



functions, to more effectively coordinate within the Secretariat, and to refine the substantive content received from other Secretariat Departments rather than create its own content.

With this in mind, we believe we must take a close look at the UN Chronicle. What is its impact? How widely is it read on a regular basis? To quote from the Secretary-General's report: "The world is already suffering from information overload; the sheer volume of the material that assails the public, from newspapers, radio, television, and now the Internet, means that we are seeking to be heard amidst a cacophony." We must ask if the professional time and other costs involved in producing this publication are justified in relation to its readership and impact. Unlike the Yearbook of the United Nations, which is a comprehensive and authoritative review of all UN activities and the main reference work of record of the Organization, the Chronicle generally contains information that readers can easily find elsewhere, and, in our view, the human and financial resources in question should be reprogrammed towards other DPI activities, perhaps, for example, to enhance the multilingual nature of the UN web site.

Mr. Chairman,

Concerning the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, my delegation is pleased to note that a reprioritization of functions is being contemplated. In our view, the Library's technical services functions, including cataloging and indexing, should be automated and rationalized and the considerable professional expertise present in the Library should be devoted to priority Secretariat-wide information support activities. In this regard, I would like to commend the Library for working with other UN system libraries in upgrading and expanding the reach of UNCAPS — the web-based catalog of UN system library holdings.

On the question of UN conferences, my delegation is pleased to note that the Department is looking at ways to better coordinate its activities with the substantive Departments concerned. We also note that DPI managers have been actively working in the United Nations Communications Group to develop and coordinate joint inter-agency communications strategies on priority issues, often in preparation for major conferences and other events. I commend the Department for agreeing to coordinate establishment of a central Internet portal for the United Nations which will encompass all web sites of UN system organizations, with a view to developing a system-wide search facility.

Mr. Chairman,

While awaiting the results of various reviews being conducted, I commend the Department for its efforts aimed at rationalizing the current ad hoc arrangement of UN information centers. The UN houses initiative coupled with the contemplated regional information center "hub" arrangement offers the potential to provide centralized and system-wide public information, educational and other outreach services to the 120 countries that do not currently host a UN information center or other DPI office. There is ample opportunity for better coordination, cooperation, and consolidation of UN system-wide field offices. I encourage the Department to work through the UN Communications Group in furtherance of these information center-related issues.

Mr. Chairman,



