

**GENERAL  
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RADIO BROADCASTING

In accordance with paragraph 10 of the recommendations of the Technical Advisory Committee on Information concerning the policies, functions and organization of the Department of Public Information adopted by the General Assembly on the Department of Public Information should actively assist and encourage the use of radio broadcasting for the dissemination of information about the United Nations. To this end it should:

- (a) work in the first instance in close co-operation with radio broadcasting organizations of Members;
- (b) operate a radio broadcasting station or stations owned by the United Nations on the necessary wave lengths, both for communication with Members and with branch offices, and for the origination of United Nations programmes.

As an auxiliary service the recommendations suggest that the station might also be used as a centre for national radio broadcasting systems which desire to co-operate in the international field.

Finally the recommendations make it clear that in the opinion of the General Assembly the scope of the radio broadcasting activities of the United Nations should be determined after consultation with national radio broadcasting organizations.

It is obvious from the foregoing outline of the policies and functions of the Department in the field of radio broadcasting that its most important task will be, as stated in paragraph (a) above, to work in close co-operation with and with the help and advice of established national governmental and non-governmental radio broadcasting agencies to

bring United Nations radio broadcasting programmes to people of all countries. To this end the Department should, both at headquarters and at branch offices, give all assistance to correspondents and representatives of national radio broadcasting system in preparing and presenting programmes on the United Nations. At headquarters and, so far as practicable and necessary, at branch offices, it should also provide them with all technical facilities in the way of microphones, studios, recording equipment, etc.

It may be some time before the Organization will dispose of a station or stations of its own. The immediate task of the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of Information should therefore be to recruit a staff competent to carry out the duties outlined above. The relations which the Department will thus establish with national agencies will help in gaining their confidence and in building up through their intermediary an audience interested in and accustomed to listening to programmes on United Nations problems and activities.

During this period of initial development the Department should undertake the preparations required to operate the United Nations own radio broadcasting station or stations as indicated in paragraph 10 of the recommendations, bearing in mind, however, that this station, or stations, are not exclusively for radio broadcasting purposes, but are to serve as a telecommunications centre for the United Nations.

It should also be borne in mind that the scope of the radio broadcasting activities of the United Nations will have to be determined to a great extent during the period when the plans for the station, or stations, are being prepared, and it therefore appears that this is the time when national

radio broadcasting organizations should be brought into consultation.

The establishment of a United Nations radio broadcasting station, or stations, will involve a fairly considerable amount of capital outlay to which the General Assembly will have to give its consent before any plans can be put into effect.

Subject to the advice to be given by the national radio broadcasting organizations on the scope of the radio broadcasting activities of the United Nations, and to the experience gained during the initial period of co-operation with the established national radio broadcasting agencies, the Sub-Committee of the Technical Advisory Committee on Information feels that it should make a few basic suggestions:

(a) the United Nations radio broadcasting station or stations should not operate on a commercial basis or sell time on the air to private agencies or governments for direct radio broadcasting. Technical facilities should, however, subject to the necessary safeguards, be put at the disposal of national radio broadcasting agencies for relay purposes;

(b) the station or stations should have at their disposal a number of appropriate wavelengths, the allocation of which being an international problem, the Sub-Committee is of the opinion that the Secretary-General should consider getting in touch at an early stage with the competent international authorities in the field of allocation of wavelengths. As far as can be foreseen the wavelengths required by the station at headquarters should be in the short wave band and should be selected in such a way as to enable it to reach the principal regions of the world, whence programmes should be relayed by established national networks and, if it be so decided, by the United Nations' own transmitters.

The question whether the second system of relay is finally used in addition to the first will to a great extent depend upon what will finally be the scope of the radio broadcasting activities of the United Nations and this should therefore form one of the main subjects of which national radio broadcasting organizations are to be consulted;

(c) Programmes originated at United Nations headquarters or branch offices and sponsored by the Department should consist of reports, speeches and informational radio broadcasts of other types relating to the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. No effort should be made to develop an international news service covering world events;

(d) The United Nations radio should be at all times at the disposal of the specialized agencies, but under the general policy and editorial control of the Department;

(e) Although it is impossible at this stage to indicate a definite outline of policy concerning languages to be used, certain limitations will be imposed by available relays and funds;

(f) In order to increase the general interest in the programmes musical and cultural programmes could be broadcast over the United Nations station or stations, preferably under the auspices of UNESCO or of national organizations co-operating to this end. The Department should consider the possibility of calling upon national networks to originate artistic programmes to be relayed by the United Nations station.

(b) The operation of a station for radio broadcasting purposes by the Department will require a considerable expansion of its original radio broadcasting staff, which will have to be chosen with a view to the new tasks outlined above. This staff should be highly competent in the preparation of scripts, in delivery and languages.

While the plans for a United Nations radio broadcasting station are being prepared the Department might consider the possibility, as an interim form of direct radio broadcasting, of buying time on existing private or governmental stations, at headquarters or at the seats of branch offices. This interim form of direct radio broadcasting would give the Department an opportunity of gaining experience in the type of radio broadcasting work it will have to undertake once its own station comes into operation.

In all circumstances an important task of the Department itself, as of the branch offices, in the field of radio broadcasting will be to arrange for listener research and a monitoring service in order to determine the reaction of the public throughout the world to radio broadcasts about the United Nations and its activities, enabling the Department to develop its radio broadcasting policy in line with the needs thus made evident.

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