

**REPORT  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

OFFICIAL RECORDS: FORTIETH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 21 (A/40/21)



**UNITED NATIONS**

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New York, 1985

## NOTE

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

[12 September 1985]

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

2. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and the recommendations of its Ad Hoc Working Group, 1/ reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in Assembly resolution 34/182, decided to increase the membership of the Committee from 66 to 67 and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session (resolution 35/201 of 16 December 1980). The Committee on Information agreed, at its organizational session in 1980, that the principle of geographical rotation would be applied to all the officers of the Committee and that they should be elected for two year terms.

3. At its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and its recommendations, 2/ reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in resolution 34/182 and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (resolution 36/149 B of 16 December 1981).

4. At its thirty-seventh session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and all its recommendations 3/ and urged their full implementation, reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in resolution 34/182 and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-eighth session (resolution 37/94 B of 10 December 1982).

5. At its thirty-eighth session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and all the recommendations contained in paragraph 94 A, 4/ affirmed the request

and appeals reproduced therein and urged their full implementation, reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in resolution 34/182, and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-ninth session (resolution 38/82 B of 15 December 1983).

6. At its thirty-ninth session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and all the recommendations contained in paragraph 86 of the report 5/ and annexed to the resolution, affirmed the requests and appeals therein and urged their full implementation, reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in resolution 34/182, decided to increase the membership of the Committee from 67 to 69 and appointed China and Mexico as new members, and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its fortieth session (resolution 39/98 A of 14 December 1984).

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

Algeria	Ghana	Singapore
Argentina	Greece	Somalia
Bangladesh	Guatemala	Spain
Belgium	Guinea	Sri Lanka
Benin	Guyana	Sudan
Brazil	India	Syrian Arab Republic
Bulgaria	Indonesia	Togo
Burundi	Italy	Trinidad and Tobago
Chile	Ivory Coast	Tunisia
China	Japan	Turkey
Colombia	Jordan	Ukrainian Soviet
Congo	Kenya	Socialist Republic
Costa Rica	Lebanon	Union of Soviet Socialist
Cuba	Mexico	Republics
Cyprus	Mongolia	United Kingdom of
Denmark	Morocco	Great Britain and
Ecuador	Netherlands	Northern Ireland
Egypt	Niger	United Republic of
El Salvador	Nigeria	Tanzania
Ethiopia	Pakistan	United States of America
Finland	Peru	Venezuela
France	Philippines	Viet Nam
German Democratic	Poland	Yemen
Republic	Portugal	Yugoslavia
Germany, Federal	Romania	Zaire
Republic of		

8. The Committee held its organizational session from 19 to 21 March 1985 and its substantive session, the seventh session of the Committee, from 17 June to 5 July and on 29 August 1985.

## II. ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

### A. Opening of the session

9. The Committee held its organizational session at United Nations Headquarters from 19 to 21 March 1985. It held four meetings.

### B. Election of officers

10. In accordance with the principle of geographical rotation, the Committee elected by acclamation the following officers for the period 1985-1986:

Chairman: Mr. Willi Schlegel (German Democratic Republic)

Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Melchior Bwakira (Burundi)  
Mr. Q. A. M. A. Rahim (Bangladesh)  
Mr. Ernesto Rodriguez-Medina (Colombia)

Rapporteur: Mr. Pablo Barrios (Spain)

### C. Organization of the work of the Committee

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

- I. Promotion of the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information
- II. Continuation of examination of United Nations public information policies and activities in the light of the evaluation of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order

Consideration of questions in this area included:

- 1 (a). Implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Information;  
(b). Implementation of General Assembly resolution 39/98 A and the recommendations annexed thereto;
2. Outcome of the activities of the International Telecommunication Union regarding World Communications Year;
3. Acquisition of a communications satellite by the United Nations;
4. Consolidated study on the contributions, effects and levels of co-ordination between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UNESCO International Programme for the Development of



Communication (IPDC) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in support of the development of information and communication infrastructures in the developing countries;

5. Department of Public Information/UNESCO round table on a new world information and communication order in 1985;
  6. Improvement of data-collection procedures with regard to use made by redisseminators of materials distributed by the Department of Public Information and its information centres;
  7. The Department of Public Information as the focal point for the formulation and implementation of information activities of the United Nations;
  8. Public information activities of the Department of Public Information in implementation of relevant provisions of the Paris Declaration on Namibia and the Programme of Action on Namibia of the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence (Paris, April 1983) and the Bangkok Declaration and Programme of Action of the extraordinary meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia (Bangkok, 21-25 May 1984);
  9. Strengthening and expansion of the Middle East and Arabic Radio Unit;
  10. Evaluation of daily short-wave radio broadcasts from Headquarters;
  11. Charges for use of video tapes, audio tapes and news photographs by Member States;
  12. Situation regarding the staff of the Department of Public Information in posts subject to geographical distribution;
  13. Establishment of United Nations information centres in Benin and Poland;
  14. Services in local languages by United Nations information centres;
  15. Coverage by the Department of Public Information of policies and practices that violate the principles of international law relative to belligerent occupation, in particular the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949, wherever they occur, especially those policies and practices that frustrate the attainment and exercise of the inalienable and national legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;
  16. Comments on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on publications policy and practice in the United Nations system (A/39/602).
- III. Evaluation and follow-up on the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications

The programme and activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee.

IV. Report of the Committee on Information to the General Assembly at its fortieth session

12. The Committee decided that oral reports would be presented regarding those of the above sub-items for which written reports had not been prepared.

### III. SUBSTANTIVE SESSION

#### A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

13. The substantive session, the seventh held by the Committee on Information, took place at the United Nations Headquarters from 17 June to 5 July 1985 and on 29 August 1985. The Committee held 15 meetings.

14. At its opening meeting, the Committee adopted the following agenda (A/AC.198/89):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
3. Statement by the Chairman.
4. Consideration of substantive questions.
5. Adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its fortieth session.

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

#### From 17 to 19 June

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

#### From 20 to 25 June

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

- Item 4 (i) Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Information;
- (ii) Report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 39/98 A and the recommendations annexed thereto;
  - (iii) Report on the outcome of the activities of the International Telecommunication Union regarding World Communications Year;
  - (iv) Acquisition of a communications satellite by the United Nations;

- (v) Consolidated study on the contributions, effects and levels of co-ordination between UNDP, UNESCO, IPDC and ITU in support of the development of information and communication infrastructures in the developing countries;
- (vi) Department of Public Information/UNESCO round table on a new world information and communication order in 1985;
- (vii) Improvement of data-collection procedures with regard to use made by redisseminators of materials distributed by the Department of Public Information and its information centres;
- (viii) The Department of Public Information as the focal point for the formulation and implementation of information activities of the United Nations;
- (ix) Public information activities of the Department of Public Information in implementation of relevant provisions of the Paris Declaration on Namibia and the Programme of Action on Namibia of the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for independence (Paris, April 1983) and the Bangkok Declaration and Programme of Action of the extraordinary meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia (Bangkok, 21-25 May 1984);
- (x) Strengthening and expansion of the Middle East and Arabic Radio Unit;
- (xi) Evaluation of daily short-wave radio broadcasts from Headquarters;
- (xii) Charges for use of video tapes, audio tapes and news photographs by Member States;
- (xiii) Situation regarding the staff of the Department of Public Information in posts subject to geographical distribution;
- (xiv) Establishment of United Nations information centres in Benin and Poland;
- (xv) Services in local languages by United Nations information centres;
- (xvi) Coverage by the Department of Public Information of policies and practices that violate the principles of international law relative to belligerent occupation, in particular the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949, wherever they occur, especially those policies and practices that frustrate the attainment and exercise of the inalienable and national legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;
- (xvii) Comments on the JIU report on publications policy and practice in the United Nations system.

From 25 to 26 June

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

(i) The programme and activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee;

From 27 June to 5 July

Item 5 Adoption of the report of the Committee on Information to the General Assembly at its fortieth session.

16. The Committee decided to establish an open-ended working group.

17. The following States took part in the session as observers: Australia, Canada, Cape Verde, Czechoslovakia, Jamaica, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Sweden and Switzerland. The Holy See and the Commission of European Communities also took part in the session as observers.

18. The International Telecommunication Satellite Organization (INTELSAT) was granted observer status. In addition, representatives of the following bodies of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system attended the session:

United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

World Health Organization (WHO)

The Inter-American Press Association and the International Organization of Journalists, non-governmental organizations in category II, also participated in the session as observers.

19. At the 12th meeting, on 26 June, Mr. Bradford Morse, Director of the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, made a statement on the African crisis.

20. At the same meeting, the Committee held a commemorative meeting to mark the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. Statements were made by the representatives of Egypt, the German Democratic Republic and Spain, on behalf of the Group of 77, the group of Eastern European States and the group of Western European and other States, respectively (see annexes I, II and III below).

21. At its 13th meeting, the Committee decided to suspend its session and to meet again at a mutually agreed date (29 August 1985).

22. At its 14th and 15th meetings, the Committee took up consideration of its draft recommendations contained in document A/AC.198/L.29, on the proposal of the representative of Egypt, as Chairman of the Group of 77. The representative of Egypt requested that the Committee adopt the recommendations by consensus. The representative of Spain, as Chairman of the group of Western European and other States, proposed amendments to recommendations 3 and 34, and the representative of

the United States of America proposed an amendment to recommendation 38. The representative of Egypt proposed that the Committee should not take action on the proposed amendments. At the request of the representative of the United States, the Committee held a roll-call vote on the Egyptian proposal and adopted it by a vote of 41 to 14. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia.

Against: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

23. The representative of Spain called for a vote on the draft recommendations contained in document A/AC.108/L.29. The representative of Egypt proposed that the Committee first take action on all the draft recommendations in document A/AC.198/L.29 other than recommendations 3, 4, 34, 38, 41 and 70. The representative of the United Kingdom proposed that the proposal of Egypt be put to a vote. The Committee decided by a vote of 41 to 14 to take action in accordance with the proposal of Egypt and then adopted the 64 recommendations by a vote of 42 to none, with 14 abstentions.

24. The representative of Egypt proposed that action on recommendations 3, 4, 34, 38, 41 and 70 contained in document A/AC.198/L.29 be taken separately. The Committee then adopted draft recommendations 3, 4, 34, 38, 41 and 70 by a roll-call vote of 42 to 13, with 1 abstention. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia.

Against: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstention: Turkey.

25. The Committee then adopted the recommendations contained in document A/AC.198/L.29 as a whole by a roll-call vote of 42 to 12, with 2 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia.

Against: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstention: Greece, Turkey.

#### B. Statement by the Chairman

26. The Chairman of the Committee made a statement at the opening of the substantive session (see annex IV below).

#### C. Consideration of substantive questions

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

(Item 4 (a))

27. In his statement to the Committee on Information, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information said that challenges to United Nations information activities remained unabated. The 40-year period since the end of the Second World War had clouded the memory of the tragic experiences and widely-shared impulse that brought the United Nations into being.

28. The vastness and diversity of the activities of the United Nations had led to a lack of sharp focus in the image of the United Nations. Because of daily preoccupations with routine matters and because of the setbacks and frustrations inevitably experienced in trying to fulfil the objectives of the Charter, there was a tendency to forget that the establishment and development of the United Nations system of agencies and programmes represented a remarkable achievement of the international community in the twentieth century.

29. The Department of Public Information, bearing constantly in mind the primordial role of information for a better world, was constantly re-examining its priorities and working methods in order to meet current challenges.

30. Referring to recent media coverage of the crisis in Africa, the Under-Secretary-General said that it was vitally important to co-operate more closely with national, regional and private media organizations. The Department of Public Information could play the role of a catalyst, generating ideas and encouraging others to centre attention on issues of global significance. In this

connection, he informed the Committee that the international consortium, Agenda for a Small Planet, which involved 25 television organizations, was now entering its third, most ambitious phase, dealing with disarmament and the struggle against the arms race.

31. The crisis in Africa represented a massive challenge to the international community, and the Department was co-operating closely with the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa. It was providing support through radio and visual services, and publications. The United Nations information centres had been instructed to explain the dimensions of the crisis in Africa and to maintain a high level of public interest and support.

32. The Under-Secretary-General said that it was also important for the United Nations to elicit co-operation from non-governmental organizations, parliamentarians, scholars, youth groups and others, to create and sustain a climate of opinion more conducive to understanding among nations.

33. The Department was striving to perform all these tasks despite a budget that was virtually stagnant and limitations on recruitment. It was devoting maximum attention to management improvement and the efficient utilization of resources. As in the past, he continued to place considerable emphasis on the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the Department's activities. He was reviewing suggestions intended to strengthen the relevant unit within existing resources.

34. The Department was continuing its fruitful co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies and conducting short-wave broadcasts on an experimental basis. Among other activities, the Department was organizing its annual training programme for journalists and broadcasters from developing countries and had held a regional mass media leaders' round table in Kuwait.

35. The Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) had agreed on a number of approaches to guide future work. Its deliberations once again emphasized the importance of inter-agency co-operation. In regard to the Department's efforts, the Under-Secretary-General said that a delicate balance must always be maintained between impartiality and objectivity, and the promotional role of mobilizing world public opinion behind United Nations goals and objectives. In regard to the editorial policies, he stressed that the Department's primary responsibility was to the entire membership; it would continue to abide by this cardinal principle.

36. In their statements, many delegations observed that this year marked the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. A number of delegations also observed that it marked the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the victory over fascism. This year would provide an opportunity for countries to renew their commitment to the United Nations, and for the Organization to make an increased effort to inform the peoples around the world of its purposes, principles, and achievements.

37. A number of delegations urged the United Nations to help promote a more accurate and effective image of the United Nations. Some delegations observed that there was growing criticism of the United Nations and that its credibility had been called into question. Several delegations, noting that the United Nations was sometimes portrayed as an ineffective and biased organization, said that the United Nations could help dispel such criticism by disseminating information about its activities and its positive achievements in many areas.



38. Many delegations supported the call for the establishment of the new world information and communication order based, inter alia, on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information, guaranteeing the diversity of sources of information and free access to information and, in particular, the urgent need to change the dependent status of the developing countries in the field of information and communication, as the principle of sovereign equality among nations extended also to this field, and intended also to strengthen peace and international understanding, enabling all persons to participate effectively in political, economic, social and cultural life and promoting understanding and friendship among all nations and human rights. In this context, some delegations stressed that the establishment of a new world information and communications order should be an evolving and continuous process.

39. Some delegations observed that the issue of the establishment of the new world information and communication order had given rise to misunderstanding and dissension. Most delegations urged that the Committee avoid controversy and ideological differences and focus on areas of possible agreement and compromise.

40. There was general agreement that a significant imbalance currently existed in terms of the flow of information. Many delegations said that a few Western countries controlled most of the major news agencies. Several cited statistics indicating that although those in developed countries represented a minority of the world's population, they controlled the majority of the world's television programming and of the world's radio frequencies. A number of delegations said that information about developing countries was often negative and was unconsciously or consciously biased. Some delegations said that news coverage was often sensationalistic, focusing on events like coups and disasters. The Western media, many delegations said, too often ignored their attempts to promote economic and social progress. Those media, some delegations added, also gave inadequate coverage to the activities of the United Nations.

41. It was pointed out that 80 per cent of the activities of the United Nations system occurred in the economic, social and cultural areas, but very little was reported about them. Some delegations stressed the need of reiterating the appeals included among the recommendations approved by consensus by the Committee on Information in 1982, including that addressed to the international media for support of the efforts of the international community towards global development and, in particular, support for the efforts of the developing countries towards economic, social and cultural progress. Similarly, an appeal should be made to the whole United Nations system to co-operate in a concerted manner through its information services in promoting the development activities of the United Nations. A number of delegations also stressed the role that information and communications could play in educating peoples and promoting social progress and development. The right to inform and be informed, some added, was a basic human right.

42. A number of delegations expressed concern about the monopoly exercised by Western media. Some delegations referred to the dominant role of the transnational corporations in controlling the access to information and its uses, which endangered the sovereignty of the States. One delegation emphasized the useful contribution made by the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations to the Committee on Information in the area of international information and data flows, mentioning, in particular, document E/C.10/1984/14.

43. Many delegations registered concern about the effects of television broadcasting by satellite and the transmission of radio programmes and the imposition of foreign values. Some delegations stressed that the basic principles of the new world information and communication order were sovereignty, independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

44. Many delegations strongly supported the principle of freedom of information. Many delegations said that the best way of implementing a new world information and communication order was not to restrict established means of communication, but through diversifying sources of information and strengthening the communication infrastructures of developing countries.

45. A number of delegations referred to major technological advances in communications systems and the large costs involved in establishing news agencies or satellite communications systems today. Some expressed the view that industrialized countries had to provide significant amounts of technical and financial assistance to rectify the imbalance. Several delegations stressed that developing countries should have more access to radio frequencies and communications satellites. They also stressed the importance of co-operation among developing countries; several representatives of developing countries said that they must work to change their status of passive consumers.

46. A number of delegations maintained that people should be free to receive information from beyond their national frontiers. A delegation of a country that broadcasted radio material to countries under different social systems said that peoples in other countries had a right to news from a variety of sources and that such broadcasts were in conformity with international law.

47. A number of delegations said that the Committee on Information was meeting during a time of international tension and stressed the role that information could play in resolving the problems that confronted the international community today. The United Nations and the media of the world should help encourage support for peace, disarmament, détente and mutual understanding among nations.

48. A number of delegations said that information must be based on both freedom and responsibility. They said that some countries were using "freedom of the press" as a pretext, while they were engaging in propaganda and trying to undermine certain Governments and social systems. Those countries were engaging in a form of psychological warfare, trying to justify acceleration of the arms race and its extension into outer space and preparing peoples for the possibility of war. Other delegations stressed that a new world information and communication order should not be used as a means to justify the suppression of information, and that the responsibility of the media should be to seek and encourage the truth and to communicate it accurately.

49. A number of delegations maintained that broadcasting television programmes by satellite and radio programmes into a country could violate its national sovereignty. Some delegations said that certain countries were using radio broadcasting to try to interfere in the internal affairs of States and subvert Governments. Such acts, they said, were in violation of international law. Some delegations advocated the formulation of principles and norms for the conduct of mass media and the formulation of a concept of new world information and communication order. Some delegations said the use of militaristic propaganda should be condemned.

50. A number of delegations said the United Nations should be disseminating more information on international problems such as decolonization, the struggle against racism, apartheid, human rights, the situation in Namibia and southern Africa and in the Palestinian and other Arab territories. Several delegations said that the establishment of the new world information and communication order was linked to other global problems, such as the need to establish the new international economic order and to deal with problems such as debt in third world countries. One delegate expressed the view that the development of communication infrastructures was inseparable from the problem of debt in third world countries.

51. A number of delegations, although they agreed that there were imbalances in information, expressed concern about maintaining freedom of the press. Many delegations also expressed support for freedom of individual expression and the freedom to communicate opinions to others. Several delegations felt that a new world information and communication order might be used as a pretext to impose restrictions or government control.

52. A number of delegations urged Governments to respect the consensus achieved at UNESCO, stating that the establishment of a new world information and communication order was a continuous and evolving process. A number of delegations said that the establishment of international codes or norms was controversial. A new order could not be legislated or imposed. They supported the efforts of developing countries to improve their capacity to obtain and circulate information.

53. Several delegations described the kinds of assistance they were providing, aimed at strengthening the communications infrastructures of developing countries, on an international or bilateral basis. Some delegations described efforts they had undertaken to improve their communication systems infrastructures.

54. A number of delegations felt that UNESCO should play the central role in the establishment of a new world information and communication order. Others felt that the United Nations also had an important role to play. A number of delegations stressed that the Committee should not duplicate work in other forums. Some urged that the Committee identify specific goals and avoid a proliferation of recommendations.

55. A number of delegations, noting that it had not been possible to reach consensus in the Committee on Information or the Special Political Committee last year, said that they hoped the Committee could reach consensus this year. Several delegations said that although they hoped the Committee could act by consensus, this should not be construed to mean that a small number of countries had the power of veto.

56. A number of delegations felt that the Committee's work had been politicized and that extraneous issues had been introduced. Some delegations said that the Organization dealt with political issues, and that those issues fell within the mandate of the Committee on Information. Information was not merely a technical issue and politics was closely related to it. Both the United Nations and the Committee reflected the political realities of the day; those realities, they said, could and should not be ignored.

57. Many delegations expressed satisfaction with the work of the Department of Public Information, observing that it had had to work under severe budgetary restrictions.

58. Most delegations stressed the importance of dissemination by the Department of information about the principles of the United Nations and its activities. Several delegations expressed concern about the "tarnished image" of the United Nations and felt that action should be taken to redress the situation. The view was expressed that more attention should be given to the needs of journalists. The suggestion was made that there be increased efforts to disseminate attractive and interesting information materials.

59. Many delegations stressed the importance of evaluating and monitoring the Department's activities and assessing the impact of its activities. A number of delegations said that the Department should increase its efforts to find out whether information materials reached target groups, and if those target groups found the materials useful and appropriate. The costs of various activities should be considered, along with their benefits. Priorities should be set, and duplication avoided.

60. A number of delegations said that the information activity of the Department should be conducted in strict conformity with the priorities established by the General Assembly.

61. Some delegations said that the Planning, Programming and Evaluation Unit should be strengthened. Some delegations said evaluation activities should take place within existing resources. A number of delegations said they supported ongoing and future efforts at internal and external evaluation, including possible studies on the location of information centres and on the distribution of photo materials, and a market-survey of the UN Chronicle.

62. Most delegations emphasized that all information materials produced by the Department should be objective and balanced. Some delegations said that any semblance of partiality should be avoided, and that the Department should present a balanced picture of United Nations efforts in all fields. Some delegations said that when there were dissenting opinions among the membership on a particular issue, this fact should be reflected.

63. A number of delegations said that the United Nations should disseminate more information on economic and social issues, since 80 per cent of the work of the United Nations was done in this area. Several delegations commended the Department's work on the situation in Africa, and said that more work of this kind should be undertaken.

64. Among other proposals, several delegations suggested that the Department publish material or publicize the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and the fortieth anniversary of the victory over fascism. One delegation suggested that information on both anniversaries be included in a booklet or in a portion of a booklet. Appropriate action should also be taken in regard to International Youth Year and the International Year of Peace. A delegation suggested that the Committee recommend that an international year of culture be held.

65. A number of delegations said that they were receiving or had requested United Nations radio or television programming, and some delegations said they would be able to use more programming if it were supplied. Several delegations requested that additional programming be supplied in languages or dialects, in addition to the working languages, such as French Creole and Dutch Papiamentu. One delegation regretted the lack of programmes of the Department in the Italian language.

66. Several delegations expressed concern about the proposal to restructure the Radio and Visual Services Division into two divisions. One delegation said this action had far-reaching implications and that consequently it was right for the Committee to take an interest in the matter; serious doubts had been expressed, and action should be postponed until a full report had been submitted to the Committee. Another delegation asked that due regard be given to the effect such changes could have on the morale of the staff.

67. Many delegations said that co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies should be strengthened and that the technical capacity of the Pool should be enhanced. Similarly co-operation with regional news agencies should be strengthened. Several delegations, speaking in the context of efforts to promote a new world information and communication order, supported training programmes for journalists and broadcasters from developing countries. One delegation asked that the Department follow the fourth conference of the Pool, to be held at Havana in 1986.

68. A number of delegations expressed support for United Nations information centres and felt that co-operation should be strengthened with the centres and through the centres with national media and educators. The centres should be actively involved in United Nations activities such as those in connection with the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, the International Year of Peace and International Youth Year. Some delegations said that personnel at the centres should be adequately trained, and expressed concern over vacancies. Several delegations said that it had been reported that in some countries restrictions had been imposed on the activities of information centres; that situation should be rectified.

69. Referring to the Charter of the United Nations, one delegation said that the French language occupied a privileged juridical position, so it was important that the Department use the two working languages; the presence of francophones in the services of the Department was a decisive factor in the diffusion and development of French. Another delegation said there should be increased efforts to disseminate materials in French, as well as local languages.

70. After the exchange of views by delegations, the Officer-in-Charge, referring to the proposal to divide the Radio and Visual Services Division into two divisions, said that the Department felt that splitting the Division would provide more effective management. Even after the proposed restructuring took place, the new divisions would be the largest in the Department.

71. The Officer-in-Charge also replied to questions about programming in various languages. Regarding French programming, the Department shared the concern expressed about the percentage of French language production by the Radio Service. It was in the process of filling the vacancy for a radio producer, which should help remedy the problem. In regard to the production of programmes in French Creole and Dutch Papiamentu, production would be provided for in the next biennium on a special service agreement basis.

72. In response to a question about the large number of programmes in Portuguese, the Officer-in-Charge said that the Radio Service had to use three different types of Portuguese: mainland Portuguese, Brazilian Portuguese, and African Portuguese. In regard to the criteria for the production of radio programmes in various languages, the Officer-in-Charge said that the criteria included a specific mandate from the General Assembly, an agreement by broadcasting organizations to air the

programmes in those languages and the availability of budgetary allocations for such programmes.

73. In their discussions, a number of delegations noted that the Committee and other forums were adopting an increasing number of recommendations requesting the Department to expand existing programmes or begin new ones. Some delegations felt that the Department should be given adequate resources to fulfil its growing tasks. Some delegations felt that activities could be carried out within existing resources. Several delegations suggested that the Department could take on new activities if relatively ineffective or obsolete programmes were deleted. Some delegations supported the principle of zero-budget growth.

74. Many delegations welcomed the two new members of the Committee, China and Mexico.

75. With the permission of the Committee, statements were heard by representatives of the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT), and the International Organization of Journalists. One delegation expressed concern that the Committee had not previously heard statements from non-governmental organizations.

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

(Item 4 (b))

Item 4 (b) (i). Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Information

76. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information discussed the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Information in his reports on subsequent items.

Item 4 (b) (ii). Report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 39/98 A and the recommendations annexed thereto

77. The Under-Secretary-General discussed the implementation of various parts of General Assembly resolution 39/98 A and the recommendations therein in his reports on subsequent items.

Item 4 (b) (iii). Report on the outcome of the activities of the International Telecommunication Union regarding World Communications Year

78. In his introduction to the report on the outcome of the activities of ITU (A/AC.198/98), the Under-Secretary-General recalled that the Committee had requested that the ITU submit its final report on the observance of World Communications Year to the Committee at its current session. He said that the Department had been informed by ITU that the report would not be ready until July. It would therefore be transmitted to the Special Political Committee, when that Committee considered questions related to information.

Item 4 (b) (iv). Acquisition of a communications satellite by the United Nations

79. A representative of the Office of General Services introduced the report on the acquisition of a communications satellite by the United Nations (A/AC.198/95). He stated that the Secretariat had made arrangements to lease communications satellite facilities, using INTELSAT facilities, for peace-keeping purposes. The circuits would be available on a 24-hour-a-day basis. There would be links with all the regional commissions, as well as with a number of other cities. He hoped that by this time next year the network would be fully operational.

80. In the discussion, a number of delegations said they agreed with the Secretary-General's conclusions on the acquisition of a communications satellite by the United Nations.

81. Many of those who spoke supported the leasing arrangements. Several delegations said they supported the leasing of the circuits as an interim arrangement. Several delegations expressed concern about the capacity of the system, referring to the needs of developing countries in the area of information. They felt that it would be better for the United Nations to acquire its own satellite system.

82. Several delegations said they agreed with the decision not to acquire a satellite, because the cost would have been prohibitive. Several delegations expressed concern about the cost of the leasing arrangements. One delegation said the cost of leasing 24-hour circuits was very high, nearly \$1.5 million; it was pleased the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had recommended against expanding the network in 1986-1987.

83. In regard to a proposed link to Jerusalem, one delegation stated that United Nations information activities should conform with United Nations decisions on the status of Jerusalem.

Item 4 (b) (v). Consolidated study on the contributions, effects and levels of co-ordination between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UNESCO International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in support of the development of information and communication infrastructures in the developing countries

84. A representative of UNESCO introduced a consolidated study on the contributions, effects and levels of co-ordination between UNDP, UNESCO, the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) and ITU in support of the development of information and communication infrastructures in the developing countries.

85. He said that the study, which was prepared by UNESCO, consisted of information on the recent activities of IPDC, on UNESCO communication projects funded by its regular programme and UNDP funds in trust, and activities related to a new world information and communication order.

86. In regard to IPDC, he said the Programme had funded about 123 communication projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America. There was an acute shortage of funds for the Special Account of IPDC; this was the most serious obstacle in the attempt

by UNESCO to make a more effective contribution towards the development of communication infrastructures in developing countries. He added that the draft programme and budget for 1986-1987 considered at the last session of the UNESCO Executive Board gave high priority to strengthening communication capacities.

87. Many delegations expressed support for efforts by UNESCO to implement a new world information and communication order and to support the development of information and communication infrastructures in developing countries. A number of countries expressed support for IPDC, including its work in the training of personnel. Some delegations suggested that the Programme be strengthened. Several delegations also expressed support for the United Nations Fellowship Programme for Educators.

88. Several delegations expressed regret that a certain country had decided to leave UNESCO and hoped it would reconsider its action. A number of delegations criticized pressure exercised against UNESCO and its Director General with the aim of modifying the organization's programmes and objectives and called for reinforcement of the active relations established between UNESCO and the Committee on Information.

Item 4 (b) (vi). Department of Public Information/UNESCO round table on a new world information and communication order in 1985

89. In his oral report on the holding of a round table on a new world information and communication order in 1985, the Under-Secretary-General said that the Department had been in contact with UNESCO on the holding of the proposed round table, but it appeared that it might not be convened until next year.

90. Some delegations expressed regret that the round table would not be held in 1985 as planned. Many delegations expressed support for the holding of more round tables on a new world information and communication order in the future.

91. In further comments, the Under-Secretary-General stated that in close consultation with UNESCO, the Department was looking into possible sites for the round table. He expressed the hope that it would be convened in the early part of 1986.

Item 4 (b) (vii). Improvement of data-collection procedures with regard to use made by redisseminators of materials distributed by the Department of Public Information and its information centres (A/AC.198/90). (Accompanied by document A/AC.198/99 containing the review of the distribution of taped radio programmes produced by the Department in New York.)

92. In his introduction to the reports on the improvement of data collection procedures and the review of the redistribution of taped radio programmes (A/AC.198/90 and A/AC.198/99), the Under-Secretary-General said that the first contained information on evaluation studies already undertaken by the Department and those planned for the future. At the request of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, the Department had started work on reviewing the distribution and utilization of photo materials, and would report to the Committee at its next substantive session. With regard to the second report an effort had been made to assess the reactions of end-users of the radio programmes.



93. The conclusions of the review had been very helpful and had resulted in some improvements in the production and distribution of radio programmes. The study revealed a need to rationalize the patterns of distribution and a closer liaison effort with users. It also recommended that follow-up questionnaires be sent to broadcasting organizations which had not responded to the first mailing, particularly regarding programmes not mentioned by respondents.

94. Most delegations expressed satisfaction with the findings and conclusions of the review. Several delegates felt that a follow-up to the study should be undertaken, since there had been only a 30 per cent response rate. Some felt that the Department should continue the review on an ongoing basis and hoped that the Department would keep the Committee informed regarding follow-up action taken.

95. One delegate expressed concern regarding data that might be construed to suggest that Arabic-speaking audiences did not benefit from United Nations radio programmes in the various regions where Arabic was spoken; he was certain that the audience was much larger than that indicated by the study. Another delegate stressed the need for computerized mailing lists as well as for better co-ordination with United Nations information centres to ensure efficient distribution. He felt that the study should have pointed to the possibility of eliminating some programmes, as 12 programmes were not mentioned by any of the respondents.

96. Several delegates suggested other evaluation studies they thought should be undertaken by the Department, including listener-surveys and a review of the performance of United Nations information centres as disseminators of United Nations information materials. One delegate said that an evaluation component should be incorporated in all planned activities of the Department. Several delegations expressed concern about receiving some programmes not being delivered on a timely and regular basis.

97. Responding to questions raised, the representative of the Secretariat said that as the study suggested it would be inadvisable at this stage to make definitive conclusions regarding those programmes not mentioned at all by respondents. A further check on whether those programmes were used would be carried out.

98. Regarding the evaluation studies proposed by some delegates, it was pointed out that because of inadequate staffing and resources, certain evaluation studies could not be carried out. However, assurances were made that their constructive suggestions would be taken into consideration. As far as building an evaluation component into all plans of the Department, not every activity undertaken by the Department warranted such evaluation. Such studies would not be cost effective, considering the magnitude of some of the activities of the Department. It would certainly be desirable to have such an evaluation component in the major activities of the Department.

99. The delegates were informed that the Radio Service was taking the necessary measures to remove any obstacles in the dissemination of radio tapes. In regard to radio programmes in Arabic, they were sent to all Arabic-speaking recipients on the mailing list, regardless of the region they might be in.

Item 4 (b) (viii). The Department of Public Information as the focal point for the formulation and implementation of information activities of the United Nations

100. In his oral report on the Department as the focal point for the formulation and implementation of information activities of the United Nations, the Under-Secretary-General said he was deeply conscious of the concern that the Committee had shown for the need to underline the role of the Department as the focal point for the formulation and implementation of all United Nations information activities. He said that the consultation process within the Secretariat was still continuing, which might eventually lead to the convening of a Secretariat-wide meeting on the role of the Department with respect to all information activities. Therefore, the Department had not been able to finalize the report requested by the Committee. The Department should be in a position to provide an appropriate report when a Secretariat-wide consideration of the question was completed.

101. In this context, he referred to the Department's role in relation to intergovernmental bodies in editing material covering their areas of interest. He stressed the fact that the Department's primary responsibility was to the entire membership and that its editorial policy would continue to abide by that principle. He said that while the Department appreciated the concerns of the intergovernmental bodies, it would seem useful to bear in mind the distinction between legislative and executive responsibilities, by which a certain discretion might be given to the executive body. Intergovernmental bodies postulated useful guidelines and priorities for the Department's work. They should also evaluate its performance, but would wish to leave operational and administrative responsibility to the Secretariat.

102. A number of delegations expressed the view that the Department should be the focal point for United Nations information activities. Several delegations expressed concern about a proliferation of information units within the Secretariat. Several delegations stressed the need for the United Nations system to disseminate information on various issues of concern. Several delegations expressed the view that the Department should bear the editorial responsibility for all United Nations information material. One delegation said this would improve the quality and integrity of the material.

Item 4 (b) (ix). Public information activities of the Department of Public Information in implementation of relevant provisions of the Paris Declaration on Namibia and the Programme of Action on Namibia of the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence (Paris, April 1983) and the Bangkok Declaration and Programme of Action of the extraordinary meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia (Bangkok, 21-25 May 1984)

103. In introducing the report on public information activities of the Department in the implementation of relevant provisions of the Paris Declaration on Namibia and the Programme of Action on Namibia of the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence (Paris, April 1983) and the Bangkok Declaration and Programme of Action of the extraordinary meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia (Bangkok, 21-25 May 1984), the Officer-in-Charge noted that the report (A/AC.198/92) was prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 39/98 A. This was the first time that the Department was reporting

directly to the Committee on the question. The Department's activities, on which it reported annually to the General Assembly, included wide coverage of the work of the United Nations Council for Namibia, an extensive publication programme, the production of special radio programmes and the organization of a series of encounters for journalists.

104. Several delegations welcomed the report on activities to disseminate information on Namibia and supported the Department's programme regarding Namibia. One delegation objected to the report on the grounds that the Committee was not the proper forum for such a discussion, since political issues were not on its agenda.

Item 4 (b) (x). Strengthening and expansion of the Middle East and Arabic Radio Unit

105. In his oral report on the question of strengthening and expanding the Middle East and Arabic Radio Unit, the Under-Secretary-General recalled that the Committee had recommended that the function of the Middle East and Arabic Unit as the producer of Arabic radio and television programmes be maintained, and called on the Department to strengthen and expand the Unit within existing resources to enable it to function in an effective manner. He reported that the Middle East and Arabic Unit had continued to expand the scope of its programmes and to increase their variety and that the Department was continuing to underline the importance of the Arabic programmes produced by the Radio and Visual Services, and every effort was being made to expand the services in the Arabic language, within the limitations imposed by the resources available.

106. Several delegations called for the strengthening and expansion of the Middle East and Arabic Radio Unit. Some delegations expressed concern that there had been no increase in the expansion of Arabic programmes. One delegation, while stressing the need for audio and visual material in the Arab world, said that programmes should be expanded, both in number and duration. He said that the figures given by the Secretariat did not support the idea that the programmes had been expanded. He asked the Office of Personnel Services to show more flexibility in hiring personnel on special service agreements and urged the Department, among other actions, to increase its contacts with Arab audio and visual organizations and to make use of ARABSAT, which had been launched in June.

107. Responding to questions raised, the Officer-in-Charge reviewed the number and length of programmes produced, and said these activities compared favourably in terms of duration with other radio broadcasts in other languages. The Department intended to expand its liaison with Arab broadcasting organizations, and the possibility of collaboration with ARABSAT was being explored.

Item 4 (b) (xi). Evaluation of daily short-wave radio broadcasts from Headquarters

108. In his introduction to the report on the evaluation of daily short-wave radio broadcasts from Headquarters (A/AC.198/88), the Under-Secretary-General said that the Department was conducting a six-month experiment to determine whether short-wave broadcasts by United Nations radio could attract a significant audience between the General Assembly sessions. The experiment consisted of a daily one-hour transmission in English and French, primarily to east, west, central and north Africa. The experiment was due to end in August.

109. The evaluation would be undertaken by outside media research organizations. Meanwhile, the Department had organized an internal evaluation in collaboration

with United Nations offices in the target areas. The Department planned to submit an evaluation report to the Committee next year.

110. A number of delegations said that they looked forward to the results of the report on the experimental short-wave broadcasting programme. Many delegations expressed the hope that the area of experiment might be expanded to stimulate wider interest that would lead to the establishment of a short-wave network. One delegation expressed concern about the geographic area involved and suggested that the period of review might be too short. Another delegation said that the report should have indicated the costs and implications of the programme.

111. The Officer-in-Charge said that financial constraints prevented the experimental period from being a longer one and from covering a wider geographic area. However, experts had indicated that the Department would be able to draw adequate conclusions from the data available.

Item 4 (b) (xii). Charges for use of video tapes, audio tapes and news photographs by Member States

112. The Under-Secretary-General, in his introduction to the note on charges for the use of United Nations video tapes, audio tapes and news photographs (A/AC.198/87), said that the Department made audio tapes and news photographs available to the media free of charge. The situation was different, however, in the case of video tapes, for the historical and financial reasons given in the note. He assured the Committee that it was not the Department's intention to make money from video tapes, when its primary purpose was public information. However, the Department needed to have some safeguards so that it was not overwhelmed with requests for video tapes. It had limited funds available for that purpose.

113. He said that the present system of charges was being reviewed, and as a result of the review, he expected the charges for video tapes to be lowered even further, particularly for developing countries. On the other hand, at this stage, he did not foresee the possibility of eliminating those charges altogether.

114. A number of delegations expressed concern about the cost of tapes and photographs. Several delegations said that the costs, particularly for developing countries, should be as low as possible. This would be consistent with the public information aim of fostering understanding and support for United Nations activities. One delegation expressed concern about the high cost of overtime; another delegation said that when overtime was involved, full additional costs should be borne by the requestor. Another delegation said that it was pleased the study was under way, but it did not include the kind of detail included in the report on the distribution of taped radio programmes, which had made that report so useful.

Item 4 (b) (xiii). Situation regarding the staff of the Department of Public Information in posts subject to geographical distribution

115. In reference to the report on posts in the Department subject to geographical distribution (A/AC.198/86), the Under-Secretary-General pledged the firm commitment of the Department to have equitable geographical distribution, which was consonant with the highest standards of professional competence, efficiency and integrity. He believed strongly that these two requirements were fully reconcilable and must, indeed, be harmonized. The Committee members would, however, understand that a perfect geographical balance might be attained only on a Secretariat-wide basis and

not in any segment thereof, such as the Department. The fact that in some units, such as radio and publications, there was a clear need for linguistic requirements, made it difficult to recruit personnel solely on geographical and general professional qualifications. With regard to the method of analysis, the Department used the same methodology as the Secretary-General's annual report on the composition of the Secretariat.

116. A number of delegations said that although the Department had made progress in equitable geographical distribution, there should be continued efforts to redress imbalances. A number of delegations called for an increase in staff from developing countries. A number of delegations registered concern about a decrease in the number of staff from Eastern Europe. Some of them stressed that the representation of those countries in the Department did not correspond to the contribution made by them to the United Nations. A delegation welcomed the reported increase in the representation of African region, and expressed concern about the number of staff from Arab countries. Another delegation expressed concern about staff from Latin America. Several delegations said there were still imbalances at decision-making levels. Some delegations said that in recruiting outside experts, the Department should be aware of the need for a balanced representation of all regions.

117. A delegation expressed doubt about the ways in which the desirable mid-points were established. Several delegations expressed concern about the ways in which staff from various regions were grouped in the tables. Specifically, concern was expressed about the grouping of staff from North America and the Caribbean.

118. Some delegations said that equitable geographical distribution should be applied on a Secretariat-wide basis, and not department by department. Several delegations referred to the provisions in the Charter stating that the paramount consideration in the employment of staff should be high standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and the most qualified personnel should be hired for posts.

119. Responding to points raised, the Officer-in-Charge recalled the statement of the Under-Secretary-General, stating that perfect balance in terms of equitable geographical distribution could be attained only on a Secretariat-wide basis. Regarding the criteria and methodology used, he reiterated that the Department used the same method as that in the Secretary-General's report on the composition of the Secretariat. The Department was bound to follow that methodology, unless the Assembly, through the Fifth Committee, decided otherwise.

Item 4 (b) (xiv). Establishment of United Nations information centres in Benin and Poland

120. In his oral report on the establishment of United Nations information centres in Benin and Poland, the Under-Secretary-General recalled that the General Assembly had asked the Secretary-General to consider the proposals of the Governments of Benin and Poland on the opening of information centres in their countries. He reported that the Department was in contact with both Governments, and he hoped it would be possible for the centres to be opened through the redeployment of resources and on the basis of support from the host Governments. He would report on this question to the General Assembly at its fortieth session. In its future deliberation on any new information centres, he added, the Committee would certainly wish to take into careful consideration the serious budgetary constraints of the Department.

121. The delegations of Benin and Poland indicated their interest in furthering their co-operation with the United Nations in the field of information and in establishing information centres in their countries.

Item 4 (b) (xv). Services in local languages by United Nations information centres

122. In his oral report on services in local languages by United Nations information centres, the Under-Secretary-General said that as a longstanding practice, and in order to ensure wide dissemination of information at the international level, United Nations information centres reproduced some Department publications in local languages. They also distributed radio tapes as well as video tapes and films in languages that are spoken locally. The extent to which such services were provided varied from region to region. The services provided, especially local translations into languages other than official languages of the United Nations, were limited by the resources available to the centres for that purpose. The information received from the centres suggested that such services in local languages were greatly appreciated, and that there was a demand for more resources to be devoted to such services.

123. Several delegations supported the use of local languages by information centres. Appreciation was expressed for the attempts by information centres to use local languages.

Item 4 (b) (xvi). Coverage by the Department of Public Information of policies and practices that violate the principles of international law relative to belligerent occupation, in particular the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949, wherever they occur, especially those policies and practices that frustrate the attainment and exercise of the inalienable and national legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations

124. The Officer-in-Charge introduced the report on coverage by the Department of policies and practices that violate the principles of international law relative to belligerent occupation, in particular the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, wherever they occur, especially those policies and practices that frustrate the attainment and exercise of the inalienable and national legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations (A/AC.198/85).

125. He said that the report contained information about activities in the past year that fell within the broad parameters of the request of the General Assembly. Those activities included, among other things, the dissemination of information through the print media by publishing of articles and issuance of press releases, newsletters and pamphlets. Furthermore, radio news programmes had also been broadcast in all the official United Nations languages and many other languages.

126. In addition, the Department had organized two fact-finding missions to the Middle East and four regional encounters for journalists.

127. Several delegations expressed support for the activities of the Department in this area. One delegation, while expressing appreciation for the Department's efforts, said that the Department should remain effective by ensuring its

objectivity. Another delegation objected to the report on the grounds that the Committee was not the proper forum for such a discussion since political issues were not on its agenda. Several delegations expressed the view that political issues could and should be dealt with in the Committee on Information as well as in various forums.

Item 4 (b) (xvii). Comments on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on publications policy and practice in the United Nations system

128. A number of delegations supported several of the subjects raised in the report (A/39/602), such as the need to gauge the impact of United Nations information materials, including publications, the need to produce material suitable for the readerships involved, and the need to improve distribution. Many delegations emphasized the primacy of public awareness of United Nations activities over the prospect of sales revenues.

129. In regard to the distribution of a particular publication, the UN Chronicle, a delegation registered concern about the number of copies that were distributed free to delegations or to Secretariat officials. In response, the Officer-in-Charge reviewed the way in which the UN Chronicle was distributed. Of the total run of 13,000, about 1,100 copies were sent to delegations and 500 were distributed within the Secretariat. The Sales Section received 7,200 for subscriptions and standing orders. About 2,200 copies were mailed to libraries or distributed through information centres. The other copies were kept in stock.

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

Item 4 (c)

The programme and activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee

130. In his statement regarding the activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), the Under-Secretary-General said that recent concerns of the United Nations system regarding public questioning of its effectiveness had highlighted once again the importance of inter-agency co-ordination and co-operation in this field. The report (A/AC.198/93) reviewed the main issues dealt with at the JUNIC session. Those issues included, among others, Development Forum, Non-Governmental Liaison Services, audio-visual matters and enhancement of public information activities of the United Nations system. The report contained the plan of action of JUNIC for 1986-1987, which indicated the broad scope and subjects that JUNIC was considering.

131. He said that JUNIC also discussed the critical situation in Africa and the fortieth anniversary as two priority items at its recent meeting in Rome. The organizations concerned reported on the activities they had undertaken, and agreement was reached on a number of approaches to guide future work.

132. Mr. Bradford Morse, Administrator of UNDP and Director of the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, addressing the Committee, thanked the Department for its assistance to his Office, and expressed gratitude for the considerable coverage given to African relief needs by JUNIC. He said that the United Nations had tried for some time to draw attention to the serious situation in Africa, but

it was not until television flashed pictures of death and suffering that the international mobilization took place. Millions of people had died, or left their homes in search of food and water. The lives of 30 million people in Africa were still at risk. Information played a crucial role in the African emergency situation and in development as a whole.

133. In his introduction of the report on this item (A/AC.198/93), the Officer-in-Charge said that JUNIC had been informed at its last session of the work of the Committee on Information in 1984 and the related developments during the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. He also drew the attention of the Committee to the questions which had been in the focus of attention of JUNIC during its last session.

134. Several delegations expressed support for the efforts of JUNIC in promoting inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination in the field of information. A number of delegations stated that they were pleased that the emergency situation in Africa had been given the highest priority by JUNIC and supported the conclusions of JUNIC in that regard.

135. Several delegations expressed the view that more attention should be given to information on economic and social issues. A view was expressed that there was a need for increased assistance to the Division for Economic and Social Information.

136. A number of delegations supported the continued publication of Development Forum, some of them favouring its financing from a regular budget. A similar view was expressed with regard to the Non-Governmental Liaison Services.

137. Several delegations expressed support for the World Newspaper Supplement, and the television project Agenda for a Small Planet - Phases II and III.

138. In the context of discussions on inter-agency co-operation, a delegation stated that international organizations such as the United Nations were bound to receive public criticism. Such criticism should be responded to as accurately and quickly as possible.

#### D. Recommendations

139. The Committee on Information submits the following recommendations to the General Assembly:

1. The recommendations of the Committee on Information approved by the General Assembly in resolution 39/98 A of 14 December 1984, as well as all provisions of the resolution, should be reiterated, taking into account the views expressed by delegations at the plenary meeting of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly on 14 December 1984. Those recommendations should be implemented in full, and the Secretary-General should be requested to report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on measures taken for the implementation of those recommendations and provisions pending implementation.

2. The mandate of the Committee on Information should be renewed as set forth in General Assembly resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979 and reaffirmed in Assembly resolutions 35/201 of 16 December 1980, 36/149 B of 16 December 1981, 37/94 B of 10 December 1982, 38/82 B of 15 December 1983 and 39/98 A of 14 December 1984.



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

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

4. The ongoing efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to contribute to the clarification, elaboration and application of the concept of a new world information and communication order should be noted. In this regard, consensus resolutions 4/19 and 3.1 adopted on 27 October 1980 and 25 November 1983, respectively, by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its twenty-first and twenty-second sessions should be recalled.

5. Under the current international climate of political conflicts and economic disorders, the Committee on Information, fully aware and cognizant of the important contribution which the mass media world-wide can make in enhancing and strengthening peace, deepening international understanding, promoting justice, equality, national independence, development, the exercise of human rights and the establishment of a new world information and communication order, recommends that the General Assembly address appeals to the following:

(a) The international media, in order to obtain their support for the efforts of the international community towards global development and, in particular, for the efforts of the developing countries to achieve economic, social and cultural progress;

(b) The United Nations system as a whole to co-operate in a concerted manner, through its information services, in promoting the development activities of the United Nations and, in particular, the improvement of the conditions of the lives of the peoples of the developing countries.

Such appeals should be aimed at achieving a more comprehensive and realistic image of the activities and potential of the United Nations system, in all its purposes and endeavours, as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations.

6. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 6/ which provides that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression and that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, and article 29, which stipulates that these rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations should be recalled.

7. Aware of the existence of structural imbalances in the international distribution of news affecting the two-way flow of news, the Committee on Information recommends that urgent attention should be given to the elimination of existing inequalities and all other obstacles in the free flow and wider and better balanced dissemination of information, ideas and knowledge by, inter alia, diversifying the sources of information as a step towards free and more balanced information and the promotion of the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

8. The Committee on Information recommends that the need be stressed to ensure and promote the access of the developing countries to communication technology, including communication satellites, modern electronic information systems, informatics and other advanced information and communication facilities with a view to improving their own information and communication systems corresponding to the specific conditions prevailing in each country.

9. The Committee on Information, while expressing satisfaction with the successful co-ordination and co-operation displayed by the Department of Public Information with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies, as well as with regional news agencies of developing countries, recommends that the Department of Public Information continue to strengthen this co-operation as it constitutes a concrete step towards a more just and equitable world flow of information, thus contributing to the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

10. The Department of Public Information should be urged to monitor, as appropriate, important meetings of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as of regional intergovernmental organizations devoted to information and communication questions, in particular the fourth conference of the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies to be held at Havana in 1986.

11. With regard to its co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies as well as with the regional news agencies in developing countries, the Department of Public Information should co-operate with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in assisting that organization, within existing resources, in the following activities:

(a) Preparation and implementation of a plan of integrated communication network and regional data and communication centres;

(b) Provision of facilities for meetings on data and communication exchange of the public information bodies of the non-aligned countries.

12. The United Nations system as a whole, as well as the developed countries, should be urged to co-operate in a concerted manner with the developing countries towards strengthening the information and communication infrastructures of the latter countries, in accordance with the priorities attached to such areas by the developing countries, with a view to enabling them to develop their own information and communication policies freely and independently and in the light of their history, social values and cultural traditions. In this regard, full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication, which constitutes an important step in the development of these infrastructures, should always be emphasized.

13. The United Nations system should constantly promote the creation of a climate of confidence in relations among States, as a means of easing tension and facilitating the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

14. Reaffirming the primary role that the General Assembly is to play in elaborating, co-ordinating and harmonizing United Nations policies and activities in the field of information and recognizing the central and important role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the field of information and communication, the Committee on Information recommends that the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned should be urged to give that organization adequate support and assistance in the field of information and communication. The Department of Public Information, in particular, should co-operate more regularly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, especially at the working level, with a view to maximizing the contributions of the Department to the efforts of that organization in promoting the establishment of a new world information and communication order and to disseminating as widely as possible information on the activities of that organization in this respect.

15. The consolidated study contained in the report of the Secretary-General 7/ on the contributions, effects and levels of co-ordination between the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Programme for the Development of Communication and the International Telecommunication Union in support of the development of information and communication infrastructures in the developing countries should be noted.

16. Recalling its recommendation, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 39/98 A, the Committee on Information recommends that the Secretary-General should be requested to expedite the convening, jointly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, of a round table on a new world information and communication order.

17. The United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, should aim at providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries, within existing resources, with regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to actions already adopted within the United Nations system, including, in particular:

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

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

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

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

18. All the information activities of the Department of Public Information should be guided by and carried out in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the aspiration for a new world information and communication order, as well as conform to the consensus reached among States in resolutions 4/19, 4/21 and 4/22 adopted on 27 October 1980 by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its twenty-first session and resolution 3.1 in Major Programme III adopted on 25 November 1983 by the General Conference at its twenty-second session.

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

20. The relevant provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975, and those of the Concluding Document of the meeting of representatives of the participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, held at Madrid from 11 November 1980 to 9 September 1983, should be recalled.

21. The final documents of the Conference of Ministers of Information of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Jakarta from 26 to 30 January 1984, 8/ should be recalled.

22. The Department of Public Information should be requested to continue its co-operation with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries as well as with intergovernmental organizations and regional organizations with a view to the promotion of a new world information and communication order.

23. The Conference of Ministers of Information of the Organization of African Unity, held at Addis Ababa in March 1985, which expressed its conviction in the importance of a new world information and communication order, should be noted.

24. In the light of the grave economic situation prevailing in Africa, the Secretary-General should be requested to ensure that the Department of Public Information does its utmost in bringing to the attention of the international community the real dimensions of the plight of the African people and the

tremendous efforts of the African countries, with a view to increasing its contribution to alleviate this human tragedy.

25. The relevant resolution on the question relating to information of the Fourth Islamic Summit Conference, held at Casablanca from 16 to 19 January 1984, 9/ should be recalled.

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

26. In connection with the forthcoming celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations, the Department of Public Information should be urged to give appropriate support to the Preparatory Committee for the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations in promoting and publicizing the noble goals and accomplishments of the United Nations as a major forum for pooling efforts of States to contribute to the solution of vital world problems.

27. The Committee on Information again stresses that the Department of Public Information should maintain editorial independence and accuracy in all material produced by the Department and should promote to the greatest extent possible an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world. The Department should ensure that its output contains objective and equitable information about issues before the Organization, reflecting divergent opinions where they occur.

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

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

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

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

29. In connection with its annual training programme for journalists and broadcasters from developing countries, the Department of Public Information should continue to allocate the last week of the programme for a visit by them to one of the developing countries that expresses readiness to receive them for the purpose of acquainting themselves with the ways in which information on the United Nations is received and utilized.

30. The Secretary-General should be requested once again to make available to the Committee on Information, at the earliest, a comprehensive report on the outcome of the activities of the International Telecommunication Union with regard to the World Communications Year.

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

32. The assessment contained in the report of the Secretary-General relating to the acquisition by the United Nations of its own communications satellite 10/ in conformity with recommendation 36 made by the Committee to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session 11/ should be noted, and it would be appropriate to re-examine the acquisition of such a satellite should circumstances permit.

33. The attention of the pertinent organs of the General Assembly and of the United Nations system as a whole should be drawn to the findings of the International Telecommunication Union set forth in its report, 12/ especially as concerns the problem of the geostationary orbit reflected, inter alia, in paragraphs 33 and 49 of that report, taking into account the needs of the developing countries.

34. The Committee on Information recommends the rejection of the use of the mass media, especially radio broadcasting, to disseminate false or distorted reports as an instrument of hostile propaganda against the sovereignty of other States. In this sense, it stresses that the media should contribute to the fostering of peace, mutual respect, non-interference and self-determination.

35. With regard to the improvement of communication infrastructures, the Committee on Information draws attention to the success attained by the ARABSAT, BRASILSAT, INSAT-1B, MORELOS and PALAPA satellite systems, designed to promote national and regional integration. In that connection, it endorses the execution of satellite projects such as CONDOR by the Andean group of countries. The United Nations and the specialized agencies, in particular those in the financial sector, should support such activities and initiatives.

36. The Department of Public Information should co-operate closely with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies to organize a workshop, within existing resources, in 1985 for familiarization of news agencies of developing countries with modern technology of relevance to news agencies and for the standardization of teaching methods and syllabuses and to produce training manuals in various languages for the training centres of the Pool and should report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on progress made to this effect.

37. In order to enhance awareness and understanding of the lofty objectives of the United Nations, the Department of Public Information should endeavour to promote teaching in the educational institutions of Member States about the structure, principles and aims of the Organization in conformity with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. In order to implement this recommendation, the Department should continue to organize, on a yearly basis, a fellowship programme for educators.

38. The Department of Public Information should be requested, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, to continue to cover adequately the Israeli policies and practices which violate and affect the human rights of the populations in Arab territories occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, especially those policies and practices which impede the attainment and exercise of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986.
39. The Secretary-General should be requested once again to maintain the functions of the Middle East and Arabic Unit as the producer of Arabic television and radio programmes, to strengthen and expand this unit to enable it to function in an effective manner and to report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on the measures taken in implementation of this recommendation.
40. In view of the importance of United Nations broadcasting for the European region, further steps should be taken to maintain and enhance the functions of the European Unit in the Radio Service, within existing resources.
41. Taking into account the needs of numerous radio producers and journalists that use French as a working language, and the role of the "blue notes" in the preparation of radio programmes of the United Nations, the Committee on Information requests the Secretary-General to instruct the Radio and Visual Services Division of the Department of Public Information to produce a daily edition, in French, of the messages concerning the activities of the United Nations.
42. The Department of Public Information should be requested anew to use the official languages of the General Assembly adequately in its documents and audio-visual documentation and to arrange accordingly for an appropriate number of staff in order better to inform the public about the activities of the United Nations. It should also make available to the French Language Production Section of the Press and Publications Division of the Department, within existing resources, the means that will allow it to distribute consistent press releases in sufficient quantity to satisfy the needs of the numerous journalists and delegations that use French as a working language.
43. United Nations information centres should continue to assist press and information media in their respective countries in accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly and, inter alia, promote the establishment of a new world information and communication order.
44. While the co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Development Programme in the field should be promoted to the maximum extent, it is also important to bear in mind the intrinsic functions of United Nations information centres as distinct from those of the United Nations development activities. The information centres should redouble their efforts to publicize the activities and achievements of operational activities for development, including those of the United Nations Development Programme, taking into account the priorities determined by the General Assembly.
45. The report of the Secretary-General concerning measures to improve the effectiveness of United Nations information centres 13/ should be further

noted and the Secretary-General should be encouraged to implement the proposals made by him therein, within existing resources.

46. The United Nations information centres should intensify direct and systematic communication exchange with local information and educational communities in a mutually beneficial way, in accordance with the priorities of the General Assembly and taking into account the areas of particular interest to host countries.

47. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/98 A, by which the Assembly acceded to the request of the Government of Benin for the opening of a United Nations information centre at Cotonou, the Secretary-General should be requested to continue negotiations with the authorities in Benin for the rapid opening of the centre, within existing resources, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986.

48. Taking into account the request of the Government of Poland for the opening of a United Nations information centre at Warsaw, the Secretary-General should be requested to continue to take appropriate steps for the establishment of the centre, within existing resources, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986.

49. The Department of Public Information should disseminate information concerning the decisions of the United Nations dealing with acts of terrorism in all its forms. In this regard, all the relevant United Nations resolutions and the statement made by the Secretary-General in San Francisco on 26 June 1985 should be recalled.

50. The Department of Public Information should focus on and give wider coverage to the economic, social and development activities of the United Nations system aimed at achieving a more comprehensive image of the activities and potential of the United Nations system, taking into account the priorities set by the General Assembly, particularly in the light of the forthcoming fortieth anniversary of the United Nations.

51. Note should be taken of the assessment contained in the report of the Secretary-General 14/ of the experimental daily short-wave radio broadcasts from Headquarters pending the submission to the Committee on Information of the final report on the results of the experiment.

52. The Secretary-General should continue his efforts to develop a system for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the activities of the Department of Public Information, particularly in the priority areas determined by the General Assembly.

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

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

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



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

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

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

54. The Department of Public Information should improve, within existing resources, its data-collection procedures with regard to the actual use made by redisseminators of materials distributed by the Department and its information centres and submit a report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on progress made in this area.

55. The steps taken by the Department of Public Information in redressing the imbalance in its staff should be noted. The Department should continue to intensify its efforts to that end and the Secretary-General should be requested to take urgent steps to increase the representation of underrepresented developing countries and of other underrepresented groups of countries, especially at the senior levels, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and to submit a report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986.

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

57. The assessment contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the present system of charging Member States and the media for video tapes, audio tapes and news photographs of important United Nations events 15/ should be noted, and the Department of Public Information should report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on that subject with a view to reducing appropriately the final cost of these materials and spreading overtime charges legitimately incurred in an equitable way so as to enable the media in the Member States, particularly in the developing countries, to give wider publicity to the aims and activities of the United Nations.

58. The interim report of the Secretary-General entitled "The Department of Public Information as the focal point for the formulation and implementation of information activities of the United Nations" 16/ should be noted and the Secretary-General should be requested to submit his final report in the light of the ongoing consultations within the Secretariat on the role of the Department with respect to all information activities of the United Nations. The Committee on Information once again recommends that the proliferation of information units in the Secretariat independent of the Department be discouraged.

59. The Committee on Information takes note of the report on the review of the distribution of taped radio programmes produced by the Department of Public Information in New York 17/ and requests the Department to take steps to improve their distribution and to report to the Committee at its substantive session in 1986 on the implementation of the recommendations contained in that report.

60. The operations of the Non-Governmental Liaison Services (Geneva and New York) as voluntarily funded inter-agency projects reaching specific target audiences in the industrialized countries on international development issues should be continued on a stable financial basis through the United Nations participation in these services. As with Development Forum, it is essential that United Nations financial participation, from the regular budget, should be ensured in the next biennium. Furthermore, the Secretary-General should be requested to urge all specialized agencies to make long-term contributions to the financing of these services, thereby stressing their inter-agency character.

61. The Joint United Nations Information Committee, as the essential instrument for inter-agency co-ordination and co-operation in the field of public information, should be further strengthened and given more responsibility for the public information activities of the entire United Nations system.

62. The quality, usefulness and coverage of the daily press release and the weekly news summary issued by the Department of Public Information in all working languages should be further enhanced and improved in view of the important public information tasks that they can perform. Services provided at the Press Section of the Department both for the media and the delegations should be improved. The Department should continue to co-operate closely with and provide assistance to the United Nations Correspondents Association.

63. The Department of Public Information should improve, within existing resources, the timely distribution of its materials to subscribers and United Nations information centres, particularly the UN Chronicle, in all languages, a major source of information on the United Nations to its recipients.

64. The report on the programme and activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee 18/ should be noted, particularly in regard to Development Forum as the only inter-agency publication of the United Nations system that concentrates on development issues, and the Secretary-General should, while continuing his efforts to secure a sound and independent basis for the periodical, make such arrangements as necessary, through the regular budget, to ensure its continued publication. The resources of the United Nations system should be pooled in support of Development Forum and Development Business and any attempt in the United Nations system to duplicate the functions performed by these publications should be avoided. All specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system should be urged to contribute to the financing of this system-wide publication, thereby recognizing its inter-agency character.

65. The Secretary-General should continue to ensure that Development Forum retains its editorial policy of intellectual independence, thus enabling this publication to continue to serve as a world-wide forum in which diverse opinions on issues related to economic and social development can be freely expressed.

66. The Secretary-General should be encouraged to continue and intensify his efforts to explore all possibilities of securing the adequate resources for the continuation of the World Newspaper Supplement project.

67. The World Disarmament Campaign should give full consideration to the role of the mass media as the most effective way to promote in world public opinion a climate of understanding, confidence and co-operation conducive to peace and disarmament, the enhancement of human rights and development. Within the World Disarmament Campaign and Disarmament Week, the Department of Public Information should fulfil the role assigned to it by the General Assembly by utilizing its expertise and resources in public information to ensure its maximum effectiveness.

68. The Department of Public Information should be requested to implement fully, within existing resources, the provisions of General Assembly resolution 38/82 B relating to the work programme of the Caribbean Unit and the Secretary-General should be requested to report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1986 on the measures taken in implementation of this recommendation.

69. The conclusions and recommendations adopted by the extraordinary session of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, held at Tunis from 13 to 17 May 1985, to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration should be noted. In this regard, the Secretary-General should be requested to intensify his efforts, within existing resources, in order to alert world public opinion against the illegal occupation of Namibia and the policies of apartheid of the South African régime and to continue to disseminate as widely as possible information relating to the struggle of the oppressed peoples of South Africa and Namibia.

70. In view of the concerns expressed by several delegations regarding the possible implications on productivity and effectiveness of the proposed restructuring of the Radio and Visual Services Division and taking into account the necessity of strengthening the Professional staff, the Committee on Information recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to submit a written report on the subject to the General Assembly at its fortieth session. Pending presentation of the report and a decision thereon, action on the proposed restructuring should be postponed.

#### Notes

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

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

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

4/ Ibid., Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/38/21 and Corr.1  
and 2).

5/ Ibid., Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/39/21).

6/ Resolution 217 A (III).

7/ A/AC.198/96.

8/ A/37/139-S/16430, annex.

9/ A/39/131-S/16414 and Corr.1, annex II, resolution 15/4-P (IS).

10/ A/AC.198/95.

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

12/ A/AC.198/73.

13/ A/AC.198/75.

14/ A/AC.198/88.

15/ A/AC.198/87.

16/ A/AC.198/82.

17/ A/AC.198/99.

Statement by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77 at the commemorative meeting of the Committee on Information for the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations

Forty years have passed since the Charter of the United Nations was signed by the founding fathers.

The United Nations emerged from history's most disastrous war. The founding fathers who witnessed the tragedy were determined to prevent a repetition. They sought to do so by creating an organization for international co-operation to protect their descendants from facing a similar calamity. The preamble to the Charter set forth their hopes and purposes:

- (a) To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war;
- (b) To reaffirm faith in the fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations, large and small;
- (c) To establish conditions under which justice and respect for obligations, arising from treaties and other sources of international law, can be maintained;
- (d) To promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

In the past 40 years, the United Nations has strived to achieve these goals, sometimes successfully and sometimes not. But under all circumstances the United Nations has demonstrated perseverance in its efforts without which the world might well be more belligerent, more unstable and more violent than it is.

On this occasion let us all acknowledge its virtues of tenacity and patience. Let us all acknowledge that its successes and failures, its achievements and disappointments depend on the political will of the Member States.

The United Nations, which is sometimes maliciously criticized by certain media organizations that seem deliberately anxious to discredit it by decrying its lack of effectiveness, ignoring the fact that this is largely dependent on decisions - or disregard - by Member States, underline the importance of the role of information in deepening understanding and support on the part of the international community for the United Nations, its principles and activities.

The crux of this world Organization is good will, good faith, honest motives and a willingness to work out mutually helpful solutions.

We have all to work in harmony, if we are to maintain world peace. We have all to be true to the lofty principles of the Charter - the right of all people to equality, freedom and self-determination.

We have to avail ourselves of this occasion to reaffirm our commitment to the United Nations and to pledge to observe and respect its Charter, to make it a solid structure on which we can build a better world for present and future generations. The founding fathers understood both the usefulness and urgency of this Organization. They understood the need to harmonize unity in diversity and foster

growth of individuals and communities within the wider frame of national development in an interdependent world.

The United Nations is here for all of us to use, not to ignore. Adlai Stevenson rightly said if the United Nations did not exist, we would have to invent it. Let us not ask what the United Nations has or has not achieved through a legitimate question; let us ask whether we have made good use of its potentials.

The United Nations, as the Secretary-General once said, is certainly the house of nations and peoples and like any house which shelters large families it has its ups and downs. Sometimes family gatherings break down in misunderstandings. There are even days when different groups cannot seem to agree on anything they wish to do together. However, all agree that it would be a good idea to make the garden more productive.

## ANNEX II

Statement by the representative of the German Democratic Republic  
on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States at the  
commemorative meeting of the Committee on Information for the  
fortieth anniversary of the United Nations

In my capacity as Chairman of the group of Eastern European Socialist States I should like, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter, to emphasize the importance and the topicality of this basic document of our Organization, particularly in view of today's aggravated international situation. The purposes and principles laid down in the Charter determine the activities and the role of the United Nations Organization; they are at the same time a binding code of conduct for all States. Taking into account the lessons taught by the pre-war period and the experiences of the Second World War, it declared as the highest aim of the Organization of States "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". The activities of socialist States in the Committee on Information as well are deeply committed to that aim.

Especially in the present time, the intellectual contribution to peace in its two aspects, namely to substantiate and promote the idea and policy of peace as well as to reject and combat ideas and practices hostile and detrimental to peace, has assumed an importance unprecedented in the period of the last 40 years.

Therefore, we have repeatedly pointed to the fact that it is not possible to diminish the danger of war without creating a climate of confidence in the relations between States. Apart from developing political dialogue and taking relevant measures in the military and economic fields, this requires the dissemination of truthful information. The mass media have to render an essential contribution to that end.

The growing role of the mass media in the thoughts and deeds of people, the ever increasing international exchange of information and the new dimensions of transboundary dissemination of information based on scientific and technological progress in communication technology have made the questions of information and communication a constituent part of international relations in our time. Therefore, the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter also apply to this sphere of international relations.

In this sense and also in accordance with Articles 11 and 13 of the Charter, we underline our resolve to continue our activities for respecting and fixing norms which are in line with equality, justice, mutual benefit and the principles of international law, and which are oriented towards a democratic restructuring of international information relations.

In the struggle for a democratization and decolonization of international information relations which has found conceptual expression in the demand for establishing a new world information and communication order, we stand firmly at the side of the non-aligned countries. We support by word and deed the steps taken in the frame of the United Nations system, notably by UNESCO, to overcome inequalities and injustices in international information relations and to guarantee national integrity and preserve cultural identity of all States in transboundary dissemination of information.

We take this opportunity to reaffirm solemnly our commitment to the United Nations Charter. We once again express our determination to contribute actively to the all-round enhancement of the United Nations as the most comprehensive universal frame for peaceful international co-operation.

In these efforts the media of information and mass communication can and must take an outstanding place. To meet this requirement means taking into account the international situation and making a worthy and necessary contribution to the implementation of the purposes and principles laid down in the United Nations Charter.



Statement by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group  
of Western European and other States at the commemorative  
meeting of the Committee on Information for the fortieth  
anniversary of the United Nations

On behalf of the Group of Western European and other States, I am pleased to join in this short meeting of the Committee on Information to commemorate the founding of our Organization 40 years ago today.

In his statement to the opening meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations, the Secretary-General said that this occasion must be used, above all, "to encourage a rededication by Member States to the principles and purposes of the Charter, to promote interest in the work of the Organization and support for its efforts and to reinvigorate international co-operation in all fields of human endeavour". The Western countries associate themselves with this appeal by the Secretary-General and believe that both this Committee and the Department of Public Information have a fundamental role to play both in promoting the image of the Organization and in strengthening international co-operation in the area of information and communication.

For all its faults, after 40 years the Organization has many positive achievements to its credit: the avoidance of global conflict, the containment of regional conflicts, above all by means of peace-keeping forces, the great historic event of decolonization, and its economic and social work as exemplified by the recent effort to alleviate the grave economic situation in Africa. The international community none the less continues to face the discouraging reality of economic and social injustices, human rights abuses, regional conflicts and international rivalries.

If we are to continue to make progress in the future, facing up to all these problems, we must reaffirm in word and deed our firm commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, our respect for internationally agreed norms in the area of human rights and our readiness to promote the economic and social progress of all peoples.

Statement by the Chairman of the Committee at the opening of the  
substantive session

Permit me to outline some ideas about those problems and questions which we will be dealing with in the next three weeks.

The Committee on Information began its work about six years ago, in April 1979. Its creation by the General Assembly meant recognition of the growing role of public information, of the significance and responsibility of the media in the present time. At the same time it was, as United Nations Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar underlined before this forum, "an acknowledgement that information matters required a special focus and needed policy directives".

The Committee has, without doubt, done commendable, though not an easy and uncomplicated work. It has constructively participated in the growing international discussion about the importance, responsibility and tasks of information. On the basis of a clearly defined threefold mandate it has given Member States an opportunity to participate more actively in the formation of the policy and programmes of information in the United Nations system and to explain their position in the discussion on the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

With the admission of China and Mexico, whose representatives I would like to welcome once more today very cordially with the hope for close and successful co-operation, the number of Member States in the Committee has risen from 41 to 66, then 67 and now up to 69. This extended representation is, I believe, proof of a grown prestige and high esteem of the Committee in shaping international relations.

Our Committee is indeed dealing with a complex problem which is undoubtedly subject of both growing interest and concern, namely information and international exchange of information. The influence of mass media on the thoughts and deeds of people has never been greater than today.

Press, radio, television, film and news agencies play an ever more important part in the socio-political and cultural life of our time. They allow millions of people to participate directly in events occurring on our planet. Information exerts a great influence on the thoughts and attitudes of people. In the last analysis it brings an influence to bear on the international political climate, on the degree of confidence among peoples.

One does not need to be a prophet to predict that this influence will multiply further. The consideration of global problems of mankind is held from different positions. It is determined by views which find expression in inter-governmental relations. Deepened international division of labour requires more intensive information and communication, closer co-operation in that field itself. With the extension of the information systems oriented towards national aims and interests, especially in developing countries, the number of those sharing the international circulation of information is increasing.

Not least, the tremendous scientific and technological progress incessantly facilitates the advancing technological perfection of the media and, thus, their ever more versatile application. These are, without doubt, developments of high

significance which call for answers, answers in direction of a democratic shaping of the international dissemination of information, answers which are sought in the frame of a new world information and communication order.

Nobody can overlook the enormous differences still existing in the approach to such a new order, the various priorities and political concepts. On the other hand, a certain basic consensus prevailing in the debates cannot be denied.

It has become obvious that the present structures of international information circulation are no longer in line with the conditions of the 1980s, the tendencies in international relations as well as with the requirements of States.

Many statements that have been made point to the fact that the share of developing countries in the international exchange of information is still inadequately low. Quantitative disproportions which are often designated as a one-way road of information exchange are taken as the cause of qualitative problems regarding the contents of information.

The Declaration of the Jakarta Conference of Ministers of Information of Non-Aligned Countries underlines: "the Non-Aligned and other developing countries are adversely affected by the fact that the international mass communication media are dominated by the transnational news agencies and corporate structures which exercise a monopoly over the world's major communication media, and consequently command a monopoly over the international distribution of the news".

To overcome these inequalities, to strengthen the media systems in the developing countries and to develop new fields for an equal constructive international co-operation in information remains one of the key tasks with which the international community is faced. The forthcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples recalls that information sovereignty is a constituent part of the entire system of independence and self-determination of States.

The International Programme for the Development of Communication in the framework of UNESCO has proved to be important for the establishment of national communication infrastructures. However, it is precisely UNESCO whose outstanding role in the discussion of information is undeniable, which in its resolutions again and again points to the fact that the mere existence of technically sophisticated communication systems does not yet constitute the solution to all questions. For instance, the acquisition of modern technology must not create new lasting dependencies. Equality, justice, mutual benefit must basically become the foundation of the working together of States. It is without doubt that the twenty-third UNESCO General Conference at Sofia this year will submit new ideas to that end.

I fully share the view of my distinguished predecessor, Mr. Moreno Salcedo from the Philippines, whose activities for this Committee have found high recognition, that the debate on international information issues must serve the preparation of human thinking conducive to a new beginning in the relations between States and peoples.

Information and communication are essential components of human rights. Without the implementation of the right of peoples to inform and to be informed, there cannot be any new world information and communication order. Active participation in the exchange of information, access to the media, variety of information sources are key elements of the new order to be created.

Yet, like in all fields of human rights it is also true of information: freedoms and rights are to be linked with duties. As is stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, they, and I quote, "may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations", and thus must be observed according to generally accepted provisions of international law.

What is necessary is to utilize the high potential of the mass media for creating a climate of confidence among States and peoples. The media bear a great responsibility through their influence on safeguarding lasting peace, on relations of good-neighbourliness and mutually beneficial co-operation between States. What was stated in 1979 in the MacBride report on the study of communication problems is still valid today:

The national communication policy must be in line with the accepted principles of international communication and must try to create a climate of mutual understanding and peaceful co-existence between the nations.

Truthful and responsible information is appropriate to render the greatest possible contribution to peace.

This year's session of the Committee on Information takes place at a time between two extremely important and closely connected anniversaries, the fortieth anniversary of the victory over nazism and fascism in the Second World War and the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations. The signing of the United Nations Charter will be commemorated in San Francisco next week. What is more natural than to make these highlights the focus of present information activities. There can and even must not be any alternative to the equal, peaceful relations of States as enshrined in the Charter.

The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, as was stressed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations before the Preparatory Committee for the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations, "will provide a much-needed opportunity to give the people of the world a truthful account of what the United Nations can and cannot do, of its successes and failures, of its means and limitations, of its dreams and realities".

Hé expressed the hope that "1985 will witness the beginning of a serious educative effort to foster world-wide information about the United Nations and that Governments, the media and educators will play an important part in this endeavour".

There can be no doubt that in this context the work of the whole press sector of the United Nations orientated by the key questions of our time will gain ever more importance. Headed by the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Yasushi Akashi, the Department of Public Information performs a significant work. We all know how difficult it can be to balance various priorities and demands within given resources. This fact should oblige the Committee all the more to focus in its recommendations on genuine problems in the political orientation and for practical measures to be taken. The Committee should at the same time be an instrument of effective support for the activities to be carried out by the Department.

Permit me, on behalf of this Committee, to express our thanks and appreciation to Mr. Akashi and all staff members of his Department for their great commitment. This also includes our recognition of the thorough and comprehensive preparation of this year's session of the Committee. As a proverb says: "Don't count your chickens before they're hatched." Yet, I am confident that this Committee will again have all support from the United Nations Secretariat.

Today, both our Committee and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space start working. Also in that Committee, as in other forums too, questions of information, the use of new technical means, as for instance satellites, for the exchange of information, for the development of education and culture are to be discussed. We should enhance our efforts for the peaceful application of these technical means serving the interests of the peoples. I think that we should also seek ways for enhanced co-operation between various organs of the United Nations when problems of information are involved. For instance, the efforts of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to develop principles for the direct broadcasting system with regard to satellite television could give rise to enhanced co-operation between our two Committees.

Being myself a journalist by profession and having worked as a journalist, I should like to address some words to those who, with dedication and various ideas, take efforts to reflect what is happening at the United Nations, what is done by Member States to promote co-operation, to settle disputes and conflicts. I am talking of the legion of correspondents, be they from Reuters or TASS, from AFP, AP or TANJUG, DPA, PTI or ADN.

Does it really suffice to appeal once a year to the media to reflect United Nations activities in a broader scale? Shouldn't the members of the Committee rather seek continuous dialogue with those who transmit the activities of this Organization and of their Member States from the horse's mouth to the world, sometimes even faster than diplomats?

This is certainly a question of reciprocity. We, as members of this Committee, that are given by the General Assembly the mandate to discuss and analyse questions of information in all their aspects, should not hesitate to make the first move to co-operation with the correspondents. Especially in the fortieth year of its foundation, the United Nations' successes and achievements, its share in saving the world from war as well as its contributions to solving social, economic and humanitarian problems of our time - all this must be embedded still more deeply in the minds of the people.

Finally, permit me to repeat what was said by the first Chairman of the Committee on Information, Mr. Mestiri of Tunisia, in his opening speech: "Let us co-ordinate our efforts and harmonize our activities for the common good."

The forthcoming weeks will require mutual understanding, constructive co-operation, patience and, above all, good will.

Let us therefore work in this spirit to preserve the atmosphere of this Committee and to achieve reasonable results.

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