Office of Public Information.

A. Press and publications

28. Press releases continue to be a basic output of the Office of Public Information. They are intended mainly for use by information media, but they are also most useful to permanent missions and to the Secretariat. Every effort is made to ensure that the releases maintain the highest standards of accuracy, balance and objectivity and that they are issued in the shortest possible time. Because of the increasing number of meetings covered at Headquarters as well as conferences and missions in the field, it is increasingly difficult, given the existing staff, to provide coverage of all meetings. As indicated in the medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983, it has been necessary to introduce some selectivity in press release coverage. Henceforth it will not be possible to give detailed coverage to certain meetings of working groups, sub-committees and similar bodies, the proceedings of which have little or no informational value, or which, under the terms of their mandates are concerned only with administrative or housekeeping operations. The Office also continues with regular daily press briefings which constitute one of the basic sources of information for news media at Headquarters. In order to help media representatives better understand the complex issues before the Organization, these briefings are often augmented by the presence of United Nations officials from substantive departments, services and offices abroad.

29. While the basic output of press releases at Headquarters is in English, the French Language Production Section has been strengthened and the number of releases and features in French has been increased.

30. An effective way of establishing and maintaining contacts with editors and writers in the field has been the holding of editors round tables and press encounters. The encounters have usually been organized in connexion with major conferences held away from Headquarters. The editors round tables are held annually on a regional basis. In 1978, as an exception to this practice, a round table for editors from developing countries was held in New York in connexion with the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

31. A major publishing event of the current year is the new edition of Everyone's United Nations (formerly entitled Everyman's United Nations), an important reference tool for educators, libraries, journalists, students, government officials and, indeed, anyone interested in a deeper understanding of the complex issues before the United Nations. The new volume of some 425 pages will cover the principal activities of the United Nations and its family of organizations concentrating on the period 1966-1977 (the eighth edition of this book covers the first 20 years of the Organization's activities). This publication is also a major sales item and is published in English, French and Spanish.

32. The UN Chronicle continues to provide its readers with prompt reporting on the wide spectrum of United Nations activities. Expanding in readership and impact, the publication has attracted an increase of approximately 2,000 paid subscribers over the past two years, with the prospect of further growth. Its subscribers include not only high schools, libraries and universities, but also a growing body of general readers interested in the United Nations and international

affairs. The Chronicle's information dissemination effort has been helped by, among other things, its new format, adopted in 1975, which includes in-depth articles by senior officers of the United Nations family, a news summary and objective accounts of all events of the month. The Chronicle is published in English, French and Spanish. Steps have been taken to effect the more timely production of the French and Spanish editions.

33. The Yearbook of the United Nations continues to be the Organization's main reference work, providing annually in one volume a comprehensive account of the activities of the United Nations, its subsidiary bodies and the related agencies. Because of the proliferation of United Nations activities, this book has expanded and its production has become more complicated and time-consuming. Nevertheless, as requested by the General Assembly, the Office of Public Information is undertaking to publish the Yearbook within 18 months of the close of the calendar year. There continue to be difficulties in ensuring that draft articles from contributors meet quality standards and be submitted on schedule. An additional problem in meeting an 18-month production schedule is that the permanent staff considered necessary for this task has not as yet been authorized. The priority demands which the Press and Publications Division must meet have made it impossible to assign staff from other units to assist in meeting the accelerated production schedule.

34. With regard to other pamphlets and booklets prepared on a variety of subjects by the Office of Public Information, an increased percentage of available resources is being devoted to the publication of these materials in both official and non-official languages in order to meet the growing requests from the information centres. For example, Basic Facts about the United Nations, a 115-page booklet on the role and functions of the Organization, appeared in its most recent edition in 1977 and has been published in some 20 languages. At the same time, the Office is encouraging the active co-operation of the information centres and non-governmental organizations in obtaining help in the local funding of United Nations publications.

35. The Office of Public Information is investigating improved technical means to speed up the production of press releases. A pilot project in the use of electronic word processing equipment is being undertaken with existing resources to determine the extent to which these techniques may be used to expedite the preparation of the copy. More rapid means of reproducing press releases are also being studied to meet the demands for larger numbers of copies of each release. Similarly, in the production of the Yearbook of the United Nations, the United Nations computing centre has been requested to make a study of the possibility of the computerized production of the annual volumes in order to determine what savings might be effected both in terms of cost and time of production.

36. In the field of external publishing new initiatives have resulted in the publication of numerous studies and reports of the Secretariat, against royalties, by commercial publishers. Frequently such manuscripts would not otherwise have been available to the public, since no resources were available for their printing. The proceedings of such major conferences as Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements and the United Nations Water Conference have been published in this way. The success of this external publishing programme will lead to further initiatives in this field.

B. Radio and visual services

37. In recent years there has been continuous and significant growth in the world audience for the electronic mass media. This development, forecast in 1971, has come about at a much faster rate than was foreseen. The distribution of radio receivers is now so wide that only a small fraction of the world's population can still be regarded as beyond the reach of broadcasting. The number of television viewers world-wide has increased dramatically. They are now served by 140 television networks, 87 of them transmitting programmes in colour; among the latter are many of the video systems in the smallest and least-developed nations.

38. Satellite technology has advanced, and its cost has diminished, to the point where even relatively small broadcasting organizations can use this link at times of national importance. New and highly portable video cameras have transformed the nature of television news gathering.

39. These developments have resulted in a sharpened demand for radio and visual services, along with a more varied and deeper interest in material provided by the United Nations. The issues are more complex today and the number of issues on which coverage is required has grown. There are calls for service in more languages and demands for a greater variety of formats.

40. The heightened interest in United Nations news has demanded a recent shift of staff and resources from documentary production to news production, more particularly in visual coverage. Radio news coverage has become more sensitively tailored to the requirements of the disseminating stations and networks, and special arrangements have been made for virtually instantaneous transmission of radio material of particular interest to broadcasting organizations. The use of short-wave as a means of broadcasting United Nations proceedings and of transmitting newscasts has diminished and, where feasible, has been replaced by the more reliable - but also more expensive - method of telephone or radio circuit feeds. This upgrading of the technical quality of transmissions has permitted the radio service to conclude a number of agreements with broadcasting organizations, providing for regular broadcast by them of United Nations material received by such circuit. Similar arrangements are being explored elsewhere.

41. Radio news programmes are dispatched to approximately 140 countries and territories each week. In North America one subscriber alone, the Mutual Radio Network, brings United Nations programmes to about 800 affiliated stations. Radio documentaries and feature programmes continue to be produced in various languages and air-mailed to all parts of the world - some 50,000 shipments a year - for broadcast by radio stations and networks of Member States. Both documentaries and news summaries are adapted into additional languages by national broadcasting organizations.

42. In general, the radio programming of the Office of Public Information has been adjusted to greater sensitivity in meeting regional and local needs. Radio services to Africa, Asia and Latin America have been strengthened.

43. As regards visual news distribution, while the major video networks continue to receive direct service from the United Nations, news film and videotape coverage of United Nations events reaches user stations and networks increasingly through syndicators - organizations such as Visnews and UPITN - which supply their customers with material and carry United Nations coverage to virtually all television networks of the world. Many of these syndicator customers are served via satellite and thus can receive reports from the United Nations almost instantaneously. For less topical material, there is a continuous flow of newsfilm and videotape shipped by air. As the television medium evolves, the Office of Public Information will extend similar co-operation to new formations or groupings of national networks, such as, for example, the pool of non-aligned news agencies.

44. Considerable progress has been made in the continuous effort to diversify and translate United Nations films to make them more suitable for wider audiences. Up to 1971 most films were of half-hour duration and produced in only a few language versions. By contrast, 107 films are now available in French, 54 in Spanish, 29 in Arabic and smaller numbers of titles in Chinese, Russian, Dutch, Finnish, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Swahili and in several languages of the Indian subcontinent. Many such language versions are produced in co-operation with networks or film studios located in the language area served. United Nations films can now be of any length, from five minutes to one hour, depending on the subject covered and the intended audience. Distribution of United Nations films for television is now free in those countries least able to pay for them.

45. In the area of photographs and exhibits, steps have been taken towards a common pricing policy and a photo catalogue for the entire United Nations system, both of which would simplify methods of ordering and exchanging photographs. Microfiche technology has made it possible for editors working at a distance to make selections from United Nations photo sources. Following General Assembly directives and the needs of substantive departments, it has been necessary to increase the number of photo exhibits and to ensure that such exhibits travel internationally for greater exposure.

46. Directives from the General Assembly and other legislative organs have also had their effect on radio and documentary film production. In 1971, for example, topics for documentary films were derived mostly from the longer-term basic mandates of OPI. In 1978 much of the film production programme, following specific directives, is devoted to such topics as Namibia, the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, the International Year of the Child and the Dangers of War. On other topics, the Office has sought joint film ventures with the specialized agencies and co-productions with outside film producers or television organizations.

47. In recognition of the growing importance of the medium of radio, the General Assembly in resolution 32/105 H of 14 December 1977 requested the Secretary-General to undertake, in co-operation with Member States whose transmitters can be heard in southern Africa, a regular programme of radio broadcasts directed at South Africa. These broadcasts are concerned with United Nations efforts against

apartheid and in support of the right of self-determination, as well as other matters of interest to the peoples of southern Africa. The radio service therefore produces a daily programme of 60 minutes duration, consisting of segments in English, Afrikaans, Xhosa and Sotho. These programmes were being broadcast into South Africa by various African transmitters in June 1978 at the rate of approximately 30 hours a week. Other broadcasting networks receive the United Nations material and use it in their own programmes which can be heard in southern Africa.

48. The Office of Public Information expects that the volume of visual news coverage will double during the next seven years, and that a reallocation of resources will be required to meet the demand. Also, major United Nations conferences held away from Headquarters will pose questions of decentralization of news coverage resources. In this respect it will be necessary to consider the experience at Geneva, where a film team has recently been established to carry out news coverage as well as documentary production. Conclusions from the Geneva experience will indicate whether other resources should in future be established away from Headquarters.

49. The constant evolution of communication technology, particularly in television equipment, requires the world industry to carry out continuous investment in improved cameras, video recording machines, editing equipment, etc. Since television networks in many countries constantly replace obsolescent equipment, those who serve them must also keep abreast of the major changes. If the United Nations is to maintain its role as a supplier of video news, then the Office of Public Information will need to possess the required equipment. The estimated value of the United Nations television plant (including cameras, videotape recorders, scanning and editing equipment) is approximately \$2.85 million. To maintain the value and effectiveness of this plant, a programme of constant replacement and modernization is necessary to ensure renewal over a five- to seven-year period: that is the rule of thumb by which comparable facilities in the television industry renew or replace their equipment. If such an expenditure is not made, the result will be a decline in the professional and technical standards which have now been established and a consequent reduction of the ability of the Office to serve its users.

50. The overhaul operation that took place between 1972 and 1976 did not extend to all of the radio studios built in the 1950s; nor did it include replacement of microphones and tape recorders. As a result, only five out of nine studios at Headquarters are adequately equipped for full radio production, and these are in need of modernization.

51. Continued diversification of format and an expanded range of language versions will be the guiding priorities in future documentary production. The enlisting of notable film-makers from developing countries to participate in the production of United Nations films will also claim special attention.

52. Each year the Office of Public Information becomes aware of a certain number of independently produced documentaries or television programmes which directly

support or explain United Nations activities. An example is a recent group of major television documentaries on the problems of southern Africa and, in particular, on apartheid. It is believed that the Office should acquire multiple prints of such films so that they may be placed in the film libraries of the United Nations information centres and circulated in other ways to the users of United Nations films. Resources allocated to this purpose will certainly help assure public awareness of important United Nations issues.

53. Still photo coverage will require more field missions by photographers, each such mission to be related to the needs of publishers and to placement opportunities.

C. External relations

1. Information centres

54. At the present time, the Office of Public Information has a field establishment of 59 United Nations information centres and offices around the world serving more than 130 Member States. The typical United Nations information centre represents a microcosm of all the main functions of the Office itself, extending to its own locality or region services in the fields of press, publications, radio, television, films, graphics and exhibitions. It also provides United Nations information services to educational, governmental and non-governmental organizations, including reference libraries open to students and the general public. In doing so, each centre serves not only the information programmes of the External Relations Division but those of all the other divisions of the Office of Public Information, as well as other members of the United Nations system.

55. For many years information centres have submitted quarterly progress reports in which centre directors summarize their activities and work programmes. These reports provide data on the information coverage of United Nations activities by all media. They also include information on the involvement of each centre in stimulating and encouraging programmes and activities in support of the United Nations, through non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, photo exhibits and film showings, lectures and similar initiatives. These reports are distributed to all departments at Headquarters, as well as to all other information centres and to the information offices of agencies in the United Nations system.

56. While the quarterly progress reports are considered satisfactory, the Secretary-General proposed in 1976 that procedures be improved so as to provide the data in a more precise manner and at more frequent intervals. Accordingly, a new procedure has been initiated to supplement the quarterly reports with a monthly report on the work and activities of the centres. This new report, based on a questionnaire form sent to the centres, provides more comprehensive information as well as feedback on the use of information materials and local coverage of United Nations issues. It should, therefore, provide a better means for measuring the effectiveness of the centres and material disseminated through

them. While the External Relations Division does not now have sufficient staff to permit the kind of in-depth analysis and evaluation which should be made of the data thus received, it is planned that this function would be carried out by an information programmes evaluation unit to be set up in the Information Centres Service. This could be done by redeploying one Professional post from another area of the Division.

57. It has become increasingly apparent in recent years that the information centre libraries are playing a key role in providing information on the aims and activities of the United Nations system. In countries where information centres are in operation, no other public facility exists which can provide such up-to-date, comprehensive and authoritative information to students, educators, parliamentarians and non-governmental organizations, as well as to the general public. In the light of these considerations, efforts are being made to strengthen the information centre libraries. An important step in this direction was the regional one-week seminar held at Headquarters in December 1977 for reference assistants (centre librarians) from the Latin American region, to increase their knowledge and expertise in the handling of all types of United Nations documentation for which they are normally responsible. Similar seminars in other regions are planned for future years. The introduction this year of microfiche reader/printer equipment in centre libraries will permit the replacement of documents by microfiche reproductions.

58. In the years ahead, particular attention will have to be paid to improving the services provided from Headquarters on which the centres depend for their efficient functioning. This priority concern has several aspects. In the first place, the continued growth in the scope and depth of United Nations activities and the increase in the number of Member States and information centres to be served have not been accompanied by a commensurate growth of the capacity of the External Relations Division at Headquarters to respond to the new demands. Second, most United Nations public information material is currently conveyed to the disseminating offices in the field by diplomatic pouches scheduled for most destinations only once or twice a week; the information thus transmitted is available at the points of use with a usual delay of 3 to 15 days which severely limits its usefulness. Third, it would be highly desirable for the information material supplied from Headquarters to the information centres to be further differentiated according to particular regional and local interests and provided in certain additional languages, such as French, Spanish and Arabic, each of which is used by a number of centres. Fourth, there is considerable potential in the use of existing computer storage and retrieval facilities at Headquarters for the purpose of establishing an information bank and indexing system which would generate constantly up-dated library index cards on current United Nations issues; the cards would be sent weekly to information centre libraries, where they would serve as a centralized guide to reference assistants on what material to keep in a special current information section, the manner of filing it and the proper time for its disposal.

2. Relations with non-governmental organizations

59. The encouragement of closer co-operation with non-governmental organizations is one of the most important activities of the Office of Public Information

because of the growing recognition that, as the United Nations deals with increasingly complex questions, non-governmental organizations have an essential role to play in educating and involving the public on these issues.

60. The Office of Public Information provides non-governmental organizations with an extensive programme of weekly briefings, an annual conference and other activities at Headquarters where it also maintains a lounge available to non-governmental organizations containing press releases, documentation and other information material about the United Nations. During the past eight years the number of non-governmental organizations reached from Headquarters has increased by approximately 40 per cent. A special effort has been made to promote co-operation with non-governmental organizations at the national level. This has been done mainly through the information centres and the periodic convening of regional non-governmental organization conferences, such as those held in Addis Ababa in 1970, Buenos Aires in 1972 and Bangkok in 1975. Conferences for Europe and Latin America are planned in 1979/1980.

61. Information centres are being encouraged to strengthen their contacts with national non-governmental organizations. An example of one successful initiative was the convening by the New Delhi centre in November 1977 of the first conference of non-governmental organizations. More than 40 Indian non-governmental organizations participated, and it is anticipated that some 60 organizations eventually will join in programmes of interest to the United Nations on such questions as the International Year of the Child, disarmament and anti-apartheid activities.

62. A special relationship continues to exist and to be strengthened between the Office of Public Information, the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) and its constituent United Nations associations at the national level. WFUNA is the only non-governmental organization whose information and education programmes are devoted exclusively to promoting greater public knowledge and understanding of the United Nations; and, in a very real sense, the activities of United Nations associations are an extension of the work of the Office of Public Information.

63. One significant new trend has been the emergence of coalitions of special interest non-governmental organizations involved in issues of particular concern to the United Nations, a development that has been stimulated by recent international conferences devoted to these issues. Also, single subject conferences for non-governmental organizations have been organized at Headquarters on such subjects as apartheid and the new international economic order with special emphasis on the commodity question.

64. Another significant recent development was the presence of some 1,000 non-governmental organizations representatives from 44 countries, at the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament and the invitation to a representative group of them to address the Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee. The Office of Public Information played an active role in helping to disseminate information to non-governmental organizations in advance of the session and in organizing daily briefings, in co-operation with the Centre for Disarmament, during the session itself.

3. Teaching about the United Nations

65. One of the most important and effective means of increasing basic public knowledge and understanding of the United Nations and its activities is through education of the young. Since 1965, the Office of Public Information has organized, in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 13 seminars for educators and policy makers in the field of education from as many as 109 countries. These programmes aim at increasing the effectiveness of education about the United Nations in schools and teacher-training institutions in Member States through the development of appropriate curricula, teacher-training courses and teaching materials about the United Nations. The programmes are also concerned with the interdependence of man and the emergence of new global concerns, and the role of the United Nations in responding to them. Teaching about these problems has now become an integral part of education in many countries. The Office of Public Information, in co-operation with UNESCO, periodically prepares a report on progress in teaching about the United Nations and its related agencies in Member States for consideration by the Economic and Social Council.

66. In addition, the Office of Public Information publishes annually a student leaflet, designed to suggest ways of teaching about a subject of special concern to the United Nations, and a teacher's guide outlining possible methods for teaching about United Nations aims and activities. A newsletter to educators was recently introduced to expand channels of communication among those concerned with teaching about the United Nations.

4. Guided tours

67. The guided tours are not only an essential public relations activity of the United Nations, but they make an important contribution to public education about the work of the Organization. From the beginning of the operation in 1952 until 31 May 1978, approximately 22.6 million visitors have taken the guided tour of Headquarters and been briefed on the aims and day-to-day activities of the United Nations. Visitors come from all walks of life; half of all visitors are students. Guides are recruited locally from as many Member States as possible with due regard to the language requirements of the tours. They are given an intensive three-week training programme on the United Nations at the time of recruitment and subsequently receive daily briefings to keep them informed on current developments.

5. Group programmes

68. Speeches and briefings by United Nations officials are extremely effective in shaping public opinion and building support for the United Nations. For that reason, the Office of Public Information regularly makes arrangements for United Nations speakers to brief public groups both at the United Nations and away from Headquarters. For groups of visitors to the United Nations special programmes are available often involving not only a briefing but a guided tour, film showing and tickets for official meetings. Particular assistance is given to schools and

to religious, business and other non-governmental organization groups in planning their visit to the United Nations, including suggestions for speakers. Efforts are being undertaken to encourage more school groups to visit the United Nations and to provide teachers and students with specially-developed educational material on the United Nations at no cost to the Organization.

6. Public inquiries

69. Requests for information received by mail, by telephone and in person from the general public average more than 6,000 per month and cover the whole range of activities of the United Nations system. The Office of Public Information prepares and regularly up-dates guidance and reference source papers; ready-made kits are prepared to meet requests for general information; and there are special kits for elementary and high school teachers. Model Assembly kits are also provided to participants of model United Nations sessions organized each year by university and high school students.

7. Student intern programmes

70. In addition to the activities described above, annual student intern programmes are conducted at Headquarters and in Geneva. In recent years quantitative and qualitative improvements in the programmes at Headquarters have been achieved by increasing the number of participants and the geographical areas from which candidates are accepted, and by obtaining more and better speakers from within the Organization. The Office of Public Information also serves as a co-ordinating point for world-wide observances, such as United Nations Day, which are used as a platform for disseminating information on United Nations activities. United Nations Today (Suggestions for Speakers) is published annually in time for United Nations Day, with up-to-date background information in French, English and Spanish on major United Nations issues. This provides a valuable year-round source of material for speeches on the United Nations and is distributed throughout the world to 55,000 recipients each year.

D. Economic and social information

71. The growing realization of the importance of economic and social issues led in 1968 to the creation of the Centre for Economic and Social Information (CESI). From the beginning it had two major functions, both dictated by the logic of developments within the world community and the United Nations system. The first and most widely perceived function was the creation of specialized information material on the problems that loomed on the international horizon at the close of the First United Nations Development Decade. There was further the need to explain the problems which the Second United Nations Development Decade would face and the activities and strategies conceived by the United Nations to deal with them.

72. As the Centre established itself, a second and equally important function came increasingly to the fore. The United Nations system in its third decade of existence had a vast and diverse involvement in the world's economic and social

affairs. From the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Economic and Social Council and the whole range of specialized agencies with their respective governing bodies, there issued a plethora of information that required proper channelling and dissemination. CESI increasingly provided a central mechanism for co-ordination and co-operation within this framework, helping both to avoid duplication and to plan complementary programmes of public information.

1. Publications

73. The Centre for Economic and Social Information prepares a great variety of booklets, flyers, folders, fact sheets, feature articles, press releases and background notes in up to six languages on a wide range of economic and social topics; this material is not of the direct reporting nature and requires a great deal of research work. During 1977 approximately a million copies of CESI publications were distributed directly or mailed to readers on specialized mailing lists.

74. The periodical Development Forum is a key instrument in over-all support of CESI objectives. Twelve issues a year are edited and printed in Geneva in English, French and German. A Spanish edition is printed in Mexico City; an Italian edition is edited and printed in Italy. Special supplements appear from time to time and are prepared, translated and printed with regular issues of Development Forum at the expense of the sponsoring members of the United Nations system. In addition to the regular edition of Development Forum, there is now a Development Forum Business Edition that appears 24 times a year. Initiated as a joint venture of CESI, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, this edition contains, in addition to the content of the regular paper, material of special interest to businessmen and potential consultants, contractors and suppliers for internationally financed development projects. Because of the considerable commercial value of the procurement information it contains, a substantial price is charged for the Development Forum Business Edition. This publication is intended in large part to equalize the opportunities for participation in the business generated by development, through the timely supply of information to everybody, and not simply those who already have access to effective business intelligence. For the time being, Development Forum Business Edition appears only in English, although a certain number of the announcements which it contains may be in other languages.

2. Films

75. In recent years CESI has provided the director or writers for United Nations films on the United Nations University, the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations, the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and women in development.

3. Co-ordination

76. The Centre for Economic and Social Information provides the secretariat for the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) which serves as a co-ordinating mechanism for the entire United Nations system (see paras. 84 and 85 below). Each year JUNIC adopts a plan of action setting a frame of reference for all information activities of the United Nations system. CESI prepares the draft of this plan and makes proposals for co-ordination and/or joint activities, taking into consideration the specific needs of all the JUNIC members in relation to interagency co-operation, as well as those activities which clearly lend themselves to such co-operation. CESI is also a leading participant in a number of interagency projects that are jointly established and financed by certain members of the United Nations system. Outstanding examples of such projects are the non-governmental organization liaison services in Geneva and New York. They were created to fulfil a perceived need - to reach out to the many non-governmental organizations that do not, for a variety of reasons, maintain close links with the United Nations system. These services are financed by CESI, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and UNICEF in New York, and by CESI, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities in Geneva. They co-ordinate and co-operate with existing liaison offices within the system and are responsible for general relations with national and international non-governmental organizations active in the field of economic and social development; the design and execution of projects in collaboration with non-governmental organizations in furtherance of the programmes of the participating agencies; responding to requests from non-governmental organizations and linking the substantive and information resources available within the United Nations development system with relevant programmes; informing appropriate units within participating United Nations organizations of initiatives in the field of economic and social development; and the execution of such other duties as the sponsoring organizations may assign to them.

4. Special projects

77. The Centre for Economic and Social Information regularly organizes encounters to coincide with major international conferences; they entail bringing together journalists and experts in various fields relevant to the conference at hand. The aim is not only to expose the journalists to the expertise available, but also to sensitize the experts to the nature of public awareness about their work. The basic raison d'être for the encounter, however, is the unbalanced coverage which any international event gets in the world press: most of the coverage is likely to be the result of about five major wire services, and few, if any, reporters are usually present from developing countries. CESI encounters bring journalists from developing countries to attend United Nations conferences. They arrive before the conference begins and are briefed by a panel of experts assembled for that purpose. A variant of the encounter is the study tour, which takes a group of journalists to study an area or a set of regional problems.

78. As a means of providing the necessary global dimension in development information in support of activities at the national level, CESI has also held a series of national encounters on issues related to the international development strategy and the new international economic order. CESI brings to these events a panel of leading personalities from developing countries and the United Nations system. The host Government, often in co-operation with non-governmental organizations, undertakes responsibility for all local arrangements, including the cost of inviting participants who are drawn from the media, universities, government departments, etc. Such encounters have been held in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands, Italy, Japan and Ireland. Linked to these events are seminars and briefings at which ambassadors from the Group of 77 discuss the new international economic order with members of chambers of commerce, groups of parliamentarians, etc.

79. The Centre for Economic and Social Information maintains contact with national information officers both in the industrialized countries and in the developing countries in an effort to increase awareness of the development needs of the Third World and to provide feedback for tailoring materials on economic and social subjects for specific audiences. In Western Europe, meetings between CESI and national development information officers have become a regular feature within the structure of the Joint United Nations Information Committee. Similar meetings were held in Asia (1971), Africa (1972) and Latin American (1972). Means will be explored to hold consultations with national information officers in all regions on an annual basis.

80. The Centre for Economic and Social Information gives support to those parts of the United Nations system which need information activities in the economic and social field and do not have their own information units or need additional assistance. Notably, such assistance has been given in connexion with the environment conference, population conference, world food conference, water conference, international women's year conference, science and technology conference, and the United Nations decade for women conference and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. CESI also gives support regularly or on request to the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, the regional commissions, UNIDO, UNEP, UNCTAD, Centre on Transnational Corporations and the United Nations Decade for Women.

81. By its resolution 3038 (XXVII) of 19 December 1972 the General Assembly decided to institute World Development Information Day to coincide with United Nations Day, 24 October, for the purpose of drawing "the attention of world public opinion each year to development problems and to the necessity of strengthening international co-operation to solve them". Since then, five annual World Development Information Day observances have taken place with high-level panel discussions bringing together eminent persons and experts in the political, economic and communications fields, as well as influential journalists. During the first three years the panel discussions were held at Headquarters. The fourth year, it was held in Paris. Last year the Tunisian Government acted as host for the occasion. This year the panel discussion will take place in Vienna at the invitation of the Vienna International Institute for Development. Since the adoption by the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly of the decisions calling for the

establishment of a new international economic order, the panel discussions have focused on the issues related to the decisions of the Assembly and to their implementation.

5. Information Service at Geneva

82. The Information Service at Geneva, as noted in the medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983, undertakes the same range of activities as the Office of Public Information at Headquarters but on a reduced scale in full liaison with the Headquarters divisions. It initiates coverage activities for events and meetings taking place at Geneva and in Europe; co-operates in the production of language versions of publications and undertakes radio and visual activities in Europe. It functions as an information centre for Bulgaria, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Holy See, Hungary, Poland, Spain and Switzerland; conducts guided tours of the Palais des Nations and remains in close contact with the information units of those specialized agencies whose headquarters are in Geneva.

83. The Geneva service has traditionally provided a full press release coverage in English but, because of the lack of adequate staff resources, has not been able to provide a corresponding service in French to satisfy the legitimate requirements of the large number of French-speaking journalists and delegations there.

IV. CO-ORDINATION AND CO-OPERATION

84. Interagency co-ordination and co-operation in the field of public information, especially in support of economic and social development, has been one of the major preoccupations of the Office of Public Information. Since 1974, system-wide public information activities have been carried out within the framework of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), a subsidiary organ of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) and composed of the directors and heads of the information services of the organizations of the United Nations system. JUNIC is chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information and its secretariat is on a continuing basis the responsibility of the Centre for Economic and Social Information.

85. Under ACC, JUNIC assumes the responsibility for developing a common public information approach covering all aspects of the activities of the organizations within the United Nations system. This means advising the United Nations system on general public information policy; providing general guidelines for co-ordination in public information matters and working out co-operative arrangements for special projects and events. The objective of this system-wide action is to promote more efficient, productive and economical use of the public information resources of the many components of the United Nations system through greater co-operation, joint planning and, whenever possible, co-ordinated execution.

86. From the experience previously acquired, JUNIC has developed a structure which is based essentially on flexibility. JUNIC members have felt that, apart from the regular annual JUNIC session, they should examine and resolve their common problems as well as work out specific co-ordinated activities through ad hoc arrangements and, when necessary, subject-oriented sessions. They have thus established, for example, an Ad Hoc Working Group on Audio-Visual Matters which is presently working on the production of a joint United Nations system film catalogue and on common pricing policy for all films of the United Nations system; an Ad Hoc Working Group on Development Education; and an Ad Hoc Working Group on International Press Relations which is presently studying the possibility of a joint newspaper clip service, the use of Third World journalists in the coverage of United Nations system activities, the assistance in the development of mass communications infrastructure in developing countries, etc.

87. As regards special events such as international conferences, the planning and co-ordinating of common public information activities are made through specific working groups of the Office of Public Information which meet long before the actual event and continue to function during and after the event in order to ensure the continuity of co-ordinated efforts. Working groups have thus been created to deal with public information programmes for International Anti-Apartheid Year, arranging in particular for the publication of a system-wide paperback booklet on the subject, as well as for an exhibit on apartheid; on the International Year of the Child, arranging for many public information projects such as core information materials, films, photos, a United Nations system film on the International Year of the Child, radio material; and on the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development.

88. System-wide co-ordination and co-operation has recently been strengthened and improved by the decision of JUNIC to adopt each year a plan of action setting a single theme for the United Nations system-wide public information programmes. For example, it was decided at the beginning of 1978 that the common theme for 1978-1979 would be "meeting human needs in relation to the establishment of a new international economic order" with subthemes selected by JUNIC members according to their own priorities but relating to the common theme. Furthermore, a number of specific joint activities were identified for 1978, and whenever possible for 1979, covering events such as international years and conferences, selected themes such as development education, primary health care, rural development, etc. General activities of system-wide concern such as joint activities in the field, reportage missions, press tours and seminars for journalists were also identified as part of the JUNIC Plan of Action.

89. Interdepartmental co-ordination continues to be the responsibility of thematic task forces established within the Office of Public Information to deal with such issues as international security, disarmament, decolonization, apartheid, human rights and related subjects. These task forces, as stated in the medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983, serve as links between substantive departments and the Office of Public Information, as well as between the various divisions of the Office of Public Information. Continuing co-ordination in economic and social activities is provided by CESI, which has been designated the focal point of public information policies and activities to support economic and social development.

90. In addition to the task forces and CESI, another step facilitating the rapid adjustment of resources to meet ad hoc priorities is the appointment of one or another OPI director to assume over-all responsibility for the total Office of Public Information effort in support of major conferences, years, decades, etc., as may be proclaimed by the General Assembly.

V. FUTURE TRENDS

91. A number of studies in recent years have attempted to outline the shape of the world's future by projecting trends in key areas and sectors. Though these studies differ in approach, methodology, substance and conclusions, they do agree in general on two points: one is the increasing magnitude and gravity of global problems and the other is the need for international action in seeking solutions. The world community faces a period of unprecedented change, and if adjustments are to be made with maximum efficiency, the process must have popular support. The crucial role of the United Nations public information activities in this context is self-evident and indeed has been explicitly acknowledged in resolutions of the General Assembly and major world conferences. Such acknowledgement has not resulted as yet in a comprehensive information policy to deal with the major problems that will increasingly shape international affairs in the coming decades. The need for such a policy undoubtedly exists, and one of the significant trends now is in this direction. The efforts at co-ordination and co-operation described above represent the beginnings of this process.

92. As far as action by the international system of organizations is concerned, it can be said with some confidence that co-ordination of information plans, policies and activities will grow. But what are the chances of conceptual agreement on a comprehensive information policy, given the international division on issues? And how should such a policy cope with the problems raised by the present debate on the global flow of information? The answers to both questions must wait upon the debate in the General Assembly and in other forums, but it would be prudent to point out that even in the event of agreements that optimize the work of the Office of Public Information, global information needs cannot be adequately met with the resources now committed. Since the founding of the United Nations, the resources of the Office of Public Information as a share of the United Nations regular budget have shrunk by more than half, and this during a period when the volume of mandated work and its complexity have multiplied several times, as have the diversity and size of the audience to be reached.

93. In the main the Office of Public Information will face changes in two significant areas: the socio-economic and the technical. In the first of these, if the 1970s are any guide, changes can occur without warning. Here, the prime needs will be greater flexibility in organization and working practices and ensuring the excellence of professional skills available to the Office of Public Information. The second area is more predictable and, to a considerable degree, can be budgeted and programmed.

94. The major direction of changes in the socio-economic area has, it is hoped, been indicated by the resolutions adopted on the establishment of a new international economic order. The structural changes in global systems and the envisaged accelerated economic and social development of Africa, Asia and Latin America will undoubtedly have profound effects on the world's traffic of ideas, opinions and news. If these changes are to be generally acceptable, they must be the result of carefully formulated policies and decisions based on well-informed public opinion.

95. In information terms the disseminators of United Nations information with whom the Office of Public Information deals will be far more diverse than they are today. The effort to reach them will thus call upon a wider range of skills and knowledge than is required at present. There will also be a need for a more decentralized approach, but one that is co-ordinated at more than the budgetary and organizational levels. The staff of the Office must thus be more than ever open to new ideas and trends, and their professional training and experience must be kept relevant at all times to trends in the changing world of information outside the system.

96. Technically, the Office of Public Information will have to deal with a broad range of change. For example, the Office will have to explore new electronic word processing techniques that reduce the cost of the daily output of press material while speeding up its production. It will be necessary to keep abreast of technical changes in the field of television in order to continue to produce material usable by networks all over the world. Greater use of microfiche and computer techniques and the utilization of modern communications facilities have to be made. There will also be a need to maintain the capability of the Office of Public Information to co-operate with and encourage co-operation among agencies of developing countries. The technical requirements in this area have to be more fully investigated.

97. As the United Nations approaches its fourth decade it faces tasks of communication different in scope and variety from any in the past. If the Organization is to succeed it must have the support of Governments, not only in providing guidance and adequate resources through the General Assembly, but in its actual day-to-day work. If Governments, through their ministries or departments of information, co-operate with the Office in selecting and processing information for their national audiences, it will increase the effectiveness with which information about the United Nations is disseminated. Concomitantly, ways must be sought to increase the adequacy and flexibility of the staff resources of the Office of Public Information, especially in view of the continuing trend to convene major international conferences and other meetings simultaneously in various parts of the world and to address to the Secretary-General an ever-increasing number of new and urgent public information mandates.
