

**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY****ASSEMBLEE  
GENERALE**

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ON INFORMATION

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC INFORMATION AND UNOFFICIAL ORGANIZATIONS

SUMMARY OF VIEWS EXPRESSED AT THE MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY, 25 JANUARY 1946, AT 3.p P.M.

There are many unofficial organizations in the world that are anxious to spread knowledge and understanding of United Nations affairs. Some of these organizations have this as their principal aim: others are constituted for various social or cultural purposes and have only a subsidiary interest in international affairs. Both classes can give valuable help to the United Nations Department of Public Information, which should therefore set up the necessary machinery to co-operate with them.

The co-operation of unofficial organizations can also be useful in spreading through specialized communities substantive material produced by particular organs of the United Nations, such as the Economic and Social Council and by the specialized agencies.

I. WHAT CO-OPERATION SHOULD EXIST BETWEEN UNOFFICIAL  
ORGANIZATIONS AND THE UNITED NATIONS?

1. Organizations have wide contacts, spreading throughout the region in which they work. These contacts can be used both for spreading better knowledge and understanding of the United Nations and for keeping the United Nations aware of the attitude and wishes of the public. Every effort should therefore be made to give members of organizations an intimate knowledge of the United Nations, its aims, purposes and achievements and its methods of working. Organizations should also be given every opportunity to convey their views to the United Nations.

For this purpose full documentation should be supplied to these organizations, and visits by members to the United Nations' headquarters should be given every encouragement, with the fullest access to meetings and to delegates and members of the Secretariat. Assistance in arranging such visits would be particularly necessary in the case of organizations operating far from headquarters.

2. Many of these organizations prepare their own material for distribution, either free or for sale, to their members and to the general public. In some cases this material is in a factual, semi-official form, in others it puts forward the author's point of view and is often argumentative and critical. According to the nature of the organization, part or all of this material can be concerned with the United Nations, which should co-operate in supplying factual advice and information for use in preparing such material.

3. Many organizations, particularly those whose chief purpose is to do information work about the United Nations, distribute material to their members. Arrangements should be made where possible for material produced by the United Nations Public Information Department to be distributed in this way. Organizations also arrange study groups, Institutes of International Understanding, etc., many on a world wide basis. Study material should be supplied to them for use in these activities. The supply of such expensive material as films and publications would be particularly welcomed.

4. Authoritative speakers also would be in demand for large and small gatherings. If these cannot be supplied, organizations would welcome the opportunity for their own members to acquire enough knowledge to fulfil such engagements themselves.

II. HOW SHOULD CO-OPERATION WITH UNOFFICIAL ORGANIZATIONS BE ORGANIZED?

5. A section should be established in the Department of Public Information which would be the point of contact for Unofficial Organizations.
6. This section would have three main duties:
- (a) to supply information material and documents on request and to facilitate visits to headquarters, contacts with delegates and members of the Secretariat and the exchange of views between the United Nations and the unofficial organizations,
  - (b) to maintain contact with unofficial organizations, invite their interest in United Nations affairs, give them such encouragement and advice as may be desirable and send representatives to their meetings where this can be arranged,
  - (c) to help co-ordinate the activities of unofficial organizations where desirable in order to avoid wasteful duplication.
7. To discharge these duties, the section should be staffed with Liaison Officers. Where necessary, each officer might be responsible for contact with a particular type of organization. Liaison by officers of the United Nations Secretariat instead of by officers of the organizations would help to preserve the organizations' independence, by avoiding any feeling that an officer of an organization at Headquarters might be too much influenced by the United Nations.

The work of such Liaison Officers attached to branch offices would be of great value, particularly in keeping contact with organizations not represented at headquarters.

8. Some unofficial organizations, particularly those whose principal aim is to spread knowledge and understanding of United Nations affairs, will want to maintain direct contact with United Nations Headquarters. Others, particularly those interested in stimulating discussion of contentious issues, may prefer to maintain contact with United Nations through other unofficial organizations as they will tend to be more interested in independent than in official views. Those organizations that wish to maintain representatives at Headquarters should be encouraged to do so.

9. To facilitate both the exchange of views between the United Nations and unofficial organizations and the work of co-ordinating, those organizations represented at Headquarters should be encouraged to form a joint working committee. Such a committee would be an advantage to the organizations concerned, as it would give added weight to any views or requests they might jointly put forward.

10. It was stressed that both the United Nations and the organizations formed to promote public support for the United Nations would derive great advantages from the association of the latter into an international association for the purpose of maintaining contact with Headquarters and branch offices.

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