

REVIEW OF UNITED NATIONS PUBLIC INFORMATION NETWORKS

Reorganization of the Department of Public Information

*Prepared by
Alain Gourdon*

Joint Inspection Unit



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FOREWORD

This report has been prepared under conditions which should be brought to the attention of the decision-making bodies of the United Nations because the problems encountered are nothing new. In this case, a number of letters and telexes requesting information or clarifications were sent during the first half of 1988 to the Under-Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Public Information and to the Director of the Division for Committee Liaison and Administration Services (CLAS), but neither of them took the trouble to reply. The main DPI officials and the UNIC Directors who received on-site visits nevertheless enabled the Inspector to complete his work.

It should also be pointed out that the Joint Inspection Unit procedure of having comments transmitted by the departments concerned was not followed. Although draft reports were sent well enough in advance and a strict deadline was set, the Inspector was still waiting in vain for the replies from DPI and the Secretariat 25 days after the deadline had expired. It was in these conditions and in a context which does not reflect a true spirit of co-operation that the report was prepared. It is simply hoped that these observations will be fully taken into account in future.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The purpose of this report is to undertake a critical review of the public information structures and networks established by the United Nations Secretariat. Its intention is to evaluate the way in which they are organized and function, and their situation and role within the system. It situates the recommendations, at the conclusion of the report, in the context formed by the mandates conferred by the General Assembly and the proposals of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts. In addition, it takes account of the unavoidable constraints of all kinds on any reform of the Department of Public Information (DPI).

2. By its recommendations 15 and 37, the Group of Experts called for a "thorough review of the functions and working methods as well as of the policies of the Department of Public Information" with a view to bringing its role up to date and improving its capacity to provide information. By resolution 41/213, the General Assembly approved those recommendations and entrusted the Secretariat with responsibility for the desired reform, which was due to be completed by 1989. In its first progress report (A/42/234), dated 23 April 1987, the Secretary-General accordingly defined the principles of the proposed reorganization.

3. He felt constrained to remark in that report that the United Nations, which had hitherto concentrated on communication with Member States, had to some extent ignored the tapping of the second-tier global constituency, "the world's peoples". He also advocated the more effective use of universities, parliaments, NGOs and the press as means of support and relay stations for the United Nations. And he expressed the hope that the younger generations would thus be more effectively helped "to discover and visualize tangible benefits" brought about through the work of the United Nations.

4. In the light of those principles, the analysis of DPI activities began during the first quarter of 1987, when a new Under-Secretary-General was appointed to head the Department. It was planned that the first half of 1987 would be devoted to exploration of the possibilities and thrust of the reform thus conceived and to questions relating to administrative management, use of technology and funding. During the second phase, to be completed before the forty-second session of the General Assembly, consideration would be given to the problems of the allocation of human, technical and budgetary resources and means of achieving improved distribution and communication. The third phase was to comprise the effective reorganization of the Department by the end of 1987.

5. The restructuring of DPI was approved by the Secretary-General for implementation from 2 November 1987. However, it proved impossible to keep to the schedule. By late 1988, the reform had been only partially executed. In the middle echelons of DPI, 1989 was to have been the year when the Department got into its stride, but by the end of 1988 work had only just begun on solving the problems of reorganization, redeployment and co-ordination of services outside the Department.

6. The preliminary first-phase studies continued beyond the time-limit originally set. Initiated at the same time as staff reductions, in conformity with recommendation 15 of the Group of Experts, restructuring was somewhat delayed in consequence. Questions may therefore be asked about the validity

of a procedure consisting of two parallel operations which, while responding to different requirements, would have obvious mutual effects. There was a danger that the staff reductions and breakdowns of posts retained might modify the characteristics of the reform or that those characteristics might determine the distribution of posts to be abolished, with a consequent risk of harming or at least disrupting the planned reorganization.

7. One may also ask, as DPI staff representatives have done, whether the conditions set by the General Assembly for the implementation of recommendation 15 had been respected. Resolution 42/213 invited the Secretary-General to act with flexibility, to prevent staff reductions from having a negative impact on programmes and the structures of the Secretariat, and to preserve "the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity of the staff, with due regard to equitable geographical distribution".

8. Regardless of these risks, shortcomings and delays, however, the reform under way in DPI already appears to have proceeded far enough for certain conclusions to be drawn from the analysis of its principles, lines of force and initial results. At the same time it seems to be far enough from completion for recommendations to influence its implementation and for the necessary modifications and adjustments to be made.

I. THE PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES OF THE REORGANIZATION CURRENTLY UNDER WAY

A. Circumstances and context

9. The reform of DPI constitutes just one chapter, albeit an important one, in the overall reform of the Secretariat ordered by the General Assembly. Nevertheless, it is also the culmination of a trend. The United Nations, which is both a mirror and a platform, has undergone far-reaching upheavals in a half century. Information has become something which is increasingly changeable and its processing has become increasingly delicate, given the revolutionary changes in radio and visual communication and new mass-media techniques. The number of Member States has grown considerably, and the developing nations have been playing an increasingly important part in the formulation of General Assembly resolutions. As a result, there have been changes in dimension and orientation which have had a considerable effect on the dissemination and management of public information from the United Nations.

10. During recent years, and at least up to the sea change that occurred in 1988, the image of the United Nations has deteriorated somewhat. Although already dated, a 1983 study by the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) provides a useful analysis of this deterioration. It highlights a lack of awareness of United Nations institutions and blatant ignorance of its mandates, spheres of competence and objectives. It underlines the inadequacy and incoherence of the responses which have been or should be made to criticism, and the disadvantages of a multiplication and confusion of audiences and targets. It stresses the imbalance in world information flows and the dangers inherent in the control of a too powerful media network by a few industrialized countries.

11. More recent surveys have shown that there was less hostility than indifference to the United Nations and that its work was on the whole considered useful. At least in a small but influential group of countries,

however, a gradual disaffection within public opinion was apparent. Errors affecting the role of the United Nations, disinformation in some cases and doubt which is more sceptical than critical still determine too many attitudes and activities. The reform of DPI is thus all the more necessary since, if the United Nations is not heard, it will not be supported and, in order to be heard, it must first be listened to.

12. The credibility crisis in the United Nations is linked not only to erosion of its image, but also to the relative paucity of its financial resources, its increasing shortage of human resources, and the inadequacy and unsuitability of methods, documents and techniques. The deterioration of image has been accompanied by a crisis in the message which was due to its obsolescence, the inadequate ability and qualifications of those who had been made responsible for its formulation, and the difficulty of responding with reduced means to more numerous and more diversified needs.

13. Over the past few decades, the share of expenditure allocated within the United Nations to public information on constantly growing programmes has steadily decreased. In 40 years, the DPI budget had fallen from 12.7 to 5.3 per cent of the total United Nations budget, even though it is now necessary to meet the demands of 159 Member States, use a dozen or so languages and deal with a list of demands which has increased tenfold. It is hardly necessary to add that the financial crisis affecting the whole of the system inevitably made this chronic lack of resources even more sharply felt.

14. The use of these already meagre resources has not always been very productive. Staff recruitment, retraining and career development policies have not properly met the specific needs for specialization and expertise required by public information. Senior DPI officials have often found themselves unable to make judicious use of new communications technologies for which administrative training had not appropriately prepared their staff.

15. In addition, for too long no in-depth analysis has been undertaken for the purpose of identifying targets, audiences, "relay stations", feedback procedures, and the effects and results of information disseminated by DPI. Now in order to promote United Nations action and to enable it fully to play its catalytic and multiplying role, public information must make a point of destroying the clichés and stereotypes that jeopardize its prestige, while at the same time showing itself to be more readable and more audible, and hence more capable of mobilizing opinion.

16. In this context, the need for renovation of DPI assumes very great urgency. The United Nations is at the same time a very complex institutional system and an organization that seems extremely remote, if not extremely abstract. The mandates it undertakes are very broad and very general. But although its tasks are redoubtable in their difficulty, its results have been by no means spectacular and have in fact been all the more far-reaching in that they are dependent on discretion or secrecy. But however important its role and responsibilities may be, the United Nations is not the Government of the Governments of its Member States. Its only power is the power to convince, and DPI therefore constitutes the strategic weapon and most appropriate vehicle for communicating its message.

B. The precedents for reform

17. Ever since its establishment, the configuration of DPI has undergone fairly frequent changes. Originally, its structures conformed to the recommendations of the Technical Advisory Committee on Information, made on the basis of a General Assembly resolution of 13 February 1946. Under the authority of an Assistant Secretary-General, and conceived and established as one of the eight major divisions of the Secretariat, DPI comprised five offices (press and publications, radio, films and graphics, library, special services). It was instructed "to promote to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world".

18. The Technical Advisory Committee on Information noted, in paragraph 7 of its recommendations, that the functions of DPI appeared to fall "naturally" into the categories of the media used. There were no substantial changes in this structure until 1955, when an Under-Secretary-General was appointed at the head of the Department and a post of Deputy Under-Secretary-General was created on an experimental basis for a period of two years. The distribution of functions according to media continued. Between 1956 and 1968, however, the Department was reorganized to a certain extent and came to comprise three divisions (external relations, press and publications, radio and visual services).

19. In 1968, at the same time as UNCTAD, UNDP and UNIDO made their first appearance, the Economic and Social Council decided, in its resolution 1357 (XLV) of 2 August 1968, to strengthen DPI's information capacity as regards development. That resolution was endorsed by the General Assembly. It thus authorized the establishment of a Centre for Economic and Social Information (CESI), 1/ which was intended to perform certain thematic tasks and to play a co-ordinating role vis-à-vis the specialized agencies and United Nations centres. Subsequently, it came to provide secretariat functions for JUNIC.

20. While reaffirming the mandates and principles established by the founding resolutions of 13 February 1946 and resolution 595 of 4 February 1952, the General Assembly adopted, in 1971, the conclusions of a report by the Secretary-General on DPI's policy and activities, a report which was to reorient the Department in a more functional direction. CESI was converted into the Division for Economic and Social Information (DESI), a Planning, Programming and Evaluation Unit was set up and, under the auspices of a co-ordinator, thematic task forces were established.

21. On the eve of 1987, and in a manner that owed less to rationality than to pragmatism, DPI, under the authority of an Under-Secretary-General, comprised two specialized divisions, determined by the media employed (press and publications, radio and visual services) and two functional divisions (DESI and external relations). The United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) were subordinate to the External Relations Division, while the "executive office", the Planning, Programming and Evaluation Unit, and the JUNIC secretariat were directly subordinate to the Under-Secretary-General through DESI.

1/ The Centre was finally set up by circular ST/SGB/131/Amend.22 issued by the Secretary-General on 11 February 1970.

22. Obsolete and imperfect though that set-up had become, it was not characterized solely by shortcomings. Admittedly, DESI did not fit easily into the organizational chart, since in itself it constituted a small-scale model of DPI and too frequently found itself overlapping or competing with the press and publications, and radio and visual services divisions. Similarly, the multiplication of mandates was not conducive to the proper breakdown of resources or personnel responsible for executing those mandates. By contributing to the development of too many more or less autonomous cells and regional programmes, it tended, beyond adequate control, to weaken the essentially multilateral character of the message that should be conveyed by the United Nations.

23. The structure that was doomed to disappear nevertheless conformed to a certain logic. Responsibilities and functions were distributed among technical divisions in accordance with the simple criterion of differentiation of the media and of the skills that that entails. The differentiation of activities did not prevent co-operation between services, the product of the one benefiting the other. If a celebration, conference or special campaign so required, the necessary co-ordination could be achieved through the temporary establishment of a task force.

24. The operation of the system was not without its difficulties, and its efficiency was very mediocre. Nevertheless, some of its qualities could not be denied: the relative simplicity of its organizational chart, the absence of any ambiguity in the distribution of responsibilities between divisions within the Department, the single nature of its External Relations Division, and the direct subordination of the "executive office" to the Under-Secretary-General responsible for DPI.

C. Delimitation of the sphere of application

25. The succession of splits and changes within DPI, the reform initiated since 1987 being only the most recent example, bears witness both to a legitimate concern for improvement and to undoubted instability and, in some cases, a rather erratic trajectory. However, the present reform is more comprehensive and more far-reaching in its aims. It is intended to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services, to rationalize the organizational chart and management, and to make more productive use of personnel, techniques and budgetary capacities, which make it a necessity to do better without having more. The reform does not have the effect of modifying the order of political priorities established by the General Assembly. It concerns only organization of the Department, without extending to the substance of its programmes or the continued existence of its overall and special mandates.

26. The prime objective of United Nations information activities has not changed: it is to enable, through information, "the peoples of the world" to understand the work, ideals and purposes of the United Nations. The revised work programme for the biennium continues to be based on the Charter and the medium-term plan, but also, in addition to resolution 13 of 1946 and resolution 595 of 1952, on all the relevant General Assembly resolutions (1335 (XIII), 1405 (XIV), 2897 (XXVI), 3535 (XXX), 33/15, 34/182, 35/201, 36/149, 37/94, 38/82, 39/88, 40/164, 41/68 and 42/162).

27. The reform, which is being carried out within the context of ongoing programmes and mandates, mainly affects the organization of DPI's central services. Although it comprises an outline for the redeployment and regional reorganization of the Information Centres, it leaves aside or at least postpones their restructuring. From this standpoint, therefore, the Information Centres are only indirectly concerned by the strengthening at headquarters of the guidance and control functions that have now been concentrated within a new Information Centres Division, which is responsible for them.

28. By confining its sphere of application to DPI, the reform can hardly be said to be in keeping with recommendation 37, paragraph 2, of the Group of Experts. It had been noted that certain information activities were frequently conducted by various departments and offices within the Secretariat. It was accordingly requested that they should, "to the extent possible", be consolidated within DPI. That recommendation raises delicate political and administrative problems that will be touched on later. The fact that it has not been implemented casts a measure of doubt on the value of a reform that is condemned not to exceed certain limits.

D. Identification of shortcomings and objectives

29. The inventory of weaknesses and inadequacies of the administrative machinery, which DPI has used since 1946, does not offer an alternative solution. But it does provide a means of identifying the difficulties, distinguishing major defects from lesser shortcomings and locating the areas in which the major effort must be made.

30. DPI does not dissociate itself from a Secretariat of which it forms an integral part. Although the injection of a certain dose of media professionalism may appear necessary, however, it will continue to be necessary to arbitrate between productivity requirements and rules of personnel management, which remain those of the public service of an international organization. Between these provisions and these constraints, disequilibrium seemed to have reached the point of non-return, the demands of efficiency were too often forgotten and the recommended reform appeared all the more urgent as a result.

31. The DPI system and structures had become less and less conducive to the implementation of activities that were correctly planned and aligned with clear and sharply defined objectives. The multiplication and dilution of objectives among too many priorities accordingly reduced the value that should have been attached to the impact of operations and led to less and less concern about any obligation to achieve a result. The definition and co-ordination of activities was not based on any information strategy.

32. To this incoherence was added the unprofitable or inefficient use of media techniques. Although television, which is of more recent use, had recourse to modern techniques, United Nations radio broadcasts still tended to carry the stamp of their origins of 30 years ago. Its practices and the style of its operations were increasingly out of keeping with the contemporary environment. The dispersal of publications and information throughout the Department made it impossible to express views while at the same time preserving the cohesiveness of the message. Lastly, the uninspired information programmes rendered it impossible to make full use of the complete range of available media and dissemination channels.

33. The shortcomings also included disorder, duplication and delay, which led to the unco-ordinated distribution of documents and various information materials. There were inadequacies in audience and target prospecting, shortcomings in visibility, and waste of time and energy resulting from mutual ignorance, the compartmentalization of media techniques and the partitioning of services. Above all, internal information flows within DPI itself were far from fluid.

34. The purpose of the reform currently under way is to develop a new logic. Instead of an organization based on the medium and the means, it is intended to give priority to impact and result, the multiple and multiplying use of communication techniques, the refinement of the message and the promotion of an image. Its aims are: a more co-ordinated approach to the execution of mandates; product quality, regularity and speed of dissemination, and receptivity of public opinion; more rigorous evaluation and more precise determination of effects and feedback.

35. The reform thus consists of a wholesale recasting of DPI's structures and organizational arrangements. It is reflected in the disbandment of the Planning, Programming and Evaluation Unit and the elimination of the three media divisions, the External Relations Division and DESI. The changes often amount to readjustments, transfers, subdivisions or mergers. In the unchanged context of the Secretariat and under the authority of its Under-Secretary-General, DPI, as reorganized in 1987, has structures which constitute a new organizational chart.

36. This chart which, since its inception, has undergone only slight adjustments comprises the following innovations:

(a) The Office of the spokesman for the Secretary-General has become a unit with broader competence, directly linked to the Under-Secretary-General and Head of the Department. This Unit is known as the "Executive Media Service" (EMS).

(b) The "executive office" (detached from the Under-Secretary-General's Office), the administrative, financial and evaluation services, and the committee's secretariat have been consolidated within a Division for Committee Liaison and Administrative Services (CLAS).

(c) Establishment of a Bureau of Programme Operations (BPO) responsible, under the authority of a Co-ordinator, for supervising the operations of a new service (communications and project management) and two new divisions (information products and dissemination).

(d) Establishment of a Communications and Project Management Service (CPMS) responsible for the programming and thematic planning of communication.

(e) Establishment of an Information Products Division comprising the news coverage, publications, radio, television and language adaptation services.

(f) Splitting of the former External Relations Division, together with the establishment of a Dissemination Division (DD), subordinate to BPO, and

establishment of a United Nations Information Centres Division, answerable to the Under-Secretary-General directly (not via BPO) and responsible for reinvigorating, through rationalization, the UNIC network.

II. THE CONDITIONS AND METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFORM

A. The difficulties inherent in a reform of DPI

37. Any reform of DPI is beset with difficulties which cannot be overcome through a reduction of structures or the rationalization of an organizational chart. These difficulties stem from, if not ambiguities, at least the extensive or restrictive interpretations that may be placed on the founding resolution of 13 February 1946 and subsequent recommendations concerning DPI.

38. DPI was instructed not to engage in "propaganda". It was also required, "on its own initiative", to engage in activities that would supplement the services of existing agencies, "to the extent that these are insufficient to realize the purpose set forth" (recommendation 2) and it was required to "actively assist and encourage" national information services, educational institutions and other national organizations interested in spreading information about the United Nations (recommendation 12).

39. The General Assembly has never specified in what respect or how positive information activities could deviate and become "propaganda". It has left it to the Secretariat to determine that point. By its resolution 33/115 of 18 December 1978, however, it decided to establish a committee composed of Member States to review United Nations public information policies and activities and to report to it on that subject. In section 1 of resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979 it extended the mandate of that committee, which was to be known as the "Committee on Information". It instructed the Committee to evaluate and follow up "the efforts made and the progress achieved" by the United Nations system in the field of information.

40. Thus, the problem was not solved, but the venue for its discussion was shifted. It is, in fact, impossible to distinguish neutral information from objective information, or to say what viewpoint must be adopted in order to define certain information as "positive". The divergences between delegations within the Committee on Information proved so great that it became extremely difficult to agree on the directives to be given to DPI. The Department was therefore obliged to compromise between opposing trends, a course which did not facilitate its routine work or the formulation of a structured and homogeneous public information policy.

41. According to the restrictive view of the role to be assigned to DPI, it should serve primarily as a conveyor belt. In the opinion of the representatives of the industrialized countries, which are the main supporters of such a policy, DPI should furnish to the press logistical support and releases in the form of short records of proceedings. It should function in the same conditions of approximate neutrality as the international news agencies of the Western world. Its role would be that of a relay station, supporting structure and a kind of official journal of the United Nations.

42. According to the extensive view, which is expressed mainly by the developing countries, DPI should not refrain from processing the information it receives and disseminates. As broadcaster and producer, it should prepare

and supply on its own account the information to be disseminated, especially information concerning the most sensitive issues. It should not therefore provide only technical co-operation or logistical support. It should serve to offset the imbalances and inequalities between North and South which characterize the international information system. It should play a leading role in the promotion of the "new world information and communication order".

43. In recent years the General Assembly, in its resolutions, has favoured the extensive view of the role of DPI, which has been given an increasing number of thematic mandates. In the area of public information, it was requested to respect political priorities and to select news, facts and programmes accordingly. It was also asked to strengthen its co-operation with the pool of news agencies of the non-aligned countries, to make a more vigorous contribution to the training of third-world journalists, and to "decolonize" information in accordance with the principles of the new world information and communication order, for the greater benefit of the "less informed countries" and their educational and media institutions.

44. Certain thematic mandates which were adopted by massive majorities in the General Assembly did not, however, enjoy the support of the industrialized States Members of the Organization, in which they lack a "political majority" but hold a "financial majority". In order to respect the wishes of one group and to spare the feelings of the other, DPI was often compelled to acquiesce in resolutions and mandates without going too actively about the task of effectively implementing them.

45. In formulating its message and fashioning the image of the United Nations which it is invited to present, therefore, DPI is unable to avoid the contradictory demands of Member States. For this reason, the General Assembly has often preferred not to impose its will on DPI and has sought to evade the difficulty, by setting up within the Secretariat or alongside it organs which it considered would be better able to fulfil the mandates that were within the competence of DPI. At this point any reform of the Department's structures comes up against its limits and, at the same time, evinces the need for the reform to be extended, since it cannot be dissociated from the review of a gamut of parallel organs endowed with similar powers and responsibilities in the area of information.

B. The inadequacy of the preparatory work

46. Before it made its recommendation for the reform of DPI, the only documentation which the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts apparently examined were notes submitted by DPI itself and the letters of a few representatives of Member States giving their personal thoughts on the subject. The notes were more in the nature of a recital of successes than self-criticism, and the letters expressed views that were more or less interesting but were in any event disparate. Moreover, when he appeared before the Group of Experts on 23 June 1986, the Secretary-General spoke fairly briefly about DPI. In order to demonstrate more effectively the extremely critical situation of DPI, he observed that it should be determined whether its mandate and structure were still valid at the present time, and suggested that the disproportionate relationship between staff expenditure and programme expenditure should perhaps be revised.

47. The deliberations of the Group of Experts resulted in the abrupt conclusion that reform was as urgent as disorder was obvious. Wishing to reduce DPI's size and budget, the representatives of the industrialized countries called for drastic economies in expenditure on the UNICs and a reduction in their number. The representatives of the non-aligned countries complained that DPI was being singled out for special treatment and other Secretariat bodies were being spared any kind of criticism. From this exchange of balanced views there resulted recommendation 37, which was characterized by the moderation of its wording, the cautiousness of its proposals, and the deferral of the main question to later investigations and studies.

48. Beyond the recommendations of the Group of Experts, as reflected in resolution 41/213, it would seem that the preparatory work for the reform was not conducted as coherently as might have been wished. The necessary consultation with DPI personnel does not appear to have been a success. Conspicuously lacking are the documents necessary for an understanding of the genesis of the reform and of the choices that determined the establishment of the new organizational chart and the reorganization of structures.

49. No DPI reorganization plan appears to have been submitted in 1987 to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) or the Committee on Information. Recommendation 37 called for a "thorough review" of the functions, methods and policies of DPI. This review, which was intended to optimize the capacity of DPI, should logically have preceded the proposed reorganization. This was not the case, however, and the review was not given practical substance by any report. Apparently, the new head of DPI confined herself to keeping the Secretary-General orally informed of progress with the reform. The Secretary-General apparently relied on senior members of the administration and budget department to make the necessary detailed adjustments.

50. However, after lengthy investigations and through sheer luck (via a personal acquaintance), the Inspector managed to find the report of an external consultant who had been asked to analyse and review the methods of DPI's four divisions as they existed under the 1976 configuration. This brief report analyses the shortcomings of the system to be replaced and in many areas supplies innovative ideas and imaginative solutions. But by no means can it be regarded as a "thorough review" within the meaning of recommendation 37.

51. The only written document of an official nature that it is possible to identify would appear to be a "DPI reinvigoration plan". This text, submitted to DPI personnel in October 1987, was to become, by a decision of the Secretary-General, the new charter of DPI (Organization manual, ST/SGB/Organization/DPI, 2 November 1987. Secretary-General's bulletin 87-27499). But such a plan is more in the nature of a working paper for internal use, a sales leaflet or an advertising brochure - albeit well done - than a documented and detailed report. It would nevertheless seem that the "summary of findings" included in the plan should be considered as replacing the "thorough review" mentioned in recommendation 37.

52. The reinvigoration plan is supposed to summarize the conclusions of the review of the structures to be recast, to highlight the key elements of the reform and to indicate the resulting implications for staff. By way of

introduction, but without providing the slightest justificatory reference to a written document, a diagram announces that a "thorough review" of DPI has been undertaken and that an organizational strategy has been implemented.

53. It is also stated that group discussions, individual interviews and documentary surveys have enabled a "thorough analysis" to be undertaken. It is observed that the process was slowed down because of the approval required at the various levels of the Secretariat hierarchy (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, Assistant Secretary General (Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance), Assistant Secretary-General (Office of Human Resources Management)).

54. The "summary of findings" is characterized more by statements of the obvious than by clarifications. It notes that the original mandate of the United Nations was relatively simple and frank. It complains about the increase in obligations which the mandate entails because of the proliferation of a multitude of priority problems. It observes that the world of communications, in which DPI will inevitably evolve and compete, has become increasingly sophisticated. It bemoans the relatively sacrosanct nature of staff costs and the inadequacy of resources for new needs and purposes, when the aim is to organize an "information service" which can claim to be "professional" and "technical". Lastly, it proposes to reorganize the structures of a Department reputed to be "unproductive and unmanageable" and to reactivate the creative potential of its staff.

55. In short, not even the scantiest of outlines of reasons for the reform appears in this "summary of findings" or in the explanations given by the Under-Secretary-General in charge of DPI to various United Nations bodies and, in particular, to CPC on 27 May 1988. Such an outline is rather to be found in budget documents (A/C.5/43/1/Add.6 of 17 May 1988 and A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1 of 27 July 1988).

56. The programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989, for DPI, was drawn up and revised in the light of a separate programme structure incorporated in the medium-term plan (A/43/6 of 14 April 1988). It outlines the characteristics of the major programme and the three constituent subprogrammes (promotional services, information services and public services). It indicates the legislative references and the objectives to be pursued, the problems to be dealt with and the strategy adopted for the period 1984-1991. It thus appears that the definition of DPI policies did not precede but followed its restructuring.

57. It therefore follows, inter alia, that the breakdown of programme tasks between the various subprogrammes will not correspond to the distribution of functions previously formulated. Consequently, the subprogrammes will be fragmented and scattered among divisions and services, in accordance with the new organizational chart, but there will be no assurance that regrettable overlapping and duplication will be avoided.

58. The work of administrative reorganization has not been sufficiently co-ordinated with analysis of the strategic aspects of DPI policy. The proposed revisions of the medium-term plan and the programme budget were supposed to result from a thorough review of DPI's information activities. In fact, reorganization has been put into effect in accordance with consultation and discussion procedures which somewhat neglected records, written

communications and any form of administrative memorandum. Programming has had to take the restructuring into account and model itself accordingly. It followed restructuring instead of accompanying it.

C. The use of external consultants

59. At the beginning of 1987, DPI personnel had high hopes that, as a result of the appointment of a new Under-Secretary-General from the world of the media, fundamental changes could be made. They hoped that an affirmative answer could fairly quickly be given to the prejudicial question asked by the Secretary-General, who wanted to know whether the Department could not be improved, but "saved".

60. Those initial hopes and goodwill rapidly vanished and the new Under-Secretary-General's decision to use external consultants contributed somewhat to the disappointment. The fact that the consultants were in many cases of the same nationality as the Under-Secretary-General was not completely inadmissible since she felt that she could work more quickly and more efficiently on the implementation of the reform, for which she was responsible, with persons who enjoyed her confidence. The fact that in some cases they received favourable, but by no means excessive, remuneration for the services requested remained of little importance, given the relatively moderate amounts involved (\$370,000). Psychologically and technically speaking, the difficulty lay elsewhere and was less easy to overcome.

61. The external consultants selected by the Under-Secretary-General conducted their investigations with excessive concern for confidentiality and did not always deem it advisable to seek the views of DPI staff members. Their lack of familiarity with the mechanisms and traditions of the international civil service too often caused them to confuse an organization with a firm and to apply to DPI arguments that were more appreciated in business and advertising than within the context of the United Nations.

62. That it was necessary to reinvigorate DPI everyone agreed. Nevertheless, new methods should have been used only if they were adapted to a weakened administrative organ. There was a need for more diplomacy and less evidence of a "non-political" approach that might appear naive or out of place. The reorganization of DPI should have been accompanied by regular and continuous consultations with staff at all stages of the reform, but this was not done.

63. The qualifications of the consultants corresponded in some cases to the requirements of a restructuring exercise. Often they were ill-suited to the context of an international organization, but undoubtedly some tasks, instead of being entrusted to external consultants, could very well have been undertaken by experts available within the Secretariat or even to existing DPI staff members. From this standpoint, it would appear expensive and unproductive to call in an external consultant in order to undertake the review of the Department's organizational structures and management procedures (cost: \$45,000). And it seems curious that another outside consultant was appointed to supply full details on information problems in France (cost: \$18,000).

64. We would not go so far as to say that the very limited consultations with DPI staff were only the pretext for, and means of, retroactively legitimizing a previously prepared reform plan. The fact remains that the somewhat too

intensive use of external consultants and their sometimes immodest conduct may have contributed to the deterioration of morale among members of the Department. By arousing suspicion - not to say antipathy - in various quarters, from the outset they added to the reform programme difficulties that it is not easy to remove.

65. Of these studies entrusted to external consultants (review of administrative and management structures, overall review of DPI, review of products and possibilities of dissemination in the areas of radio and visual services, analysis and prospective research) it was not in fact possible for the Inspector to find the slightest trace in writing, either in the form of a report or in the form of a memorandum or note. This makes the staff's suspicion all the easier to understand and sheds curious light on certain working methods. Although implementation of the reform required discretion, that did not prevent preparatory documents from being duly prepared and being used for reference purposes in the effective analysis for which the external consultants had been called in.

66. A final consultant was appointed to develop DPI's external relations with the media and business communities. In the perspective within which the new Under-Secretary-General found herself, such a mission spread over seven months might have proved extremely useful. It is nevertheless regrettable that, as the person concerned has himself admitted, any lessons or conclusions he may have drawn from his contacts have not been set down in a memorandum.

III. THE JUMBLE AND INCONSISTENCIES OF CO-ORDINATION ACTIVITIES

A. The ambiguous situation of the Director of CLAS

67. At the highest level of the Department, some innovations can only be welcomed. The concern for increased prestige and greater credibility for the United Nations has thus led to the establishment of the Executive Media Service, which is headed by the spokesman for the Secretary-General. In addition to the spokesman's traditional functions, this new unit should provide stronger information and media support for the Secretary-General and for other senior Secretariat officials.

68. Whether in technical counselling or public relations, selective documentation or use of the audio-visual media, the Executive Media Service therefore has to act as a manager in an ongoing electoral campaign, as a privileged assistant in multilateral diplomacy and as a director for publicity that is properly understood. Only the position of the deputy spokesman, or the official acting as such, should be clarified in terms of that of the Director of the Information Centre in Washington in order to avoid possible conflicts and friction harmful to the Organization as a whole in the capital of a Member State in which it is particularly important to speak with one voice. However, existing problems now seem to have been solved and, since late 1988, EMS officials have been going to Washington only to prepare for visits and interviews by the Secretary-General.

69. The role, the place in the organizational structure and the consolidation of heterogeneous functions in the Division for Committee Liaison and Administrative Services (CLAS) are, however, open to many objections. CLAS's task is to supply support for the Department's executive and administrative functions and, at the same time, co-ordinate and harmonize the Management of

the Department's human and financial resources. In this regard (A/C.5/43/1/Add.6 and ST/SGB/Organization/DPI), the Director assists the USG in his/her consultations with Governments and delegations as well as with specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system on matters falling within the scope of DPI. He also assists the USG in the formulation of draft medium-term plans and biennial programmes of work.

70. Hence it is difficult to see how these functions of the Director of CLAS can, in the absence of co-ordination, be tied in with those of the head of the Office of the USG. According to the same documents, the latter is not only required to act as a chef de cabinet but also to assist the USG in DPI management and policy formulation. Splitting up co-ordination functions in this way between the Office of the Under-Secretary-General and the Director of CLAS does not meet the frequently repeated demands for consistency.

71. Moreover, instead of being directly subordinate to the USG, as in the earlier arrangement, the Executive Office is now separated and placed on the same footing as the other divisions and services. This choice and the resulting structure are not rational and also openly conflict with recommendation 40 of the Group of Experts that the functions of the Executive Office "in each department" should be consolidated into the office of the head of the department so as to form "a compact and streamlined unit".

72. A mixture of ill-assorted functions within CLAS makes the separation between the Office of the USG and the Executive Office still more questionable when the head of the Executive Office is at the same time the director of a division of the usual kind. CLAS combines administrative and financial services, personnel management and specific evaluation and liaison functions. As defined in document ST/SGB/Organization/DPI, the explicit policy functions of the Director of CLAS, who is to act as a kind of chef de cabinet for the USG, are difficult to reconcile with straightforward administrative functions.

73. CLAS has also inherited some of the functions of the Planning, Programming and Evaluation Unit previously subordinate to the USG. As newly defined, these functions are:

(a) To monitor and evaluate DPI's information programmes and report on them to the USG;

(b) To work out criteria for regular evaluation of the public's impressions and needs;

(c) To conduct any qualitative evaluations, public opinion research and media analyses necessary for this purpose;

(d) To provide, in co-operation with the Central Evaluation Unit, for any co-ordination and guidance necessary for self-evaluation exercises in DPI.

74. Combining the functions of audience and expectations evaluation and impact monitoring with the functions of information programmes evaluation does not pose any difficulties. Incorporating them in a division that is responsible for financial and human resources management is perhaps, admissible. Nevertheless, it would seem more logical to assign them to an Executive Office that would itself be directly subordinate to the USG.

75. As the preferred tool for co-ordinating self-evaluation operations and for monitoring programme implementation and follow-up, evaluation is the responsibility of the head of DPI, without anyone in between. The important thing is that, outside the division and at the same level, the Executive Office and the Evaluation Unit, whether incorporated in it or not, should be in a position to act in direct touch with the USG in charge of the Department.

B. Interference between CLAS and BPO

76. It is difficult for the functions of co-ordinating the Department's policy to be properly linked between the Office of the USG and the Director of CLAS. But it is even harder to reconcile them with those of the Director of the recently established Bureau of Programme Operations (BPO). This Bureau is not only required to oversee and co-ordinate the tasks of three new units responsible for promoting, supplying and distributing public information products and services. Under the 1987 plan to revamp the Department, the Bureau also establishes the long-term priorities for each of these units, assists the directors in their day-to-day work and resolves any conflicts.

77. In these co-ordinating functions, the Director of BPO should act as the USG's deputy and alternate. The head of the Office of the USG and the Directors of CLAS and BPO, are assigned co-ordination functions that overlap, and hence the problem arises of co-ordinating the co-ordinators, a problem that does not seem to be particularly easy to solve. By the end of 1988, no official had yet been appointed to head BPO. The Department's administrative life has been made easier, but the question of principle remains and BPO, however theoretical it may seem, has not yet disappeared from the organizational chart.

78. Various United Nations bodies have not failed to criticize the inconsistency in a structure which does not clearly establish the scope of the activities of CLAS and BPO. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has already had occasion to call BPO into question (ACABQ/A/43/651), at least in its present form. In challenging an innovation that complicates DPI's hierarchical organization and makes it unwieldy, the Committee recommended to the Secretary-General that the question should be reviewed. In connection with the relationship between BPO and CLAS, the Chairman went so far as to speak of duplication of work.

79. In this regard, the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) also expressed concern and asked for clarification of BPO's functions (A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1/Add.1). The Post Review Group, too, noted that the Director of BPO seemed to be in charge of a very small administrative unit consisting of three staff members, whereas he was to supervise three larger units, each headed by directors at D.2 level.

80. There was no longer any question of heading the BPO with an ASG (as initially proposed by the head of DPI) or even a director at the D.2 level. A year after the reform, the post of Director of BPO was still vacant. Either the USG had come to question the real value of the post or seen that it was a body she could save on and possibly use as a bargaining chip when it proved necessary to hold on to sectors or posts less difficult to defend. In any event, it is gratifying that the Post Review Group indirectly decided on the elimination of BPO by recommending that it should simply be absorbed by the Office of the USG.

C. The downgrading of liaison with the Committees

81. The shortcomings in co-ordination, which stem from the relations between BPO, CLAS and the Office of the USG, are of some importance. Assigning CLAS the functions of liaison with the Committee on Information and JUNCIC helps to make them still worse. These functions are not simply a response to the demands of co-ordination: they also have a distinctly policy side to them. Incorporating them in an administrative unit is all the more unfortunate in that tasks which previously fell to a Committee Secretariat are now split up among other divisions.

82. In resolution 36/149, the General Assembly had called for a stronger role for JUNCIC, which it had described as "the essential instrument for interagency co-ordination and co-operation in the field of public information". To enable JUNCIC to function more effectively, the Assembly had decided to create one Professional post (P.5) and one General Services post (G.4) to act as a secretariat in DPI. This decision, taken in 1981, had never been challenged and the General Assembly constantly hailed the efforts and achievements of JUNCIC, whose essential role it continued to praise.

83. In the system thus established, the Committee Secretariat came under the responsibility of one single official, who was fully able to meet two requirements, namely coherent presentation of United Nations positions in interagency discussions, and close follow-up of joint projects (publication of Development Forum, liaison services with NGOs in New York and Geneva, annual plans on priority topics, ad hoc task forces).

84. Under the 1987 reform, the responsibilities of that unified secretariat directly subordinate to the Office of the USG are now split up between CLAS, BPO, the Communications and Project Management Service (CPMS) and the new Dissemination Division and Information Centres Division. CLAS includes a Committee Liaison Unit, which performs both technical and policy tasks. For example, it provides secretariat services for the Committee on Information and for JUNCIC, which is headed by the USG. It also has to provide the necessary liaison with experts and intergovernmental bodies so that the Department's policies conform to mandates and are in line with the policies of the specialized agencies and of United Nations system programmes.

85. However, these functions performed by CLAS by no means cover all of the field that previously fell to the Committee Secretariat. It has been split up among other units in a quite muddled fashion. BPO is intended to supervise the flow of media products for, inter alia, the NGOs, whereas CPMS is intended to supply support for liaison services with the NGOs.

86. From now on, it will be the task of the new Dissemination Division, and not the Committee Secretariat, to keep its contacts, which include first and foremost the specialized agencies, educational institutions and NGOs, abreast of the public information and media activities of the United Nations. A section of the Dissemination Division will be specially responsible for keeping up such contacts and supplying the NGOs with logistic support. Similarly, the Information Centres Division will keep up and strengthen relations with local NGOs.

87. The break-up of the old Committee Secretariat, so that its functions are dispersed and even wholly scattered, impedes the ongoing objective of a common approach to the public information problems of the United Nations family. It could also be prejudicial to the reliability and credibility of the head of DPI, who cannot forget the fact that she is still the chairman of JUNIC.

88. Co-ordination of the United Nations family's information system is a mandate JUNIC cannot escape. Hence it would be dangerous to diminish the effectiveness and the scope of the functions of the Secretariat that is the instrument for such co-ordination, either by mutilating its powers or assigning them to too many bodies and thereby weakening them.

89. A review of the functions of CLAS and the other divisions concerned should therefore be undertaken to take better account of the specificity of the role of the Committee Secretariat and turn it to good account by consolidating part of the functions it had prior to 1987. The logic of a restructuring of the USG's cabinet means that a Secretariat re-formed in this way will have to be placed directly under an Executive Office that is itself separate from the administrative and financial management services.

D. Need for a reappraisal of the role of JUNIC

90. According to the people who promoted the reform of DPI, the difference between the old and the new formulas lies not in the disappearance or in the creation of functional units, which have chiefly been changed in terms of structure. The difference stems from a principle whereby the important thing is to make the system more dynamic rather than streamline it. The reform is a less administrative and more technical, if not professional, approach to the problems of public information. Without detracting too much from a spirit of public service, the reform endeavours to combine such a spirit with the habits of the media world and makes no great effort to find out how stable the mixture is. Such concepts are not without merit. But then, there is no need to re-invent the wheel.

91. As the head of DPI, the USG is at the same time the chairman of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC). She can expect to make the subprogrammes that are her responsibility much more effective in her position as chairman of JUNIC, rather than in her position as the superior of the Director of CPMS. A reform cannot succeed when it lays emphasis on the notions of co-ordination and renewal, targeting and the long-term, yet underestimates, whether or not deliberately, the role JUNIC has played and continues to play, as much from its own dynamism as from the mandates assigned to it by the General Assembly.

92. JUNIC is the recognized body instructed to co-ordinate public information policies in the United Nations. Happily, JUNIC's chairman is also the head of DPI and the secretariat is provided by the Department, in accordance with the express wish of the General Assembly. It would therefore seem logical and practical for this Committee, which is the focal point of the requisite lines of convergence, to act as the preferred tool to achieve greater dynamism.

93. A draft plan of action prepared for JUNIC at its fifteenth session clearly pointed to the fact that DPI's mandates and those of the Committee (CCINU/1988/R.13/Add.1) did not clash. It emphasizes the concepts of system-wide co-operation and co-ordination in public information. It expresses the hope that mutual support will be combined with a

multidisciplinary approach. It refuses to be merely an intellectual exercise. It seeks to rationalize information activities and maximise the impact by proposing a more appropriate presentation of priority issues to potential audiences.

94. The action plan points out that, under the mandates assigned to JUNIC by the General Assembly, it is for the secretariat made available to JUNIC by the Department to formulate all proposals for joint action and to keep the members of the Committee regularly informed of other activities. It thus displays a concern to encourage the endeavour to co-ordinate ongoing projects.

95. On the basis of these principles, the preparatory action plan proposed that the chairman of JUNIC should have an advisory group that would be delegated the task of preparing technical documents and position papers to be submitted for discussion by the Committee.

96. This preparatory document does not seem to have been taken up by the officials concerned. It nonetheless affords a worthwhile point of departure and deserves to be used later with a view to better defining the linkages and focal points of genuine co-ordination of public information.

IV. COMPLEXITY OF THE LINKAGES BETWEEN PROMOTION AND MEDIA PRODUCTION

A. Programming and promotion

97. An examination of the relations and the interference between CLAS, BPO, the Office of the USG and various services or units which come under them shows that, in the name of co-ordination and consistency, the 1987 reform introduced into the upper echelons of DPI not so much order as confusion. By creating superfluous levels of management, by displacing and dispersing or consolidating functions and powers with some arbitrariness, the reform contributes very little to an efficient administrative machine. It opens up many opportunities for rivalry and conflict between fields of responsibility which often overlap because they have not been defined in sufficiently clear terms. Hence the setting for any attempt to make DPI's activities more dynamic will be questionable.

98. The head of the Department frequently emphasized the importance she attached to the Communications and Project Management Service (CPMS). She saw it as the most significant element and the anchor of the whole reform. The success or failure of the experiment would lie in this newly established service, linked to the USG through BPO. By means of CPMS, greater dynamism in information activities, and consequently DPI's structures, was to go hand in hand with the multimedia approach to priorities and the relevant mandates.

99. The task of CPMS is, first of all, to devise strategies and carry out appropriate multimedia public information plans to promote a better knowledge and informed understanding of the priority problems of the United Nations. The initial idea is very laudable. Instead of responding time and again over the short run in politically sensitive areas, at the risk of dissipating its efforts in the scattered events of a changing news scene, DPI intends to act over the medium term by information campaigns it launches or provides the framework for.

100. To achieve this objective, CPMS has to set up a database for interested institutions, NGOs, press people, radio and film producers and individuals actively engaged in promoting priority issues. It also has to maintain and foster close working contacts with specialized agencies and the Secretariat departments dealing with these issues, and also plan and organize various promotional events and ceremonies.

101. Document ST/SGB/Organization/DPI slightly altered the terms of the plan for revamping DPI, so that the establishment of the above database and the tasks of monitoring United Nations activities connected with priority issues are shifted from CPMS to BPO. Under the terms of the same document, CPMS is also responsible for arrangements for co-production and joint promotion ventures as well as for activities financed jointly or totally by extra-budgetary resources. Accordingly, CPMS is the focal point for all publicity- or commercial-type operations for modernizing the image of the United Nations, without harming its institutional respectability. CPMS, under subprogramme 1, is also required to establish a system for consistency of style in United Nations information products.

102. Initially, CPMS consisted of five sections, three of them for special theme-oriented programming (human rights and self-determination, development, peace and security). A fourth section, the Special Programmes Section, was to deal with educational and journalist training programmes, the high points of the General Assembly and special observances, internal programmes and all other projects that could be assigned to DPI.

103. A general-purpose Communications Services Section completed the CPMS set-up. This was intended to engage in the necessary co-ordination but also to function as a promotional agency, an agency for public relations with the Secretariat and the media and a centre of multidisciplinary creativity (artistic design, rewrites, exhibitions, events). It was also intended to provide logistic support for some projects prepared in the world of the media or the NGOs and to provide the financial and technical arrangements required for some information products.

104. The Human Rights and Self-Determination Programmes Section covered projects concerning decolonization and Palestine, Namibia, apartheid and racial discrimination, as well as self-determination and human rights. The Development Programmes Section was in charge of economic and social development and the environment, the New International Economic Order, the New World Information and Communication Order and the advancement of women. The Peace and Security Programmes Section dealt with various aspects of peace and security (safeguarding and restoring peace, disarmament).

B. Destructuring and restructuring of theme-oriented sections

105. To demonstrate that the new CPMS formula was superior, it was argued that the previous structure made for scattered projects, managed by different divisions. Economic and social projects fell to DESI, the question of Palestine to the Press and Publications Division, the question of apartheid to the Radio and Visual Services Division, and the question of Namibia to the Office of the USG. In addition, a project manager was not in a position to deal with the programme components as a whole (media allocation, timetable, budget appropriations, public receptiveness).

106. Regardless of the value of this reorganization and the intentions of its advocates, CPC felt the need to express concern at the absence of a separate unit or units for Palestine, Namibia and apartheid (A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1). To avoid any misunderstanding about these questions, which were deemed to be of paramount importance, the Secretary-General went on to propose two possible solutions: either establish a Special Programming Section for Palestine, Namibia and apartheid in CPMS, or include a "Programmes Unit" for Namibia and apartheid in the Radio Section of the new Information Products Division.

107. If the first solution was chosen, one single section would deal with both human rights and development, another would cover the questions of Palestine, Namibia and apartheid, but the restructuring of the CPMS sections would end there. With the second solution, it was proposed that the question of Palestine would remain with CPMS and that the questions of Namibia and apartheid could fall to a subsection of the Radio and Television Service of the Information Products Division. Going beyond that choice, various delegations had even advanced the idea of making BPO directly responsible for information on these three questions.

108. In mid-1988, the first solution won out, but on two conditions: the three questions were to be covered by a special section in CPMS, and the related information tasks were to be co-ordinated to the Director of BPO. BPO's role had been challenged in the meanwhile, and so the USG in charge of DPI submitted further proposals. After taking the view that CPMS afforded broad scope for some necessary redefinitions, the Post Review Group proposed that the Human Rights and Self-Determination Programmes Section and the Development Programmes Section should be merged. It also proposed that the programmes on peace and security should be assigned to the Special Programmes Section, at the risk of making the Section's tasks even more heterogeneous.

109. A mere review of these hesitations and the attempts to restructure CPMS would seem to show that the theme-oriented sections were not initially divided up with sufficient political caution. Nor did the establishment of these sections take into account the existence of the mandates and functions of United Nations bodies working on similar priorities. Hence the adjustments, co-ordination and co-operation that should have accompanied the reform were not properly thought out.

110. In CPMS the same importance is attached to four theme-oriented programming sections, grouped under criteria which have already been changed a number of times, and a multifunctional section in charge of helping to promote United Nations media products through joint services or products. Known as the Communications Services Section, its role is one of guidance and promotion. In this regard, it does not operate at the same level, or under the same modalities, as the other four divisions.

111. The Post Review Group therefore rightly proposed that this Communications Services Section should be done away with and that its functions should be assigned to the Office of the Director of CPMS. An administrative unit headed by someone who is the equal of the heads of the four theme-oriented sections cannot bring about greater dynamism, which involves a higher position in the hierarchy, some administrative power that is exercised at a higher level.

112. Accordingly, it would be normal for the task of programme formulation and co-ordination, in liaison with the "project managers" of the theme-oriented sections, to fall to the Director of CPMS, who would be provided with greater facilities, rather than to a chief in the promotional services, who is subordinate to him. It is not possible, in the name of more dynamic structures, to escape certain elementary administrative distinctions between programming and promotion, horizontal and vertical relations, co-ordination and management.

C. CPMS and IPD relations

113. With the reform's multimedia approach to public information, it seemed logical from the outset to consolidate and co-ordinate DPI's various communication elements and instruments in a single Information Products Division. The new division thus combines the functions of two divisions which previously covered press and publications on the one hand, and the audio-visual side on the other. It now consists of three Services (News Coverage, Publications, Electronic Magazines and Features, i.e. radio and television) and two Sections (Production Services, Language Adaptation). The Electronic Magazines and Features Service itself is made up of a Video and Films Section and a Radio Section, which could include three subsections (central programming, regional programmes, programmes on Namibia and apartheid).

114. The former News Coverage and Publications Services which are now part of the new Division call for no special comments. The News Coverage Service provides daily coverage of United Nations activities. It prepares and issues summaries of most United Nations meetings in both working languages of the Secretariat. It prepares and issues professional press releases on selected activities of interest to news agencies. It issues weekly news summaries and provides photographic coverage of selected activities in the system. The Publications Service creates and produces all DPI's periodic publications. Both of these services for printed matter continue, in a new administrative framework, to perform functions which have not changed and cannot change a great deal, since qualitative improvements in this regard depend more on financial and human resources than on the institutional environment.

115. The Electronic Magazines and Features Service produces, for the widest possible distribution, radio and television feature programmes on the work and purposes of the United Nations, taking into account international and regional concerns. The Production Services Section provides technical and logistic support and maintains libraries for DPI's media products. The Language Adaptation Section provides language adaptation services to the News Coverage, Publications and Electronic Magazines and Features Services.

116. From the somewhat commercial standpoint of the product, midway between preparing it upstream and distributing it downstream, it would seem quite consistent to group all the printed and audio-visual media services in one single division. But this reasoning leaves aside the differences, from the standpoint of communication, between printed and audio-visual materials, and from the standpoint of information, between printed and radio and television material.

117. Messages differ, depending on the means used to convey them. Under the previous structure, DPI had properly grasped this truism, at the risk of

pushing the compartmentalization of the media too far. The new structure, however, has been too busy trying to eliminate this kind of danger, at the risk of consolidating within a single production unit, under the same director, heterogeneous services which are entirely dissimilar in terms of how long they last, of targets and audiences, methods, design and modalities of distribution.

118. Under these conditions, the particular relationship between the Information Products Division and CPMS will involve some difficulty. In the theme-oriented sections of CPMS, a project manager has first to propose a preliminary programme. But he also has to co-ordinate the operations for implementation with his colleagues in the Information Products Division, as well as with professionals and experts in other Secretariat centres or departments. Lastly, it is his task to mark out the targets and audiences, to identify the appropriate media and to monitor the implementation of the programme.

119. Admittedly, it is specified that the project manager, who comes under CPMS in administrative terms, is head of the project, but he is not the superior of the other officials called upon to help carry out the project. They still come under the supervision of their own directors. The approach to programme promotion is more collective than individual, but must none the less respect the separation of powers as between the divisions.

120. Brought together at the initiative and in the framework of the theme-oriented sections of CPMS, multidisciplinary teams will therefore include the project manager, the media designers from the Communications Services Section and the specialists and technicians from the Information Products Division, the Dissemination Division and the United Nations Information Centres Division. These exchanges will result in the programme itself and the only thing left to do will be to pass it on to the three divisions for them to act on it.

D. A cumbersome and confusing process of
media project implementation

121. In the plan to revamp DPI, the arrangements for implementing a project highlight the extreme complications of a process that has to combine the exigencies of producing services which are to some extent commercial with the institutional constraints of an international public service. The question therefore arises of the relevance of a system which, since it cannot restructure everything from top to bottom, is compelled to reconcile both of these aspects, which are not contradictory but are in no sense complementary.

122. Under this system, a preliminary project is prepared by the project manager, either under ongoing programmes and subprogrammes, or at the express request of the General Assembly, or on special request by a Secretariat department or by an agency. In liaison with the Director of CPMS, the project manager determines the level of priority, the purposes and objectives, the budget and the evaluation criteria. The chief of the Communications Services Section then brings together the project team. He calls on specialists, who are available to him, and on representatives of the divisions concerned. He thus develops a "creative" strategy and, at the same time, determines the components for project implementation, the budget needs and the responsibilities of each member of the project team.

123. Once this work of preparation is completed, the project is submitted for approval by the Director of CPMS and, in some cases, by the USG. Where appropriate, it will also be submitted for approval by the "customer", i.e. a Secretariat department, a specialized agency or even the General Assembly. The project manager and the preparation team make sure that the budget package and the timetable are respected. But it is understood that the "customer" can step in during various stages in shaping the project and that its express approval, after the media product is produced, may be required before it is distributed. In addition, the project manager is responsible for monitoring project implementation, but the Dissemination Division evaluates it and discusses its impact and the feedback, in liaison with the customer.

124. The readiness to integrate and co-ordinate, which reigns over this system in which CPMS has a key role, encounters a serious obstacle in this connection. The reform has refused or feared to draw all of the inferences from this principle. CPMS, treated as the mainspring and vector for the other operational divisions, is placed on the same level as they are. It has no budget authority over them, nor is it given the slightest administrative pre-eminence.

125. The project implementation process will suffer all the more in that the system opens up ample room for rivalry between the chiefs of the theme-oriented sections in CPMS and the chiefs of the media sections in the Information Products Division (IPD). This applies not only to the formation of project teams but also sporadic intervention by any customers or to the definition of areas of competence. A project's lifespan consists of eight phases. It would be a mistake to think that it is a one-way thing and that, over and above any internal quarrels and the clumsiness of the procedure, the actual preparation of the message can withstand the simplifying rigidity and rudimentary logic of this system.

126. In this field, the reform has to some extent disregarded the intellectual development involved in any creative work in general and the launching of media projects in particular. DPI's administrative organization is now chiefly subject to the criterion of the functional allocation of tasks (planning, production, dissemination), whereas it is difficult to carve up any flow of information, any process of communication, into functional slices. Not only is the circuit too long and too complex, but it will be hard to keep to rules which, for reasons of elementary efficiency, will very soon have to be sidestepped or broken.

127. The establishment of a project team does indeed tend to offset the drawbacks of a one-way implementation process. But the reform does not explain sufficiently how it would be possible to distinguish in practice between the programming and the production phases. Any plan is prepared in the light of the available means and the known limits of production. The necessary interplay, the back and forth, the constant action and response, call for modifications in plans which will act as overall guidelines but which will always be changed many times.

128. It is also specified that requests may be made at any time from Secretariat departments or from specialized agencies, but in meeting them the order for planning subprogrammes on priority issues will inevitably be upset to some extent. In addition, to and sometimes to the detriment of, campaigns prepared over the long term, CPMS will thus have to respond, one by one, to

requests it has not included in its schedules. Thus, the requirement of integrated multimedia programming is clearly relativized, inasmuch as questions will often arise about the formation of teams and the availability of some of their members from different divisions.

129. While the distinction between the notions of promotion and production involves no ambiguity, the way they are actually covered in CPMS and IPD could act more as a spur to competition and duplication than to co-operation in keeping to established fields of activity. The promotion services now tend to overlap with the production services in the name of a new distinction between "noble" work and routine work, between financing from budgetary resources, which is by definition mediocre, and financing from extra-budgetary resources, which is by definition more comprehensive.

130. According to document ST/SGB/Organization/DPI, in addition to exhibitions, events and celebrations, the Communications Services Section of CPMS develops "promotional materials", which explicitly include books, pamphlets and press kits. Under vague criteria for the allocating functions, CPMS will therefore compete in these fields with IPD's News Coverage Service and Publications Service.

131. Similarly, CPMS, not IPD, will be responsible for creating or acquiring artistic or graphic designs and making the necessary arrangements for DPI's external printing and publications. CPMS will provide the project managers with technical assistance in promotion and relations with the world of the media. It alone will handle exhibitions, although these are services that are difficult to separate from those provided by IPD.

132. The criterion for the distinction between promotion and production often advanced in the 1987 reform thus gives way to a system whereby tasks would be split up among the divisions, in terms of whether they were more or less arbitrarily judged as being more or less creative and/or rewarding. CPMS, which already has various responsibilities in regard to production, will thus tend to set up machinery for final production that is tied in with spheres of competence it develops at the expense of IPD. It could enter into competition with IPD or even do without its services, in as much as it will be possible for it to deliver media products financed by extra-budgetary resources, since its task is to bring together and to keep an eye on such funding. It is a situation that is both confusing and liable to create internal conflicts and questionable overlapping, a situation that deserves to be cleared up.

V. DUPLICATION AND OVERLAPPING IN THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

A. Break-up of the former External Relations Division

133. The breaking-up of the former External Relations Division into two new entities, one concerned with dissemination of information and the other with the United Nations Information Centres (UNICs), considerably alters the overall organization of the Department. It would seem, however, that the need for rationalization and for development of a more dynamic organization, often stressed by the head of DPI, has been completely ignored in this instance. The creation of the United Nations Information Centres Division meets an obvious need for co-ordination and supervision of the work of the UNICs, which are the major channels for the dissemination of public information. There seems to be far less need, however, for a Dissemination Division.

134. The new Dissemination Division seems in fact more like a sort of holdall than an administrative entity with a specific function and clearly defined tasks. An examination of the functions which its unit, service and sections are supposed to perform soon reveals an excess of duplication. The fact that this Division could readily be broken up and its functions transferred elsewhere in the Department demonstrates that maintenance of the Division, while not harmful, is certainly of little utility and leads rapidly to the conclusion that the Division should be done away with.

135. According to document ST/SGB/Organization/DPI, the function of the Dissemination Division (DD) is to activate the network of interlocutors and partners of the organization, which are also distributors of its information products. The DD addresses both the general public and the NGOs, the specialized agencies and the various written and audio-visual media. The primary functions of the Dissemination Division are to ensure the widest possible access for provision of these services and to ensure the timely receipt of the information products by the parties concerned.

136. The Dissemination Division is also responsible for the management and financial control of pouch services and for the packing and transport of information products. It is responsible for holding briefings for United Nations officials and orientation courses for press and documentation officers assigned to the United Nations Information Centres. It also has to organize regional meetings of Information Centre directors and information meetings for UNDP Resident Representatives.

137. The Dissemination Division comprises an Information Dissemination Service, a Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit, an Institutional Relations and NGO Section and a Public Services Section. This organizational structure is not particularly coherent and the distribution of functions between the Dissemination Service, the Unit and the two Sections is not very logical either.

138. The Information Dissemination Service:

- co-ordinates the distribution of information materials to Member States, the media, specialized agencies of the United Nations system, United Nations Information Centres and non-governmental organizations;
- maintains mailing lists of NGOs, media agencies and potential re-disseminators for easy and quick reference for promotional purposes;
- develops data bases for the operation of an electronic mail system;
- surveys UNICs and NGOS regularly to determine their needs and interests with a view to ensuring an efficient and targeted distribution;
- establishes arrangements with external publications for the production and distribution of United Nations information products, as appropriate.

139. The Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit is of a quite different nature. It provides logistic support (work space, technical assistance, facilities) to media representatives at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The staff

of the Unit supervises the press correspondents and accompanies film and television teams visiting Headquarters. It has considerable responsibility in the area of security, as its technical teams work close to Heads of State and Government. Its role is therefore important. This role should be efficiently performed, however, and the new arrangements are perhaps not the best means of ensuring this.

140. From a practical standpoint it would be more desirable for this Unit to be attached to the Office of the spokesman for the Secretary-General (EMS) than for it to form part of the Dissemination Division. The division of media responsibilities between these two divisions only complicates the task of the press, radio and television correspondents. Under the present system, they cannot take action as a group or discuss in a single office matters relating to accreditation, technical aspects of their work and the routine facilities they are entitled to expect from the Department of Public Information. It would seem well worth while, therefore, to integrate this unit into EMS. In view of its contacts, practices, expertise and position, EMS is in every way better equipped than the Dissemination Division to satisfy the professional requirements of the media.

141. In addition to the Information Dissemination Service and the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit, there is a unit responsible for maintaining continuous relations with the NGOs and keeping the specialized agencies informed of DPI's information activities. This section plans and organizes communication with institutions and agencies that share common aims and purposes with the United Nations. It provides accreditation for and briefings to their representatives and to working groups. Document A/C.5/43/1/Add.6 refers, inter alia, to training and orientation programmes for representatives of the NGOs, joint publication activities, updating of publications for their use and surveys of their organization and methods.

142. The Dissemination Division also includes a Public Services Section whose main function is to organize visits to the various United Nations Offices (an average of 100,000 visitors annually in Geneva and 500,000 to 1 million in New York). This section plays a far from minor role, having regard to the financial income it produces, its promotion of ideals and the educational task it performs. It operates the guided tours and issues relevant directives. It arranges programmes for visiting groups and handles requests for information received from the public by letter or telephone call. It makes Secretariat speakers available to schools, associations and universities. It advises on the organization of conferences, providing necessary facilities and materials.

143. The usefulness of this Section is not questioned, but its position in the organizational structure of the Department and its attachment to the Dissemination Division do not correspond to any particular need. Depending on whether it is desired to emphasize the promotional or the relational aspect of the services provided, consideration might be given to transferring the Section to CLAS, to CPMS or to the United Nations Information Centres Division.

B. Establishment of a new Information Centres Division

144. Besides the Dissemination Division, the successor to the DPI's former External Relations Division, it was deemed advisable to set up a new United Nations Information Centres Division with responsibility for rationalizing and reviving the external services network. The role, position

and reorganization of the UNICs is dealt with in a supplementary report. However, it is necessary, at this point, to examine the relationship between the Dissemination Division and the new Information Centres Division.

145. The new Division comprises a Centres Operations Service, a Policy and Programmes Section and a United Nations Information Centres and Services Section whose work is divided between four regional offices. The functions of its Director are:

- to serve as a channel for communication between Headquarters and the Centres, to supervise and support the latter and to arrange regular rotation of their Directors;
- to disseminate information to and from the Centres in co-operation with the Office for Research and the Collection of Information (ORCI), which is directly attached to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General;
- to co-ordinate arrangements for the collaboration of the Centres with offices of United Nations programmes and organizations in the field and, where necessary, to provide liaison with Member States.

146. The Division's Policy and Programmes Section provides all necessary directives on policy and programmes, ensures consistency and quality in field services, updates an operating manual and provides training programmes for the Directors, officers and other staff of the Centres. It plays a major role in the organization of meetings of Centre directors and works with them in designing appropriate promotional material. It also has to seek extrabudgetary financial support for UNIC-related ventures.

147. The reform of DPI's dissemination system therefore had two objectives. Reorganization of the Dissemination Division's various functions was combined with an effort to make relations with the UNICs autonomous through the establishment of a new division. Distribution and related functions, which were formerly divided among all the divisions, have now been concentrated in a single Dissemination Division. This Division being the necessary transit point for transmission of the department's products to the public, it was deemed advisable to include in its functions relations with the NGOs and other agencies pursuing objectives similar to those of the United Nations.

148. Still in accordance with the purposes which the promoters of the reorganization sought to achieve, a new Information Centres Division was made responsible for reorganizing the Information Centres and carrying out, as an extension of the reform at Headquarters, a reform of the external services which would make the Headquarters reform fully effective. While the head of the Dissemination Division is placed, like the heads of CPMS and IPD, under the BPOs co-ordinating authority, the Director of the United Nations Information Centres Division reports directly to the head of DPI. The difficulty of the exercise seems thus not to have been taken into account. Planning for the dissemination of information products to be carried out within a specific division, while ignoring the question of the administrative management of Information Centres inevitably gives rise to serious difficulties.

C. The transfers and restructurings required

149. The criteria according to which responsibility for relations with the NGOs is allocated, within the Dissemination Division, are not clear. In certain cases these relations are the responsibility of the Information Dissemination Service and in others they are handled by the Institutional Relations and NGO Section. For example, the Service will be responsible for co-ordinating dissemination of information to the NGOs, but it will also be responsible for the NGO mailing lists and for surveys of their interests and requirements. The NGO Section, as its name implies, will be responsible for overall relations with the NGOs, but will also deal with accreditation of their representatives and for training and information of their staff.

150. This does not seem a very well ordered internal distribution of functions, but it seems even more irrational to keep the information centres network and the network of relations with the NGOs in separate divisions. As indicated in document ST/SGB/Organization/DPI, the Information Centres have to maintain a close working relationship with the media and educational institutions, but especially with the NGOs which are a particularly useful means of disseminating United Nations documents and promoting the purposes of the Organization.

151. The activities of the Information Centres and those of the NGOs are so interconnected that it is proving very difficult, under the new DPI organization, to separate them and assign them to different divisions. The Information Centres Division must, directly or indirectly, keep in touch with the work and activities of the NGOs, just as the Dissemination Division must know something about those of the Information Centres. As indicated in document A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1, the subprogramme "Promotional services" specifies that the Dissemination Division will "consolidate and co-ordinate information activities in the field with other members of the United Nations system". In doing so, however, the Dissemination Division will necessarily be overlapping with the Information Centres Division, which is entrusted with a similar task under the same subprogramme.

152. The Dissemination Division's Information Dissemination Service is responsible for co-ordinating distribution of information products, inter alia, to the United Nations Information Centres and for conducting surveys of the Centres and of the NGOs. It is difficult to see how the Dissemination Division would be able to develop its NGO mailing lists and data bases without the active support and help of the United Nations Information Centres. It is even more difficult to see why the Dissemination Division, rather than the Information Centres Division should have to provide training or orientation courses for the officers and directors of the United Nations Information Centres.

153. A desire to maintain individual posts clearly had some impact on the reform of the DPI's dissemination system. It has led to a dispersion and overlapping of functions which is highly prejudicial to its operations. The coexistence of two externally-oriented divisions entrusted with related and sometimes similar functions cannot fail to give rise to constant conflict between them. In the context of relations with the Department's other divisions, and particularly the Information Products Division (IPD), such duplication gives rise to constant difficulties. In the case of film distribution and television broadcasts, the competing, if not conflicting, presence of two interlocutors may prove extremely harmful.

154. The Information Centres Division carries out specific functions and co-ordinates the homogeneous activities of the network of United Nations Information Centres, which are both the external services of DPI and the focal points for dissemination of information products which the NGOs relay more effectively than local media and government information services. In order to simplify and rationalize a dissemination system which the coexistence of two divisions by no means strengthens, it will be necessary to break up the Dissemination Division and transfer its functions, which in some cases are quite diverse, to the various divisions of DPI.

155. The first consequence of such an overhaul of the Department's organizational structure would be the disappearance of the Dissemination Division. The elimination of this Division should be accompanied by measures along the following lines:

(a) Incorporation of the Institutional Relations and NGO Section of the Dissemination Division in the Information Centres Division.

(b) Transfer of the functions of the Dissemination Service of the Dissemination Division that relate to NGOs to the Institutional Relations and NGO Section, which should become part of the Information Centres Division.

(c) Integration of the thus reduced functions of the Information Dissemination Service either in the Centres Operations Service or in the Information Centres and Services unit of the Information Centres Division.

(d) Transfer of the Dissemination Division's Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit to the Office of the spokesman for the Secretary-General (EMS).

(e) Transfer of the Public Services Section to an administrative and financial division dissociated from the Executive Office of the head of DPI, or to the CPMS, or to the Information Centres Division.

VI. PARALLEL MANDATES AND REALLOCATION OF INFORMATION FUNCTIONS

A. The problem at the outset

156. In addition to DPI, which operates within the framework of the United Nations Secretariat, the specialized agencies and subsidiary bodies also possess information services of various sizes. The Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), whose chairman is the head of DPI, co-ordinates the information activities of these agencies of the United Nations system. Resolutions adopted annually by the General Assembly invite the Secretary-General to increase the efficiency of DPI, with particular emphasis on a "co-ordinated approach" to public information issues deemed to be of a priority nature.

157. The type of relations between the information services of the specialized agencies and DPI which need to be established or strengthened do not give rise to any special problems of competition or conflict. An exception to this is the case of UNESCO, some of whose functions duplicate those of DPI. Within or close to the Secretariat, however, there are a number of departments, offices, centres and units which prefer to make only partial use of the services of DPI and establish their own information machinery.

158. This is not a new situation. In a 1983 evaluation of the activities of DPI it was pointed out that since 1971 there had been increasing dispersion of public information functions and of the human and financial resources devoted to them (E/AC.51/1983). More recently it was calculated that the regional commissions and various departments, offices, centres and groups, other than the Department of Public Information, together devote 36 work-years annually to information activities (23 work-years of Professional staff time and 13 work-years of General Service staff time). Forty-two per cent of public information activities external to the Department were reported to be undertaken at Headquarters in New York and 33 per cent at the United Nations Office at Geneva, the remainder being distributed mainly among the regional commissions, the World Food Council and the United Nations Office at Vienna (A/43/651).

159. This situation was also noted by the Group of Experts which proposed, in paragraph (2) of its recommendation 37, that such information activities external to DPI should be consolidated in the department "to the extent possible". The General Assembly accordingly invited the Secretary-General to do everything possible to make DPI the focal point of United Nations information activities. A feasibility study on the necessary consolidation and co-ordination was to be carried out, with specific reference to the financial implications, as well as to the effectiveness of the operation in increasing the productivity of DPI.

160. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), having considered the question and the report on the feasibility of recommendation 37, noted the persistence of the factors hampering the consolidation of information activities in DPI and the negative conclusions of the review. Furthermore, the Department had indicated that until it had properly established its own organization it would not be able to take on additional responsibilities. The Secretary-General therefore proposed that a further review of the question should be undertaken "not earlier than 1992" (A/43/651).

161. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions accepted this argument, but remained nevertheless convinced of the need to continue the efforts undertaken. Disagreeing slightly with the Secretary-General and considering that prompt action was required, it urged that the further review referred to by the Secretary-General be undertaken "no later than 1992". It also expected that the Department of Public Information and the other offices involved in public information activities would strive for better co-operation among themselves "so that resources appropriated can be applied for optimum results".

162. In this area, any desire to achieve greater efficiency by avoiding any waste of human and financial resources comes up against a dual obstacle. The obstacle is both sociological, since any administration always seeks to survive and extend its area of competence, and legal, because the information activities performed by these bodies were assigned to them by the General Assembly. It is possible to effect savings on costs, but a mandate given cannot be ignored. Attempts at reorganization will in many cases conflict with the mandate and, as the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General points out, there is little or no possibility of the reorganization being successful.

163. Since 1987, therefore, the DPI has continued to adopt a waiting position. Its subprogramme 1 "Promotional services" provides for "regular contact" with other departments of the United Nations Secretariat "in the planning and implementation of public information activities" (A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1). The same subprogramme provides for consolidation and co-ordination of information activities in the field with other members of the United Nations system, "in order to improve efficiency". It calls for co-sponsored "demonstration projects" and "comprehensive campaigns" on priority issues. DPI is to provide part of the costs of joint productions and to associate the United Nations Information Centres more closely with the holding of events related to such issues.

164. Regardless of the formula employed, nothing more positive is envisaged than consultation and co-ordination which, while not excluding JUNIC, rarely mentions the role that Committee could play. In the opinion of the head of DPI, integration of approaches and dialogue within the CPMS promotion teams should, in the medium-term, mitigate the difficulties created by the lack of reorganization. While the existence of parallel mandates is fully recognized, without reorganization the distribution of responsibilities and information production between DPI and the other offices of the Secretariat leaves somewhat to be desired.

165. If it is not possible, in the medium-term, to consolidate all the Secretariat's information activities within DPI, then the consequences of the impossibility of action must at least be limited. The present impossibility of complying with recommendation 37 of the Group of Experts must not be interpreted as opening the door to more duplication and an increase in costly competition. It is therefore necessary to examine the main defects of the status quo and to consider certain practical remedies, without awaiting the 1992 time-limit set by ACABQ.

B. DPI and information on priority issues

166. In the case of such bodies as the office of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia, with its public information and media relations unit, the Centre Against Apartheid and the Division for Palestinian Rights, the information that is furnished relates to priority issues and the politically sensitive matters connected with those issues are the subject of special mandates given by the General Assembly. However, the information activities of these secretariat offices being the responsibility of a very limited number of specialists, the main responsibility for the information concerned should be assumed by DPI, as has been made clear in certain resolutions of the General Assembly.

167. On the recommendation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/66, DPI is requested "in full co-operation and co-ordination with the Committee" to continue its special information programme. The services which the Department has to provide thus range from dissemination of news to publication of brochures and from the holding of seminars or visits by journalists to radio programmes and television broadcasts.

168. Similarly, under resolution 42/114D, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to direct the Department of Public Information to assist the United Nations Council for Namibia in implementing its programme of

dissemination of information and to ensure that United Nations information activities on the question of Namibia conformed to the policy guidelines laid down by the Council. The same resolution requests that all of the activities relating to the dissemination of information on Namibia be grouped under a single heading in the section of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989 relating to the Department of Public Information. The Department is also to submit to the United Nations Council for Namibia a detailed report on the utilization of the allocated funds.

169. The distribution of responsibilities between the secretariat offices entrusted with tasks relating to priority issues and the Department itself does not give rise to any competition or conflict. In these offices, very small units, or a few officials only, deal with information activities. Their main concerns are explanation of the issues and the content of the information to be provided. Since these offices are not technically equipped to perform production and dissemination functions, it is logical that DPI should give them the necessary logistic and information-related support, in accordance with its general mandate and any special mandates.

170. It is of course clear that the "policy issue specialists" of the above-mentioned offices will retain full autonomy or will play a determining role in the public information field (organization of visits, regional seminars and relations with NGOs). However, if they are to work in close co-operation with the officials of DPI within the framework of the Programmes Sections of CPMS, it must be made clear that the development of products and services is the responsibility of DPI alone.

171. Having regard to the technical resources at the disposal of the various offices, it is inconceivable that there should be any competition between them and DPI. Nevertheless, in order to avoid any duplication, it should be expressly stipulated that the functions of production and dissemination of information (brochures, films, radio and television broadcasts, information kits, magazines) are the exclusive responsibility of the best-equipped department, namely DPI. Subject to any clarification which this principle may dictate, it will therefore be advisable to maintain the status quo in this area of the treatment of priority issues and mobilization of international public opinion in their support.

C. DPI and information on fundamental issues

172. If we examine the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Centre for Human Rights, UNCTAD, the Centre on Transnational Corporations or UNDP, we see that all these bodies have one common feature. They are concerned and deal with "fundamental" issues, which must be distinguished from what are known as "priority" issues. Priority issues involve political problems whose solution may be expected in the short term. By giving these issues prominence, the General Assembly has sought to accelerate the search for a solution. Fundamental issues, on the other hand, are of a structural and continuing nature. The information functions of the offices concerned must therefore be patterned accordingly and the question of their relations with DPI will be affected as a result.

173. While such issues as disarmament, human rights, world trade, transnational enterprises and economic and social development have important technical aspects, they nevertheless have a political content. The greater

this political content, the more the media have to concern themselves with these issues. It is therefore quite natural that the administrative offices concerned with these matters should establish services to provide relevant information. It is less logical, but almost inevitable, that they should eventually expand these services to the point where they may even be competing and in conflict with DPI.

174. Decentralization, which is inevitably carried too far and tends to result in dispersion, is in conflict here with consolidation which might lead to the furnishing of intellectually inferior information products. If no clear choice is made, the tendency will be towards achievement of a balance which will be as difficult to find as it is to maintain. Whatever the value of their political contribution and the substance of their message, those who have responsibility for the priority issues have very limited logistic and media resources at their disposal. Similarly, those responsible for the fundamental issues may be in a position to stress the special mandate with which they have been entrusted, but, if given greater information resources, they will take even more advantage of that mandate vis-à-vis and to the detriment of DPI.

175. The Department for Disarmament Affairs and its information section claim not only that it is only their officials specializing in disarmament matters who possess the thorough knowledge and background that enables them to produce useful material on the subject. They also stress the mandates arising from General Assembly resolutions, and give them as justification for their production of the Disarmament Yearbook (31/90), the launching of several periodicals (31/90, 32/87E, 37/100I, 33/71G) and various publications and pamphlets (39/63A, 37/100H, I and F).

176. There is no agreement covering the exchange of services between DPI and the Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA). The latter supplies relevant material, which may then be used in articles in periodicals or in the Yearbook, which are published by DPI. It provides, on request, lecturers or participants in talks and specialized meetings. DPI used to furnish logistic support to DDA, including the packaging of materials, sea shipment and distribution to the United Nations Information Centres, but, for the past three years, DDA has been doing this work itself because of DPI's chronic lack of financial resources.

177. In the case of UNCTAD the situation is similar. In their reply to DPI's questionnaire of 11 March 1987, the authorities of UNCTAD emphasized the technical nature of the matters dealt with by that organization and the trade and development experience required for any information work in this field. For daily contacts with specialist commentators and the negotiation or conclusion of agreements, appropriate information material must be provided by persons with appropriate skills. Resolutions of UNCTAD have confirmed this approach by inviting the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to intensify the information activities of the organization and thus to mobilize public opinion (10(II), 35(III), 36(III), 43(III)).

178. The preceding observations also apply substantially to the Centre on Transnational Corporations and UNDP. These bodies, one of whose tasks is the provision of public information on these fundamental issues, are in any event better equipped than is DPI to perform that task, both intellectually and in terms of documentary resources. In principle, they seek to reach world public

opinion, but in practice their true audiences are those who, individually or jointly, serve as their sources, institutional interlocutors or relays (NGO, academic circles, specialized media, delegations of Member States, international officials). They therefore dialogue with an informed public which is more readily convinced by sound arguments than by an attractive presentation or simplifications which are liable to distort the message.

179. In view of the fact that written texts are the best media for transmission of such material, a dividing line cannot readily be drawn between the information activities of DPI and those of these organizations. The latter should be given exclusive responsibility for written documentation, publications, pamphlets and periodicals, and similar products should therefore not be included in DPI's subprogrammes.

180. DPI should play a role in the area of fundamental issues only in those cases where it is necessary to address general sectors of world public opinion, to launch multi-media campaigns, or to co-produce and finance pilot projects. For these purposes it will be necessary to resort to "heavy" audio-visual media which, for financial and obvious technical reasons, must be concentrated in DPI.

181. Since there can be no question of any regrouping of information activities and there must be no trend towards decentralization, a new division of labour should be established between DPI and these organizations, based on the nature of the information and the media used and on a distinction between written and audio-visual material.

D. The special case of the Centre for Human Rights

182. The Centre for Human Rights, like the other entities already mentioned, is concerned with a fundamental issue. However, the person who heads it has the benefit of a duality of functions. The Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights is also the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG). This situation creates some delicate problems of subordination and consultation for the head of the United Nations Information Service (UNIS) at Geneva, who reports both to the Director-General of UNOG and to the DPI authorities in New York. The situation is by no means simple and is further complicated by the fact that the Centre for Human Rights recently found it necessary to strengthen its information machinery, even though this meant risking some duplication of information production and some financially costly competition.

183. The Centre for Human Rights, with headquarters at Geneva, is responsible for centralizing United Nations activities in the field of human rights. For this purpose, it carries out studies and research, produces reports and takes all necessary measures relating to human rights. Its information functions are of two types. In the first place, it collects and disseminates information, and prepares brochures, newsletters and periodicals, as well as other documents, in a field where there have been more failures than successes. It also ensures regular liaison with the NGOs, other agencies and the media.

184. A restructuring of the Centre for Human Rights was undertaken in early 1988 with the aim of strengthening co-operation with the human rights community, which is composed of a great variety of targets and relays, auxiliaries and interlocutors (NGOs, academic and university circles, the

media and all other institutions concerned). A new External Relations, Publications and Documentation Section was set up in the Centre at that time. This Section was responsible for co-ordination of the activities to celebrate the Fortieth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, activities aimed at increasing knowledge and understanding of the principles enunciated in the Declaration. The Section will also be performing information and education functions in the area of human rights.

185. The issue of human rights gives rise to considerable demands from the press. The supply of information in response to that demand constitutes approximately 60 per cent of the information product furnished at the Geneva Office at the United Nations. The United Nations Information Service at Geneva therefore occupies a particularly strategic position since neither the Centre nor DPI at Geneva has a monopoly in the dissemination of information on human rights.

186. As an external service of DPI, constituting as it were a small-scale DPI in itself, UNIS possesses the mandate, the resources and the expertise that are required for dealing with this subject. As a department of UNOG, UNIS, at Geneva, can only work in close co-operation with the Centre and its operations in the human rights sector account for more than half of its "press" activities and for 30 to 40 per cent of its other services and products.

187. By strengthening the Centre for Human Rights as a background focal point, the Under-Secretary-General/Director-General has sought to develop increased and fuller understanding of the concept of human rights and of the action being taken by the United Nations to promote them. He was also seeking to satisfy a demand expressed by the specialized press. The latter wished to maintain contact with the officials concerned with the daily activities of the Centre, who are able to provide a constantly up-dated picture of the work being done and the strategies being carried out.

188. In its resolution 1988/74, the Commission on Human Rights urged that the activities of the Centre's External Relations Section be co-ordinated closely with those of DPI, but it failed to indicate how responsibilities were to be divided between UNIS and the Centre's External Relations Section. However, General Assembly resolution 43/128 of 8 December 1988, on "Development of public information activities in the field of human rights", and a Commission on Human Rights resolution dated 7 March 1989 recently shed some light on the situation. Paragraphs 9 and 10 of the General Assembly resolution state that, with regard to the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights, the "substantive activities" are to be co-ordinated by the Centre for Human Rights, while the "public information activities" are to be co-ordinated by the Department of Public Information. The Commission on Human Rights resolution refers to "the primary role assigned to the Department of Public Information in its own field of competence" and to the need to make full use of the network of United Nations Information Centres for the dissemination of information in countries and regions.

189. As far as the concomitant and continuing relations maintained with the press by UNIS and the Centre for Human Rights are concerned, a practical distinction must be made. The Director of UNIS or his alternate must have responsibility for acting as spokesman at press conferences, for press centres and for press releases, as far as routine information relating to human rights is concerned, particularly during sessions of the Commission on Human Rights.

The head of the Centre's External Relations Section should have responsibility for acting as press officer and occasionally as spokesman in dealing with substantive issues or explaining fairly technical documentation. It would also be desirable for a UNIS official to be informally associated with certain meetings of the Centre's heads of section, to help in the development of DPI's information programmes relating to human rights.

190. Both journalists and representatives of the Member States need at all times to have access to a source whose main usefulness will be its ability to provide daily information on a regular basis. This should be UNIS's task. However, if national representatives, specialized commentators, researchers or NGO representatives desire special information on a human rights question, they must turn to a specialized unit concerned with the subject of human rights. This demand must be met by the Centre's External Relations Section.

191. DPI's technical and logistic support is obviously essential to the Centre as far as audio-visual coverage is concerned. However, some clarification is needed in the case of written material if possible duplication is to be avoided. Since 1988, "fact sheets" and "newsletters" have been issued on an irregular basis by the Centre. If the Under-Secretary-General's desire to produce useful information on the subject of human rights is to be met, he must be given responsibility for the production of all written material, except press releases, which are the responsibility of UNIS, even if this means some budgetary changes and reallocations between the Centre and DPI.

192. DPI's subprogrammes (A/C.5/43/1/Rev.1) provide for the production, inter alia, of reprints of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of Human Rights, document kits on the fortieth anniversary of the Declaration, Arabic, Chinese and Russian versions of these documents and a reprint of the English version of The United Nations and Human Rights. In addition to these information products, which really fall more within the competence of the Centre for Human Rights, DPI issues in English and French, for the media and the NGOs at Geneva, a quarterly bulletin providing information on forthcoming meetings and recent publications relating to human rights. DPI should therefore consult with the Centre for Human Rights, through UNIS, Geneva, and the Information Centres Division, in order to avoid fairly costly duplication.

E. Demarcation and a new division of responsibilities

193. It will be desirable expressly to recognize that the communication of information on human rights by audio-visual means is the exclusive responsibility of DPI, which alone is capable of providing the necessary facilities and expertise in this area. It should also be made clear, however, that in the area of production of written material (reference works, printed matter or reprintings, brochures, periodicals, "newsletters", documents and publications, fact sheets and files) the Centre for Human Rights, like the other bodies with responsibility for substantive issues, will have exclusive competence and DPI will therefore have to exclude from its budget all expenditure relating to products of this nature.

194. As regards the dissemination of this written material, particularly to the United Nations Information Centres, ad hoc agreements should be concluded between DPI and the bodies concerned, with a view to sharing the transport costs and ensuring a distribution which should pay more attention to the

quality, type, number and even sometimes the existence of the end users. The problem of excessive dissemination, unused stocks and dead storage is a matter of concern to all the divisions of DPI, particularly in the case of the written material produced by the bodies concerned with fundamental issues. Recent observations in United Nations Information Centres of different sizes and in different areas leave not the slightest doubt in this regard.

195. There should be a more pragmatic than rational distribution of products between DPI and various secretariat bodies responsible for fundamental issues, according to the particular media concerned. However, recommendation 37 should not have the unwanted effect of leading bodies that are threatened with reorganization to strengthen their information machinery in consequence and to supply further information products to the empty yet satiated market of world public opinion.

196. There is a real risk of this happening and the following example should encourage useful reflection. As is widely known, Development Forum, with its English, Spanish and French versions, is an important monthly publication of the United Nations. There is no denying its popularity and the reputation it has gained both among the general public and among its normal target audience (NGOs, government officials, the media and university and business circles). Development Business, which supplements it and is sold by subscription, plays an equally useful role by providing relevant information on the economic and commercial possibilities created by the loans and subsidies granted by international financial institutions and development agencies.

197. UNDP's decision in March 1988 to start publishing a new periodical therefore seems somewhat questionable. An editorial signed by the Administrator of UNDP and included in the first issue of this monthly World Development, explained the reasons for this project. The purpose of this publication is to highlight UNDP's achievements, to provide numerous "success stories" and to justify the use made of the considerable funds handled by the Programme's administration. The monthly is specifically addressed to decision-makers and teachers, to the NGOs and the media. It aims to enhance their knowledge of what UNDP is doing, how it is doing it and why it is doing it.

198. The text adopted in 1946 which established the information activities of the United Nations stated that there should be no "propaganda". We may assume from this that any activity tending towards the self-extolling of a United Nations body is a form of propaganda and should therefore be prohibited. One might take a more conciliatory attitude if Development Forum did not exist. But since this monthly continues to be published and there is no question of terminating it, a choice must be made between these two publications, with the Secretary-General acting as arbiter. This is in any event an obvious case of duplication and competition which, in the present context of budgetary stringency, are quite unacceptable.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

199. The reform of DPI, commenced in 1987, was said to have a triple objective: rationalization of the machinery, more energetic activities and professionalization of functions. The aims were clear: to co-ordinate the approach to and presentation of the important issues confronting the United Nations, to improve the quality and visibility of media services and

products, to disseminate them more rapidly and in a more seriously targeted manner, to identify the audiences more carefully and to evaluate more correctly the impact of the programmes.

200. The staff of DPI were also requested to adopt a collective viewpoint and to form a homogeneous family. It was understood that criticisms and improvements were always possible but that the worth of the machinery resulting from the reform would be that of those responsible for implementing it. Success would depend on the determination of the Department's officials to involve themselves in the task and on the quality of a new leadership.

201. The project has been carried far enough for it to be possible to assess the value of DPI's new form of organization. The principle of the new reform was coherence. The question now arises, however, whether the reform has not, in some measure, had the effect of replacing one form of incoherence by another and meeting as inadequately as the previous system did the need for co-ordination which had rightly been stressed. For example, the representative of one Member State in a major committee expressed concern at the disadvantages of a structure which could be considered as complex and inconvenient as, if not more costly than, the previous one (GA/SPC/1904).

202. From the outset, the reform of DPI drew criticisms and caused concern, which was voiced both within the Department and in the Secretariat generally. Whether the criticisms and concern appear justified or not is examined below. It is not sufficient merely to engage in a priori censure or to express premature fears. It is necessary to distinguish between suspicions and reality and between mental reservations interpreted with varying degrees of tendentious temerity and public expression of goals and ideals.

203. Some have seen fit to take the repeated statement by the head of DPI that greater recourse should be had to extrabudgetary resources for financing certain projects as a pretext for accusing him of planning to transform a department of the Secretariat into a commercial enterprise. This ignored the fact that an appeal for extrabudgetary funds is not incompatible with the management of an international public service. It also failed to recall that such recourse can perfectly well be reconciled with observance of the priorities laid down in the public information activities sector.

204. Combining DPI and NGO resources for the execution of joint projects, the idea of exploring the possibilities of financing local activities in agreement and in co-operation with the United Nations Information Centres and increased use of co-financing are in principle in no way objectionable. If a private foundation or a film production corporation agree to share, in liaison with DPI, in sponsoring an international seminar on world peace or a film on the economic problems of Africa, or if Governments contribute, directly or otherwise, to the financing of certain United Nations Information Centre activities, there is certainly some benefit to be gained. And the fact that a well-known European firm is equipping the United Nations tour guides in exchange for some advertising concessions should not arouse indignation, which cannot be otherwise than somewhat artificial.

205. DPI's revised programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989 specifies moreover that "as a means of enhancing access to wider audiences, the Department will, whenever appropriate, seek external support to complement its own resources". (A/43/16). To this end the Department is to elaborate a model

agreement which will ensure that the content and purpose of the materials and projects to be financed is in conformity with the goals and objectives of the United Nations.

206. The Department is also to strive, where appropriate and to the extent possible, to make activities self-financing. The relative magnitude of overhead costs and the inelasticity of staff costs serve to reduce the share of resources that can be allocated to information activities. Only recourse to external financing and co-financing can give the system some flexibility and allow it sufficient room for manoeuvre.

207. Admittedly, co-financing and external financing are acceptable only if the activities thus financed are consistent with the programmes and priorities assigned to DPI. The only thing which might be criticized, therefore, would be the acceptance of extra-budgetary funds for projects whose execution would upset the Department's overall plans. It is not sponsoring which should lead to the execution of a project but rather the inclusion of a project in DPI's programme which should enable sponsoring to take place.

208. Governments, NGOs and private enterprises are free to agree or refuse to participate financially in the execution of a project decided upon by DPI, but none of them should be free to "sell" a project of their own under the United Nations flag and under the cloak of DPI. It is also obvious that rigorous selection of enterprises and bodies should help to avoid any co-operation whose implications would be compromising or doubtful. For the system to operate correctly, it is sufficient to take certain precautions and to identify any drifting in the wrong direction.

209. There is no justification for the criticism that an allegedly commercial or publicity-oriented approach has been adopted in reforming DPI. These charges are based only on ignorance or a misunderstanding of modern public relations machinery and agencies. Public relations must not be confused with press relations or with self-promotion of DPI and its products. Public relations, as currently used by governments and private enterprises in industrialized countries in order better to convey their message involve methods and skills which are not possessed by United Nations staff but are practised by agencies and consultants specializing in particular countries, types of organization and topics.

210. Criticism of the reform should focus on another point. It is not the extra-budgetary financing methods it involves or seemingly more than genuinely advertising methods that are to be deplored. What must be challenged, rather, are the claims of media professionals who thought it possible to carry out a reorganization of DPI without paying adequate attention to the administrative environment and political context of the United Nations system.

211. Within the Committee on Information there has always been a difference of opinion between those members favouring a restrictive interpretation of the responsibilities of DPI and those who feel the Department has a broader role to play. The mistake has perhaps been to think that with a measure of media professionalism these differences can be overcome and that it will be possible to resolve the contradictions which, whatever the reforms attempted, will always influence the administrative practice of DPI and the administrative structure in which it operates.

212. Media professionalism cannot eliminate the tensions which DPI can only hope to manage or control. The more it underestimates the constraints affecting the management of and the introduction of any change in an international agency, the more difficult it will be for it to supervise and maintain unstable equilibriums and negotiated compromises. When, at the same time, the methods of staff reduction applied are the subject of protests, media professionalism tends only to create a climate that is highly unfavourable for the implementation of a reform of the Department's machinery.

213. The reorganization of DPI in accordance with recommendation 37 of the Group of Experts is independent of the reduction in staff numbers called for in recommendation 15. These two concomitant but separate processes could not fail to interfere with one another. While the staff of the Department welcomed the idea of a reform it soon became worried, not about the general obligation to reduce staff size, but about the manner in which the reduction was to be carried out. The question was raised whether the reform might not, in any event, be deflected and biased to some extent because of the staff cuts. There was even more concern as to whether the reorganization of DPI and the increased number of senior positions did not take too much account of the posts held by certain senior officials and the need to adjust the organizational structure accordingly.

214. Recommendation 15 of the Group of Experts called for the overall number of regular budget posts to be reduced by 15 per cent within a period of three years. The recommendation also emphasized the need to continue recruiting new staff members at junior professional levels to ensure a vigorous secretariat structure. It stated that the number of staff members recruited at the P-1, P-2 and P-3 levels should not fall below the average number of those recruited during the years 1982, 1983 and 1984. The head of DPI would seem to have complied only partly with this recommendation and, while the percentage recommendations were observed, his proposals for staff cuts tended to affect more the junior than the higher echelon posts.

215. The changes made by the Post Review Group remedied this situation to some extent. The Group rejected proposals under chapter 27 of the regular budget which more seriously affected junior posts and provided for the downgrading of certain D-1 posts to P-5. However, a system of reassignment of officials of the former DPI was introduced which seemed to depart rather too much from the appointment and promotion procedures in force in the United Nations.

216. The changes wrought by the 1987 reform nevertheless provided an opportunity for reflection on the methods and purposes of DPI which was of some value. It helped to provide a better view, within the United Nations, of certain problems, even if it did not facilitate their solution. For more substantial progress to be made, however, an early review will be necessary of an organizational structure and a management system which do not seem to be very effective.

217. DPI's new administrative machinery seems no more efficient than the one it replaced. It satisfies no better than did the former one the acknowledged need for co-ordination and coherence, for rationalization and for simplification. Fortunately, new ways have been envisaged for giving the Department a more dynamic structure and a communication strategy, even if the principles underlying the establishment of a service such as CPMS are more valid than the actual result.

218. In the light of these conclusions, the following recommendations are made to serve as guidance and a framework for the structural changes and redistributions and transfers of responsibilities and competence, which seem most practical and useful in the present circumstances.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made to the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

Recommendation I

The management of the Department of Public Information (DPI) should be rationalized and the Department made to function more efficiently:

(a) By eliminating the Division for Committee Liaison and Administrative Services (CLAS) so as to separate the administrative and financial functions of a conventional management unit from those of an "Executive Office", which, in accordance with recommendation 40 of the Group of Experts, should always be consolidated into the office of the head of Department in a compact and streamlined unit (paras. 69, 70, 71).

(b) By incorporating the Office of the USG in the Executive Office as thus modified, giving it those resources and officials of BPO which it is felt useful to retain (paras. 71-72).

(c) By establishing an administrative and financial unit (para. 74).

(d) By attaching the Evaluation Unit to the Executive Office in such a manner as to retain its necessary independence of evaluation and judgement (para. 75).

(e) By clarifying the role of the person who appears to be acting as deputy spokesman for the Secretary-General, in terms of the responsibilities and powers of the present Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Washington (USA) (para. 68).

Recommendation II

Autonomous status should again be given to the Committee secretariat, which has an important role to play in defining, pursuing and harmonizing the information policies for which JUNIC provides the framework and focal point (paras. 81-96):

(a) By considering practical means of linking the Committee secretariat with the Executive Office, having regard to the dual policy and technical role which it retains (para. 89).

(b) By making an exploratory study of the establishment of an advisory unit within JUNIC, which would help to co-ordinate public information policies in accordance with the draft action plan submitted to JUNIC at its fifteenth session (paras. 95-96).

Recommendation III

The Communications and Project Management Service (CPMS) should be reorganized and its machinery should be made more productive:

(a) By eliminating the Communications Services Section of CPMS, as recommended by the Post Review Group, and by transferring its functions to a new management office to be placed under the authority of the Director of CPMS (para. 111).

(b) By assigning to the Director of CPMS, thus provided with greater resources, the task of programme formulation and co-ordination, in liaison with the project managers of the theme-oriented sections (para. 112).

(c) By clarifying the relations between CPMS and the Information Product Division (IPD) so as to maintain between them a strict and effective separation of promotion and production functions (paras. 113-132).

Recommendation IV

There should be a complete reorganization of the DPI functions and of the DPI staff concerned with dissemination and external affairs (paras. 149-155):

(a) By doing away with the Dissemination Division (DD), which at present duplicates the work of the Information Centres Division (para. 155).

(b) By attaching the Institutional Relations and NGO Section of the Dissemination Division to the Information Centres Division and by transferring to the NGO Section the functions of its Information Dissemination Service which are carried out for the NGOs (para. 155 (a) and (b)).

(c) By assigning the functions of the thus reduced Dissemination Service to the Information Centres Division, and by distributing them, as necessary between the units of that Division (para. 155 (b)).

(d) By incorporating the Dissemination Division's Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit in the Office of the spokesman for the Secretary-General (EMS) (para. 140 and para. 155 (d)).

(e) By incorporating the Public Services Section in the administrative and financial unit referred to in recommendation I (c), in CPMS or in the Information Centres Division (para. 142, para. 155 (e)).

Recommendation V

Recommendation 37 of the Group of Experts which calls for the consolidation of all information activities in DPI, should be implemented "to the extent possible"; a further review of the question should be undertaken "no later than 1992" and certain guidelines should be formulated, the provisional aim of which should be (paras. 156-165):

(a) To retain the present system of distribution of information functions between DPI and the bodies responsible for the promotion of resolutions on "priority" issues (Namibia, Palestine, Apartheid) (paras. 167-169).

(b) To reserve production of all written information to the bodies responsible for the promotion of resolutions on "fundamental" issues (transnational corporations, disarmament, development, human rights) and to exclude the dissemination of similar products from DPI's subprogrammes (paras. 178, 179, 180).

(c) To specify the conditions and methods for provision of audiovisual information on both "fundamental" and "priority" issues, which is and should be primarily the responsibility of DPI (para. 171).

Recommendation VI

There should be arbitration of the question of the parallel and concurrent publications Development Forum, published by DPI, and World Development, published by UNDP, and, should Development Forum receive preference, the Committee's secretariat should be given exclusive responsibility for it (paras. 197-198).
