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The report outlines the mandate of JUNIC, the discussions at its 8th session (3-6 February 1981), including major events for 1981, audio-visual issues, development-education, non-governmental liaison service, special target audiences: parliamentarians and trade unions, distribution, careers of the info services, updating the JUNIC plan of action for 81, and conclusions.

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UNGA DRAFT REPORT OF JUNIC TO
THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION of GA

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I. MANDATE

1. In its resolution 35/201 of 16 December 1980, the General Assembly stressed the importance of the complementarity of the activities in the field of information and communication and the need to strengthen co-operation on co-ordination between the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system that deal with different aspects of information and communication.
2. In the same resolution the General Assembly expressed its appreciation to the Joint United Nations Information Committee for its efforts towards improving co-ordination of the public information activities of the various organizations of the United Nations system and called upon it further to improve and strengthen such co-operation and co-ordination by reporting through the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to the Committee on Information regarding the extent of and prospects for such co-operation and co-ordination.

II. BRIEF BACKCROUNG ON THE JOINT UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION COMMITTEE (JUNIC)
The Joint Committee, its membership and secretariat

3. Co-ordination and co-operation between the organizations of the United Nations system at the inter-secretariat level is the responsibility of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) chaired by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and in which all the Executive Heads of the organizations of the United Nations system also participate. Under ACC and reporting to it, the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), established in Rome in September 1974, is responsible for public information matters.
4. JUNIC is composed of the Directors and Heads of the Information Services of the organizations of the United Nations system. Its Chairman is the Under-Secretary-General of the UN in charge of Public Information. Its Secretary is the Director of the Division for Economic and Social Information, DPI, of the United Nations, which also provides a full-time secretariat to the Committee.

Mandate of JUNIC

5. JUNIC assumes responsibility for developing a common United Nations public information approach covering all aspects of the activities of the organizations of the UN system with special attention however to economic and social information. The Joint Committee:
 - (a) Advises ACC on general public information policy and co-ordination for the United Nations system as a whole;
 - (b) Provides general policy guidance and co-ordination in public information matters throughout the United Nations family at Headquarters and in the field;
 - (c) Jointly plans public information operations including the establishment of co-operative arrangements for special projects and events.

Method of work of JUNIC

6. The Committee holds a regular session once a year and special sessions whenever needed. Its regular co-ordination work is done throughout the year through Task Forces and Working Groups. Task Forces plan co-ordinated or joint public information activities carried out by the United Nations and its system of organizations and generally linked to international events under the auspices of the United Nations such as in 1981, the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and the International Year of Disabled Persons. Working Groups deal with general issues of continuous and common concern to organizations of the United Nations system such as Development Support Communication, Development Education, etc., or with specific and more technical questions such as Audio-Visual Matters, Target Audiences and Distribution, etc.

7. The over-all objective of JUNIC has been strengthened by its adoption every two years of a Joint Plan of Action which serves as the framework for practical co-operation between the organizations of the United Nations system in the field of public information. The content of the Plan of Action results from a comprehensive study prepared by the JUNIC secretariat of the individual programmes and plans of the organization members of JUNIC and submitted to the JUNIC secretariat in a standardized form of presentation showing categories of activities /Regular/Ongoing (Objectives and Themes); Yearly Priorities (Themes and Events)/ and type of activities /Press/publications; Radio/Audio-visual; Reportage mission/field trips/seminars/round-tables/encounters and others (external relations, development support communications, NGOs, etc.)/. The Plan now focuses on a number of selected projects, whenever possible jointly undertaken and financed, and concerned with specific issues or events which have been given higher priority by the international community.

III. SALIENT POINTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS HELD BY JUNIC AT ITS 8TH SESSION AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACC

8. The 8th session of JUNIC was held at Tokyo from 3-6 February 1981. As a result, the following matters have been submitted for the consideration of ACC at its first regular session in 1981 to be held in Geneva on 13-14 April 1981:

Recent developments in the field of public information within the United Nations system and the contribution of JUNIC to the work of the Committee on Information

9. JUNIC agreed to continue to study the evolution of the concept of a new world information and communication order which would henceforth provide a new analytical framework for its activities. It was, however, more important and more urgent to make a concrete contribution to the establishment of this order. The training of journalists from developing countries and the development support communication activities were among examples cited of concrete joint action. Other suggestions included wider use of "stringers", the establishment of a joint feature service and a system for the exchange of information staff among organizations of the United Nations system.

Report on the public image of the United Nations system

10. A general concern was expressed at the deterioration of the image of and the erosion of support for the United Nations; a number of other important issues were also raised. As a result, it was unanimously decided that further elaboration was

needed on these issues and it was agreed that a Working Group would be convened by the Chairman of JUNIC at United Nations Headquarters in the near future. This Working Group would be open-ended but would include at least the representatives of the following organizations: UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, the World Bank, the ILO and UNESCO. It was also agreed that the JUNIC secretariat, on the basis of the background papers already available and of the record of the present discussions, would prepare a background paper for the Working Group. The Working Group would subsequently prepare a concise and action-oriented draft report to be circulated to all JUNIC members for their final comments and to be completed for the third regular session of 1981 of ACC.

Development support communication/PSC

11. It was agreed that a paper would be prepared by JUNIC for consideration by ACC. This paper should:

(a) Include a selection of practical case study examples of DSC/PSC needs and actions, which a jointly funded consultant would be commissioned to prepare, drawing on the experience of the JUNIC members concerned (five JUNIC members would consider co-financing the consultant);

(b) Recommend, and document the case for, building "communication components" into many more development projects whose success depended on such communication being integrally designed and adequately resourced;

(c) Refer to the role of information/communication specialists on the staffs of respective JUNIC members as advisers in the design and implementation of communication components;

(d) Be circulated for comment among JUNIC members and preferably be ready for presentation to ACC at its third regular session of 1981.

Training programmes for journalists and broadcasters from developing countries

12. The Chairman of JUNIC expressed his satisfaction with the positive attitude taken by JUNIC members on this question and hoped to be able to report to ACC and to the Committee on Information on concrete steps being taken by the organizations of the system to harness resources and facilities concerning the training of journalists.

Development Forum

13. In view of the crucial need to promote the publication, in both the general and business editions, it was decided to convene two interagency task forces on promotion, one in New York and one at Geneva, within the next few months.

Next sessions of JUNIC

14. JUNIC further decided to hold its special session in 1981 from 8 to 10 July at Geneva. The agenda of the special session would include in particular:

(a) Development Forum; (b) draft report of JUNIC to ACC on the public image of the United Nations system; (c) reports from the non-governmental liaison services;

(d) review of joint information projects regarding the International Year of Disabled Persons, the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries; and
(e) preparation for the JUNIC Plan of Action for 1982-1983.

15. The ninth regular session of JUNIC will be held at Vienna in February 1982.

IV. OTHER MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE 8TH SESSION AND DIRECTLY WITHIN THE PROVINCE OF JUNIC

Major Events and Themes for 1981

16. Under this item JUNIC reviewed public information activities for the following events and themes in 1981:

- (a) International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP)
- (b) United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy
- (c) United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries
- (d) International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade
- (e) International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa
- (f) "10 Years after Stockholm": a co-ordinated multimedia by UNDP
- (g) Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries
- (h) Public information activities for the Disarmament Decade
- (i) Public information activities concerning the struggle against apartheid
- (j) United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

17. This review also provided an opportunity for JUNIC members to furnish up-to-date information about their organization's activities concerning the various events and themes under discussion. It also led to proposals for joint action under JUNIC auspices and to requests for assistance regarding two major events to take place in 1981 and which had not yet been discussed by JUNIC: the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (Geneva, 9-10 April 1981) and the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Paris, 1-14 September 1981).

Audio-Visual Matters

18. Under this item JUNIC in particular took note with satisfaction of the report of its Ad Hoc Working Group on Audio-Visual Matters and welcomed the idea of holding in the future workshops similar to the one on film distribution organized by the Working Group at Headquarters in New York at the end of 1980.

19. The progress report on the project "Agenda for a Small Planet" was presented to JUNIC which noted that the production phase had been completed and that this television series had been screened in July 1980 at United Nations Headquarters. JUNIC also noted that national broadcasting organizations from ten developed countries in the North had joined in this co-operative venture which offered a co-production of the highest quality on present North/South issues.

20. JUNIC was also informed that the UN/RVS Division, the Canadian International Development Agency and the Worldview International Foundation had recently agreed to sponsor a second phase presenting "the message from the South". JUNIC expressed its full support for the project noting that the UN Committee on Information had

referred to this matter in its last report to the General Assembly urging DPI to increase the trend for co-operation of films and television programmes between the developing and the developed nations. JUNIC felt that the "Agenda" projects were exactly fulfilling this goal.

Development Education

21. During the discussion under this item the concept of Development Education and the numerous activities undertaken under the umbrella of the JUNIC Ad Hoc Working Group on Development Education were queried. A number of JUNIC members indicated their strong and continuous support for many of these activities. It was however agreed that the concept of Development Education should be reviewed and that JUNIC should define priorities in this field. It was furthermore agreed that the Ad Hoc Working Group would continue its work under the leadership of UNICEF but that the whole issue should be fully examined at the next regular session of JUNIC. The Working Group was asked to prepare a background paper on the subject explaining the involvement and competence of JUNIC and presenting logically, with concrete examples, in-school development activities and out-of-school activities.

Non-Governmental Liaison Services

22. In view of the heavy agenda of the current session of JUNIC, it was felt that a major discussion of the Geneva and New York Services might be usefully undertaken at a special meeting to be held in late March in New York to which actual and potential sponsors would be invited.

23. A number of representatives paid tribute to the work of the NGLSs which had achieved remarkable results in a short time and had managed to reach audiences beyond the constituencies of the NGOs normally accredited to the UN system.

24. There was general agreement on the need to maintain and strengthen the NGLSs as well as to clarify their relationships with other accredited NGO groups.

Special Target Audiences: parliamentarians and trade unions

25. It was generally recognized that contacts with parliamentarians were extremely useful and interesting but not easy. Approaches to parliamentarian groups should be made carefully and with caution and should involve as much as possible national connexions and contacts. It was agreed that the question of the involvement of parliamentarians with the work of the organizations of the UN system was an important one which should remain on the agenda of JUNIC.

26. JUNIC also briefly discussed relations with trade unions, which could play a key role in a number of programmes of the UN system.

Distribution: a case study by UNDP

27. A case study by UNDP concerning distribution problems in the context of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade was presented to JUNIC which recognized generally that the experiments carried out had been extremely rewarding and presented an excellent example of interagency co-ordination.

28. It was agreed that the time had not yet come for the revival of the JUNIC Ad Hoc Working Group on Distribution but that concrete steps might be taken in the near future by JUNIC members individually on the basis of the experience presented by UNDP.

Career system for the staff of the Information Services of the organizations of the United Nations system

29. JUNIC noted that CCAQ was discussing a paper on measures to foster an inter-organization exchange of personnel and it was therefore decided to await the results of this discussion. In the meantime, DESI/DPI should continue to function as a clearing house concerning information on the exchange of potential candidates for the information services of JUNIC members.

Up-dating of the JUNIC Plan of Action for 1981 and Preparations for the JUNIC Plan of Action for 1982-1983

30. It was agreed that JUNIC members would forward as soon as possible to the JUNIC secretariat in New York lists of new activities undertaken within the framework of the Plan of Action for 1981.

31. JUNIC decided to postpone further substantive discussion of the preparations for the JUNIC Plan of Action for 1982-83 until the special session of JUNIC to be held at the beginning of July in Geneva. It was agreed that such a discussion would take place in the light of developments regarding the International Development Strategy for the Third Development Decade and the global negotiations.

V. CONCLUSIONS

32. The discussions held at the last session of JUNIC and in particular that regarding the respective public image of the organizations of the UN system as well as the over-all image of the system itself have clearly demonstrated that these organizations are confronted more and more with identical problems. They are moreover confronted with the common problem of increasing the interests and the participation of the public in their activities. As a consequence, the credibility of the United Nations system is of special concern to all information services of the organizations of the UN system.

33. Though organizations of the United Nations system have their own information mandate and the means they require to implement this mandate, in most cases the efforts are directed to the same public and deal with increasingly common or related vital issues such as decolonization, racial discrimination, disarmament and development, etc. This situation tends to create considerable overlapping and unnecessary duplication. The activities of JUNIC should therefore in the future, through joint projects, contribute to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination of the information services of the UN system

34. With the emergence of the concept of a new world information and communication order and the promotion of its establishment, organizations of the UN system will be more and more jointly involved in the search for a definition of this order and will be required to take jointly, under the auspices of JUNIC, the concrete steps towards its establishment.

35. These concrete steps will be taken especially in the following areas:

(a) Strengthening information/communication capacity in developing countries;

(b) Strengthening information/communication capacity among developing countries;

(c) Strengthening balanced development information flow between the developing and the developed countries;

(d) Strengthening the foundations of understanding of the developing countries and of a new planetary perception of the future among the general public in industrialized countries.

36. JUNIC will also devise ways and means to give more importance to the communication and education component and will promote the inclusion of an information communication component in relevant development projects in the United Nations system.