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### QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION

#### Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the General Assembly the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/60 B of 6 December 1988 (see annex).

## ANNEX

Report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational,  
Scientific and Cultural Organization on the application of the  
International Programme for the Development of Communication, as  
well as on the social, economic and cultural effects of the  
accelerated development of communication technologies

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 43/60 B of 6 December 1988, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) presented to the one hundred and thirty-first session of the Executive Board, held in Paris from 17 May to 22 June 1989, under item 7.4.2 of the Board's agenda ("Recent decisions and activities of the organizations of the United Nations system of relevance to the work of UNESCO"), a report on questions relating to information. In accordance with decision 7.4.2 of the Executive Board (131 Ex/25 and 131 Ex/48/Decisions), inviting the Director-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session a detailed report on the application of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) of UNESCO, as well as on the social, economic and cultural effects of the accelerated development of communication technologies, the Director-General of UNESCO has the honour to submit the present report to the General Assembly.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION

### A. Activities of the International Programme for the Development of Communication

2. Since submitting the report (A/43/670) to the General Assembly at its forty-third session in 1988, the Intergovernmental Council of IPDC held its tenth session at UNESCO House in Paris, from 7 to 13 March 1989, with 34 States members of the Council participating, under the chairmanship of

Mr. Francois Nordmann (Switzerland). The representatives of 51 member States not members of the Council also attended as observers, as well as two non-member States with observer status and the representatives of 3 United Nations bodies, 9 other intergovernmental organizations, 14 non-governmental organizations, a foundation and 11 professional organizations.

3. This session dealt chiefly with the working methods and procedures of IPDC, the financing of projects and the World Communication Report.

4. As at 31 May 1989, total pledges to the IPDC Special Account amounted to \$US 17,468,336. The special funds for IPDC-approved projects amounted to about \$US 19,700,000 as at 31 May 1989. It should be noted that the Federal Republic of Germany paid a total of \$US 10,257,429 as its funds-in-trust contribution.

5. In 1989, the following member States pledged or contributed funds to the Special Account under funds-in-trust arrangements:

(a) Finland: 600,000 markkaa to the Special Account;

(b) France: FF 1,237,000 to the Special Account and FF 1,950,000 for funds-in-trust, for a total of FF 3,187,000;

(c) Italy: \$US 200,000 to the Special Account and \$US 200,000 for funds-in-trust;

(d) Japan: \$US 300,000 to the Special Account for fiscal year 1989, subject to approval by the Diet;

(e) Switzerland: SwF 200,000 to the Special Account, and SwF 50,000 to enlarge the IPDC secretariat;

(f) USSR: R 300,000 to the Special Account, R 100,000 of which would be paid in convertible currency. Continued provision of 50 university scholarships a year;

(g) Republic of Korea: 12 fellowships for further training in radio and television;

(h) Sweden: SKr 1,300,000 to the Special Account and an offer of participation by the Swedish International Development Agency in preparatory missions;

(i) Yugoslavia: 20 three-month fellowships for journalism and 14 three-month fellowships for television engineering;

(j) India: \$100,000 pledged and already paid;

(k) Australia: \$433,000 under funds-in-trust;

(l) Norway: \$US 695,855 to the Special Account;

(m) Ghana: \$US 5,000 to the Special Account.

6. Although the member States contributing to IPDC remain few, it should be noted that they are providing most of IPDC's resources. The financial support of other United Nations bodies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and communication companies and professional organizations remains very small. Since the establishment of the IPDC, Norway, which has contributed a total of \$US 7,130,216 to the Special Account, including \$US 695,855 for 1989, has remained the chief contributor to the Programme.

#### B. Working methods of the Programme

7. In order to take into account the comments made by some member States, the Intergovernmental Council, during its tenth session, undertook a detailed study of measures which might enhance the effectiveness and impact of IPDC-financed projects. In thus reviewing its working methods, IPDC was pursuing three goals: to improve the quality of the services provided to recipient countries; to better identify priority needs; and to encourage a greater number of States to contribute, and to contribute more to IPDC's Special Account.

8. The Council accordingly noted that many projects were under-funded with respect to the effect sought. The steady increase in the number of projects submitted was reflected in a dispersal of resources which decreased the effectiveness of the Programme.

9. The Council decided in the future to concentrate its annual actions on a limited number of projects with multiplier effects and in this way to increase the average amount allocated to approved projects, in accordance with the principles of sound administration.

10. The Council accordingly established the general direction of IFDC's activities for several years, including financing priorities. It decided that a country could obtain financing for only one project at each session, whatever the project's phase of implementation, and requested its officers to pre-select the projects submitted to the Programme.

11. These decisions made it possible to go from 55 projects approved and financed at the ninth session, with an average of \$US 35,000 per project, to 18 projects approved and financed at the tenth session, with an average of \$US 88,700 per project.

12. In view of the study in progress, the Council took exceptional steps in deciding on the projects submitted to it at its tenth session. It rejected national projects, with the exception of those submitted by the least-advanced countries, and approved only two interregional and five regional projects, while emphasizing that this was a one-time decision pending the establishment of the necessary criteria.

13. At its tenth session, the Council approved the following allocations:

\$US

Interregional projects

(a)	PDC/10 INT/09	Development of the network of the Pool of News Agencies of Non-Aligned Countries	50 000
(b)	PDC/10 INT/04	Promotion of educational materials for communication studies (IAMCR/AIERI)	50 000

Regional projects

(c)	PDC/10 RAF/02	Training for audience research specialists in eight Central African countries	150 000
(d)	PDC/10 RAS/07	Development of the rural press in South-East Asia	56 500
(e)	PDC/10 RLA/10	FELAFACS (Training of trainees in communication education methods)	70 000

			\$US
(f)	PDC/10 RAB/02	Establishment of mass communication training and documentation centre	145 000
(g)	PDC/10 RLA/06	Increasing regional TV co-production in the Caribbean	40 000
<u>National projects</u>			
(h)	PDC/10 ETH/01	Ethiopia: Establishment of community radio stations	165 000
(i)	PDC/10 GAN/01	Gambia: Communication training for social change in Gambia	77 000
(j)	PDC/10 MAU/01	Mauritania: Extension and development of the resources of the Professional Training and Further Training Centre (CFSP) of the Mauritanian Broadcasting Service (ORTM)	140 000 (for 2 years)
(k)	PDC/10 URT/01	Tanzania: Rehabilitation of Zanzibar television	75 000 (feasibility study)
(l)	PDC/10 UGA/01	Uganda: Manpower planning and development for the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting	70 000
(m)	PDC/10 BGD/01	Bangladesh: Development of film training facilities in the National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMC)	50 000
(n)	PDC/10 LAO/01	Lao People's Democratic Republic: National School for Training in Mass Media	140 000
(o)	PDC/10 MDV/01	Maldives: Television programme production	60 000
(p)	PDC/10 NEP/01	Nepal: Nepalese Folk Music recording project	90 000
(q)	PDC/10 SAM/01	Western Samoa: Rural radio project	82 000
(r)	PDC/10 SUD/01	Sudan: Rescue and safeguarding of the audio-visual heritage	86 000 (for 2 years)

14. The following projects will receive special funding. The Council recommended that reports on their implementation should be periodically submitted to the Council:

- (a) PDC/10 INT/01 Development of International Network of Documentation Centres on Communication Research and Policies (COMNET);  
Funds-in-trust (FES: \$US 50,000 and France)
- (b) PDC/10 INT/07 Development and strengthening of a human rights news agency;  
Funds-in-trust (Italy: \$US 81,333)
- (c) PDC/10 INT/08 Vidéo-Lire (Voir et entendre: Un auteur, un livre (Video-reading: seeing and hearing; an author; a book);  
Funds-in-trust (France)
- (d) PDC/10 RAS/02 Pacific Video Training Project (PACVIDEO);  
Funds-in-trust (Australia: \$US 433,000)
- (e) PDC/10 RAS/04 Development communication for women in the Pacific;  
Funds-in-trust (France: \$US 66,260)
- (f) PDC/10 RAS/05 Consultancy service for training courses in feature writing and photo journalism;  
Funds-in-trust (France: \$US 24,000)
- (g) PDC/10 RAS/03 Establishment of a women and media network for Asia and the Pacific;  
Funds-in-trust (France)
- (h) PDC/10 RAB/01 Production of educational materials for rural women in Arab countries;  
Funds-in-trust (Italy: \$US 90,000)
- (i) PDC/10 RAB/02 Establishment of mass communication training and documentation centre;  
Funds-in-trust (France)
- (j) PDC/10 BGD/01 Bangladesh: Development of film training centre;  
Funds-in-trust (France: \$US 50,000)

### C. World Communication Report

15. During the period under review the Intergovernmental Council took up and discussed in detail the World Communication Report. It became clear that continued co-operation by the institutions and agencies that had contributed to the Report would be needed to keep it up to date. Since only 22 States had expressed their views on the preliminary version, numerous amendments were put forward. The revised version submitted to the Council at its tenth session takes into account the comments and recommendations made up to that time. The current, experimental, version of the Report appears in a single volume which assembles all the available information and references in a form more accessible to users. Most speakers congratulated the Secretariat on having completed such an important task in relatively difficult circumstances. They felt that the Report deserved the attention of the whole international community. The Report has been published in English. The French and Spanish versions will be available by the end of 1989.

### D. IPDC-UNESCO Prize for Rural Communication

16. The IPDC-UNESCO Prize for Rural Communication, awarded for the third time in March 1989, was given to two projects in Latin America and the Caribbean:

- (a) People's Cultural Action (ACPO) of Colombia;
- (b) National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) of Cuba.

17. On presenting the prize certificates, together with a cheque for \$10,000, to the representatives of the two organizations, the Director-General of UNESCO said that, in selecting them, the IPDC jury had sought to encourage the "new communication" which went hand-in-hand with the move towards a new era of imagination, effectiveness and solidarity.

### E. General observations

18. In his address to the members of the Intergovernmental Council, the Director-General of UNESCO noted that the Programme needed more resources in order to expand its activities so as to provide better, more concentrated and more effective assistance. In its efforts to expand its field of activity it might also focus on encouraging South-South co-operation. At a time when UNESCO was launching the World Decade for Cultural Development, it was important also to consider the cultural impact of communication.

19. In order to enhance the effect of the reforms undertaken by the IPDC Intergovernmental Council in the period 1988-1989, the Director-General proposed in the draft medium-term plan (1990-1995) that IPDC should become the chief instrument for action in the major field of programme IV. In the programme and budget for the biennium 1990-1991, he proposed that the General Conference should double the resources made available from the Regular Programme to IPDC making it the basic mechanism for establishing communication infrastructure in developing countries and



for training the staff responsible for operating and for selecting appropriate communication technologies adapted to local conditions. Since the Executive Board had agreed that IPDC was one of UNESCO's highest priorities, that decision should be reflected in the Programme's financing. Such measures would undoubtedly enable IPDC to attain the degree of effectiveness expected of it by donor Governments.

### III. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL EFFECTS OF THE ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

20. The recent arrival on the market of new communication technologies was immediately perceived by UNESCO as a decisive factor for change. The need for research in this field had already been recognized in the first medium-term plan (1977-1982), but the importance of the new communication tools and the urgent need to study their socio-cultural impact was given special emphasis in the second medium-term plan (1984-1989). As regards research, UNESCO is no match for national or regional research institutions which, with their large research staffs and ample financial resources, are able to carry out joint research into topics of interest to the international community. However, UNESCO is in a privileged position to encourage and co-ordinate such research and to ensure that the results are widely disseminated. The second medium-term plan therefore defined UNESCO's field of activity as being, on the one hand, to foster and encourage research and, on the other, to help disseminate the work carried out in the various regions of the world.

21. Prior to the launching of these efforts, consultations were held with the research bodies concerned and in December 1983 UNESCO organized an international symposium in Rome on the cultural, social and economic impact of new communication technologies. That meeting was followed by three geographically-based consultations held in Florida, United States of America (1984), in Ahmedabad, India (December 1985) and in Gothenburg, Sweden (January 1986).

22. Because of budget cuts, it was not possible to carry out the programme planned for the period 1988-1989 in its entirety. Nevertheless, some 30 studies were carried out in various parts of the world on the application of the new technologies and their social, economic and cultural effects. In addition, a survey of existing studies was conducted based on a number of lists of research being carried out in different continents. These regional compilations include a list of studies completed or in progress together with a summary of their topics, methodologies and major results. Annotated bibliographical syntheses of this kind have been established for Latin America, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Africa and the West European and socialist countries.

23. In response to the Florida consultation's recommendation stressing the chronic shortage of information available to Latin American research workers about studies of new technologies and the difficulties of communication among the various research centres, UNESCO took part in setting up an information network for Latin America. The network has led to the publication of a liaison bulletin entitled NTC/NCT, providing information on research in progress, communication policies and projects, scientific events and bibliographical references. This bulletin, financed with assistance from UNESCO and produced by the Centre on Transnational

Culture of the Institute for Latin America at Lima, was produced and circulated regularly from 1986 to 1988, but financial difficulties have prevented its publication since that time. It is expected to reappear shortly.

24. In addition, a catalogue of communication research in Western European countries has been prepared by IDATE (Institute de audiovisuel et des télécommunications en Europe), with the support of UNESCO and the European Economic Community. The listing includes 200 public and private agencies involved in communication research. It also includes a list of 400 research workers and consultants, specifying their respective fields of research. Some 2,000 publications issued since 1980 are also part of the ARCOME computerized data base, accessible on-line through the European Community's Echo service. The catalogue is also available in printed form, in two volumes (agencies and research workers). The data base is intended among other things to facilitate the exchange of information among European research workers.

25. The draft third medium-term plan (1990-1995), which was considered by the Executive Board at its one hundred and thirty-first session (May-June 1989) for adoption by the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session (October-November 1989), proposes that research into the social, economic and cultural effects of the new communication technologies should be continued as part of programme IV.3. During the third medium-term plan, UNESCO will concentrate on studying the nature, dimensions and form of the impact of new communication media and technologies on societies, culture and cultural identity, and on the development of media education for the benefit of users and, through them, of producers, and lastly, the use by developing countries of low-cost, appropriate and effective technologies adapted to their needs. One of the most important elements of the programme will be directed towards taking the necessary steps to permit the evaluation, in both industrialized and developing countries, of all aspects of the impact of the media and of new communication technologies on culture and cultural identity, in particular among young people, so as to define strategies and approaches which will make it possible to take advantage of all the positive effects of such technologies while at the same time offsetting any negative effects that may ensue from their application.

26. Another part of the Regular Programme of UNESCO is concerned with the development of technologies appropriate to developing countries and with their endogenous production and distribution. Under the programme concerned with the acquisition of appropriate equipment and endogenous production of equipment, UNESCO commissioned the design of several low-cost broadcasting elements (audio mixer, 10 Watts VHF/FM transmitter, 100 Watts amplifier, relay station, solar-powered VHF/FM receivers and solar units) following technical consultations between engineers and technicians from developing and industrialized countries. All this hardware has been designed in order to meet the requirements of the transfer of know-how. Its assembly leads to self-learning and understanding of the functioning and operation of hardware and, at the same time, facilitating maintenance. Some hardware follows ergonomical criteria and the environment of the users. A major aspect of this programme is that developing countries can gradually develop their infrastructure more independently of commercial changes. To ensure a long-term base for this work, the Programme also envisages establishing a human resource network which will assist UNESCO in implementing projects in this field.

27. The radio broadcasting equipment has been and will be used for rural community and regional radio purposes in different continents (Africa, Asia and the Pacific). In Ghana, for example, a second station will be brought into operation. Regarding electronic data transfer, UNESCO has co-operated closely with design engineers on a low-cost electronic mailbox using ordinary telephone lines that can be operated with any kind of micro-computer or main frame and can even be accessed by a simple keyboard and video display unit. A pocket-size mailbox will be available in the near future to allow journalists to reach their headquarters through every telephone network.

28. UNESCO is continuing to establish an information network between headquarters and some regional field offices as well as with several offices of non-governmental organizations working closely with UNESCO. In the field of software, UNESCO has developed programmes able to write local dialects electronically, which fits into the modernization of printing for newspapers and books. A software for message switching and distribution, editing of news dispatches and filing or retrieval of archival dispatches is being developed. The programme will be designed to meet the requirements of regional and national news agencies.

29. A series of experiments with compact earth terminals will be undertaken and evaluated. The programmes picked up will be the object of critical analysis.

30. Under the third-medium term plan, these activities will be directed towards the endogenous production of programmes and equipment and the use by developing countries of low-cost technologies adapted to their needs. They will seek to enhance the developing countries' potential for producing, at the national and local level, programmes and hardware reflecting the social and cultural environment. In this regard, particular attention will be paid to endogenous production in the media and parallel forms of communication allowing sectors and communities whose views are not always taken into account by the mass media to have access to information or to express their opinions.

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