Etat des activités de l'UAI
Summary of Activities
September 2003

I. Publications et services d’information

1. Yearbook of International Organizations

Book: Since the Council meeting in September 2002, the regular annual publication cycle has continued normally. The cycle of 2002 was completed with the production of Volume 5 (Statistics) in November 2002, despite difficulties (unusual printing problems of graphics images) and delays (due to illness).

For the 2003 cycle (40th edition), editorial work on organization profiles (Volumes 1a and 1b) was completed according to schedule with publication in May 2003, followed by production of the geographical volume (Volume 2) in June 2003, the subject volume (Volume 3) in July 2003, and the bibliographical volume (Volume 4) in August 2003. Work is continuing on the statistical volume (Volume 5) with production expected in November 2003.

In Volume 1 were included 25,979 of the most important organizations from the database of organizations (past and present); minimal information is provided on a further 5,462. Of the 25,979 bodies profiled, 2,552 are intergovernmental (IGOs) and 23,427 are international non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

--ca. 23,500 addresses of main offices plus telephone, telex and fax
--ca. 26,000 e-mail addresses
--ca. 350,000 links to member countries
--ca. 300,000 inter-organizational links
--ca. 16,000 websites

The bibliographical volume (Volume 4), resulting from the work of Joel Fischer is composed of three parts:

-- Publications and information resources of international organizations: cites about 25,428 publications and 1,696 information resources (identified in Volume 1).
-- Research bibliography: includes some 19,650 citations under 40 subject headings dealing with the history and practice of transnational organization.
-- An index to all the publications mentioned in the other two parts lists the authors, publishers, titles, and keywords from titles of these publications and resources in one alphabetical sequence of 99,106 items
This cycle has been distinguished by the adjustment in the editorial team with the decreasing involvement of Jacqueline Nebel (approaching retirement) and the increasing responsibility of Nancy Carfrae for the production process (notably for Volumes 2 and 3), together with the increasing involvement of Allan Howard. These reflect measures taken to maintain the quality of editorial work on increasing numbers of international organizations (as discussed during the Council meeting of October 2002). See also comment under Personnel.(below).

The special challenges relating to the statistical volume (Volume 5) are discussed below.

**CD-ROM:** The production processes for the 9th edition (2003) were considerably facilitated by the experience of the 2002 (8th edition) which had required the implementation of new interface software. As with that edition it included the 4th edition of the *Who's Who in International Organizations* (2003). Work, and testing, is being completed in September 2003 with a view to production in October 2003.

The CD incorporates all 25,979 organization descriptions in English from the 2003–2004 book version and an additional 17,371 bodies of secondary interest. Concerns remain regarding the copy security features on this product, despite continuing discussions with SAUR.

**Online:** Continuing interchange with SAUR (and through them with GALE) has resulted to many improvements in the access facilities to this version. UN agencies continue to form a significant part of the subscribers. Access to the Who’s Who in International Organizations is part of the subscription. SAUR recognizes the online format to be of growing importance in comparison with the book version. As a result of agreement with SAUR, the images from the UIA’s *World Guide to Logotypes* (1997) were included in the online organization profiles as a further means of enhancing the quality of the service.

Concern has been expressed to SAUR regarding the continuing demands on UIA staff time (in the person of Tomas Fülöpp) in handling special connection problems of subscribers but especially adjusting the usage statistics (which may well be counter-productive to some sales), access features and user friendliness to facilitate the task of GALE sales personnel. It is clear however that many changes are appropriate in response to the increasing standardization of facilities within the wider online environment. GALE currently obtains 30 percent of its revenue from online services – possibly a future expectation in relation to UIA.

2. **International Congress Calendar**

**Book:** The four quarterly editions of the 43rd edition have been
published in 2003 under the continuing supervision of Regine Toussaint. As indicated in the previous report, concerns remain regarding the coverage of this publication (due to the proliferation of information on the web) and the ability to process the available information (especially from the web) with the editorial resources available. Interaction between YB and Calendar staff remains high as information is shared back and forth, increasingly with regard to information concerning web resources on NGOs.

**Online:** As previously indicated, the online version has not yet been activated under subscription because of a combination of technical problems (notably the challenge of closer integration of the Calendar data with the distinct format of Yearbook data on events identified in organization profiles) and the unsatisfactory nature of the business model to ensure its viability. There is an active demand for this facility and it therefore represents a useful source of future revenue. It is planned to be activated, in some form, in time for the October 2003 Associate Members meeting.

3. **Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential**

**Book:** As indicated previously, no current plans in relation to this publication, last produced in 1994-5. SAUR would be prepared to publish it as hardcopy but would then require cessation of the free distribution over the web, which plays such an important marketing role in relation to the Yearbook. Additionally the amount offered by SAUR would barely compensate for the formatting of the data into hardcopy form, namely without enabling any development of the data.

**Online:** The related databases (problems, strategies, values, human development, etc) are very actively used as a free complement to subscriber access to the data on international organizations (as such they conform to the provisions of Article 3 of the UIA statutes). They are recognized by SAUR as being of value to marketing the organization information. Unfortunately the data is slowly becoming obsolete in the absence of any systematic updating of it.

4. **Who’s Who in International Organizations**

**Book:** Editorial work on the 4th edition was successfully completed by Nancy Carfrae in November 2002 and the volume was published in January 2003. It is not expected that a new edition will be prepared before 2005.

**CD-ROM:** The available updated information was incorporated into the Yearbook CD-ROM (8th edition) and into the current 2003 (9th edition).

**Online:** The updated information forms part of the standard
subscription to Yearbook Online.

5. **Republication of UIA historical publications**

Progress continues on the work (partially outsourced to Delphi in Slovakia) in processing UIA historical publications – notably with a view to its centennial celebrations.

**UIA journal:** All versions of the UIA periodical (*La Vie Internationale* 1912-21; *Bulletin des associations internationales*, 1943-44; *Bulletin mensuel de l’Union des Associations Internationales*, 1951-53; *International Associations*, 1954-76; *Transnational Associations*, 1977-2001) have now been scanned into image form – totalling some 35,000 pages. Note, as such they cannot be effectively used because of the size of each image file or effectively searched.

These image pages are in process of being converted into searchable text in MS Word format. The current situation with this process is as follows:

-- **Completed:** (and transferred to Brussels): 1953-1955, 1957-2002 (and the 1910 Congress proceedings)
-- **Not yet completed:** 1943, 1944, 1951, 1952, 1956 as well as 1912, 1913, 1914, Congress 1911, Congress 1913

The next stage is to convert these pages to PDF format (for ease of distribution under online subscription or on CD-ROM). This is in principle a low-cost, rapid process. Completed test versions are being used to refine the access process with a view to permitting access online under subscription in addition to any possible CD-ROM version. The issue will be whether to commence marketing the product in its “rough” form, with limited facilities, indexing and interlinking, or whether to improve the product to increase its attractiveness, or some combination of these two strategies (eg various versions, subsets by theme, etc). 

These tests will also make it possible for more concrete discussion of options with regard to the future of any online version of the current issues of *Transnational Associations* (see below), which could be integrated into the same format.

Links to individual articles in past issues of *Transnational Associations* will be provided from the online bibliography of research papers that forms part of Volume 4 of the Yearbook. Subsequently efforts will be made to design an access procedure via subject groups independently of that provided via the online databases.

Recent discussions with SAUR indicate some interest in marketing this facility, possibly in conjunction with online access to the Yearbook. It may prove more appropriate to allow SAUR to market the product but to treat it as a UIA product. The possibility of marketing a CD-ROM of
back issues of *Transnational Associations* is also under consideration. The approach to be taken will be affected by the scope of any future contract for the publication of *Transnational Associations* (see below).

**UIA Yearbooks:** SAUR is now advertising an online version of the UIA’s historical *Annuaire de la Vie Internationale* (1905-1911; 5,000 pages). These may be placed on CD-ROM in the future. Currently they are in MSWord format and merit conversion to PDF format as indicated above.

6. **La Revue de l’UAI: Associations Transnationales**

Conformément à la décision du Conseil de l'UAI en octobre 2001, la revue est désormais trimestrielle.

Le premier numéro (double, 1-2) de 2003 a été consacré à l’œuvre de Paul Otlet, avec la collaboration scientifique de nombreux chercheurs européens et américains – architectes, sociologues, historiens, philosophes, spécialistes de la communication et de la documentation. L’une des contributions nous est parvenue du Mundaneum, une autre de l’auteur d’un film sur Paul Otlet.

Le numéro 3 traite du rôle des OING dans la négociation de certains traités internationaux, de la création d’une banque de développement méditerranéenne, de questions liées à la médiation sociale et au capital social. Les prochains numéros (4/2003, 1 et 2/2004) se pencheront sur les thèmes suivants :
- La notion de “capital social”;
- La notion de “médiation sociale”;
- La société civile et l’usage des langues

La revue est désormais ouverte aux textes de langue espagnole, afin d’assurer une plus grande diversité culturelle des contributions et d'accroître l'internationalisation de son lectorat. Les pages web de la revue sont rédigées en trois langues : anglais, français et espagnol.

Les négociations menées avec le groupe d’édition Taylor & Francis (maison d’édition Routledge), en vue de la publication et de la diffusion commerciales de la Revue, devraient aboutir très prochainement.

Le Conseil scientifique de la Revue, dont la création a été décidée par le Conseil en octobre 2001, a été constitué et est opérationnel. Il comporte dix personnalités (nombre non limitatif) venues du monde des organisations internationales, de la diplomatie et des milieux universitaires.

Le contenu de la revue est partiellement disponible sur la Toile (sommaire, certains articles). Diverses modalités de l’abonnement sont à l’étude, combinant l’édition papier, l’édition électronique (complète ou partielle) des numéros récents et anciens.
7. Multimedia products

As indicated previously, following the production for demonstration purposes of poster-size maps (of networks of organizations, problems, strategies, etc) generated from the online facility, further work on these products is now envisaged in relation to a new marketing approach. The main focus of such work is currently with respect to Volume 5.

These facilities could play a key part in the UIA’s participation in some future international meetings. The hiring of a new part-time assistant may help to advance this possibility.

8. Statistics projects

Over the past three years, the UIA has invested in progressive rationalization of the statistical data it has published during the 20th century, whether in the Yearbook itself or in articles in Transnational Associations. Data in the Yearbook tables over that period has been incorporated into Excel tables. Work remains to be done on early statistical studies (pre-1980) published in Transnational Associations.

At present the UIA has three annual statistical projects:

(a) February-May: a contract with the Centre for Civil Society of the London School of Economics for production of selected tables on NGOs in their Global Civil Society Yearbook. As noted below, the timing of this work has proved to be extremely inconvenient in relation to the UIA Yearbook production cycle because they continue to depend in part on data generated for the version of Volume 1 in production.

(b) June-August: the production of International Meeting Statistics for Associate Members

(c) August-October: the principal section of Volume 5 of the Yearbook of International Organizations (as indicated above).

The contents of these three projects overlap but have raised issues about UIA’s ability to produce them annually as a consequence of progressive reduction in involvement of Nadia McLaren who has rationalized their production during 2001 and 2002 (as well as integrating scattered statistical data from past decades). In contrast to other reference projects, the new formats required by these products call for extensive use of software packages (Excel notably and Adobe PDF) to achieve the quality of graphics output and the adaptation to stringent printing formats.

At this point a transition process, under the guidance of Nadia McLaren, a significant amount of work is being undertaken for 2003
by outsourcing it to the Slovakian company (Delphi). However despite satisfactory results, there remains concern about the continuity of the operation in the absence of Nadia McLaren.

9. **Website and database access**

Considerable work continues to be done to improve the look, feel, organization, navigation, currency and integration of the UIA’s static and dynamic websites – notably in relation to the needs of online subscribers and the new facilities (historical publications, etc). This is important in developing the image of the UIA on the web, notably as it affects UIA ability to market its publications and services.

As indicated above, the subscription online access service to the Yearbook is being positioned by SAUR as an important complement to the hardcopy and CD-ROM versions. The free databases (problems, strategies, etc) integrated with it continue to be conceived as an important marketing tool.

Unfortunately some essential work has had to be delayed because of demands on the time of Tomas Fülöpp. This situation has now been partially alleviated by hiring a part-time person to reduce other demands on his time.

Regular update procedures have now been standardized.

10. **Requests for information**

The Secretariat continues to receive numerous e-mail demands for information. Some of these take the form of requests from Associate Members for which the extraction can be charged. Others involve much time by various staff members, which is justified under the heading of public relations services. The quality of UIA response is now expected to improve as a result of hiring a part-time person to handle this process.

As discussed previously, the UIA is in an awkward situation in seeking to strike a balance between free or discounted distribution of such information (notably to academic researchers and NGOs in the light of the UIA statutory mandate), commercially-rated distribution (notably to commercial bodies and consultancies acting for them), and refusal of such requests (notably to bodies liable to set up competing database and publication services).

Demands may be for:

- mail address labels
- e-mail addresses
- organization profiles
- reproduction of statistical tables
Independently of the question of exploitation of the data, a key concern for the UIA is to avoid excessive “spamming” of international organizations (long overloaded by unsolicited requests), both in their interest and in UIA’s interests (to avoid prejudicing the UIA’s ability to solicit information from them for the Yearbook). The UIA’s current conservative policy has been justified by the rate of reply to its questionnaires but it was one factor in the failure of UIA to garner support for its bid for the .ORG domain in 2002. A major concern is any implication that the UIA becomes identified as a source of spam to international organizations. Recent discussions in the online publishing community have proven the UIA conservative approach to be valid. Additionally, savvy commercial operators realize that spamming potential clients is not in their interest.

II UIA partnerships and cooperation

1. **UN:** No current developments relating to the UIA’s consultative relationship or CONGO. The Secretariat has been informed concerning the new high-level UN panel that is reviewing the relationships between the UN and Civil Society. The specialized agencies and units of the UN which had subscribed to the UIA online service in 2002 (as a result of the initiative of SAUR) have renewed their subscription for 2003 resulting in a total of 26 such agency users.

2. **UNESCO:** Discussions with the Secretariat, in association with the 6-year review of the UIA’s consultative relationships, had opened the possibility of a more fruitful interaction. In an increasingly difficult international context, this has not yet materialized.

As yet the possibility of concrete collaboration has not become evident. The UIA did not participate in a further session of UNESCO/NGO group on “Communication et nouvelles technologies” (Paris, 28 April 2003)

3. **European Commission:** No further steps have been taken with respect to the EU’s Sixth Framework because of previously explained uncertainties with regard to: the budgetary commitment to proposal preparation, the lengthy time cycle before any response is forthcoming, the administrative work if successful, and the strong possibility of having to act as banker in anticipation of receipt of funds. This cycle involves a degree of long-term commitment which it is difficult to guarantee at this time, notably with the relocation of Nadia McLaren who has proven most competent in negotiating such
contracts.

4. **London School of Economics (LSE):** This collaboration has so far resulted in production of tables in the 2001, 2002 and 2003 editions of the LSE’s *Global Civil Society Yearbook*. The timing of the work required is however extremely inconvenient in that the deadline is very close to that of final editorial work on Volume 1 of the Yearbook. This makes it very difficult to manage the data selections for LSE whilst the latter is being finalized. Various awkward compromises were explored for the work undertaken for 2003. This income remains financially important for the viability of the statistics initiative as a whole.

The situation has been further complicated by the move of the director of the LSE project to a California-based university, with the requirement that contractual relationships be made with a US-based entity under conditions where the UIA would be at a severe disadvantage in case of contractual disagreements. Arrangements have been made for the contract to continue to be made via LSE.

5. **Public Interest Registry (PIR):** Following the failure of UIA to win the bid for management of the .ORG web domain, the winning group (Internet Society) formed, as they had proposed, an NGO called Public Interest Registry to manage .ORG. Nadia McLaren, in her personal capacity, was proposed by Verisign as a member of the PIR .ORG Advisory Council. The President-CEO of PIR visited the UIA and PIR is continuing discussions with a view to some form of collaboration or contractual work.

6. **Strategy with respect to IGOs**

Unfortunately the Council, at its last meeting, did not have time to deal with this matter on its agenda.

### III International conferences

1. **Montecatini:** Professor Gianni Tibaldi invited the UIA to participate in a workshop to be organized under the auspices of the UN University as an immediate precursor to the European Conference of Ministers of the Environment (July 2003). At Professor Tibaldi’s request a presentation was made to the organizing group on 21 March in Montecatini by Anthony Judge, Nadia McLaren and Tomas Fulopp.

It was tentatively agreed that the UIA would make a multimedia presentation in a poster session. UIA involvement was however finally discontinued due to lack of funds.

2. **Annual Meeting of UIA Associate Members**
This meeting is currently scheduled for 6-7 October 2003 in Brussels. The theme is: International Meetings Industry in the light of the current global situation.

It remains to be seen whether current events in relation to air travel will affect decisions on the organization of the event and in what way.

3. **Working Group on NGOs on Hazardous Missions**

No further activity has been undertaken on this theme since the last report. Dr Yves Beigbeider has suggested that the group should be terminated.

4. **World Summit on the Information Society**

This event is to be held in Geneva (10-12 December 2003) and in Tunis (2005). Currently the Secretariat recommends, if resources can be found within current priorities, that UIA participation take the same form as that for the World Summit on Social Development (Geneva, 2000) with presentation of multimedia displays of its data. It should be remembered that many UN agencies are already accessing UIA data online and this usage can be usefully reinforced.

**IV Budget and administration**

1. **Personnel**

Au 1er juin 2003, nous avons dû nous séparer d'une secrétaire qui travaillait à temps plein depuis 4 ans. Elle est remplacée, à partir du 2 septembre 2003, par une personne qui assumera les tâches de classement, photocopies, fax. Cette personne est engagée à l'essai et part time.

En dépit des fortes chaleurs, l'équipe UAI a courageusement assuré la continuité du travail pendant les mois d'été et.. de vacances.

Bien que certains problèmes urgents du personnel aient été réglés afin d’assurer la continuité de production demandée par les contrats en cours, il est clair que les ajustements ne répondent pas à des problèmes à plus long terme. Les contraintes budgétaires poussent vers une simplification des tâches et empêchent l’engagement de personnes ayant la capacité d’analyse et de perspective nécessaire pour le maintien et le développement de certaines fonctions, notamment avec les logiciels de bureau qui conviennent. Même si l’on trouve le budget nécessaire, le problème est rendu plus complexe avec la rotation rapide du personnel (après formation) qui devient de plus en plus courant dans le cas des personnes ayant ces capacités. Le cas du remplacement formé pour les projets statisiques en est un exemple.
Le Conseil a demandé un rapport concernant le personnel en fonction de leur activité. La mise à jour d’un document à ce sujet a été préparé pour discussion.

2. Finances

Le "creux" de l'été n'est pas favorable aux rentrées d'argent. La trésorerie est difficile. SAUR a accepté de participer au lourd investissement que nous avons dû consentir pour le remplacement, suite à ses défaillances, de notre serveur (35.000 euros) et cette aide (19.500 euros) nous viendra bien à point.

3. Comptabilité


4. Statut juridique

La nouvelle loi belge sur les associations internationales est entrée en vigueur le 1er juillet 2003. Elle oblige l'UAI - d'ici environ 5 ans - à modifier ses statuts pour supprimer l'obligation d'avoir dans son conseil un membre de nationalité belge. Rappelons ici que M. De Schutter, membre du Conseil de l'UAI, s'est très activement employé à suivre les débats autour de ce projet de loi tant à la Chambre qu'au Sénat, et à intervenir chaque fois que c'était possible au bénéfice des associations internationales. Il a également, régulièrement, tenu au courant, par l'intermédiaire de la FAIB, les associations dont le siège se trouve à Bruxelles.

La question d'un statut européen des associations préoccupe certaines instances européennes qui organisent les débats. M. De Schutter a représenté l'UAI à une réunion organisée par le Conseil de l'Europe à Strasbourg.

5. Computer-related infrastructure issues

As indicated in previous reports, the UIA’s central computer equipment and software has been aging beyond the point of reasonable maintenance and was proving increasingly vulnerable to severe breakdowns – of which several have been navigated successfully, thanks to efforts of Joel Fischer. It is important to recognize the degree of dependence on most members of UIA staff on the satisfactory
operation of the system – in addition to the fact that most of the UIA’s data assets are held on it (despite various backup strategies). In April 2003, the most severe breakdown was directly associated with the very high level of dust resulting from work on the building housing the UIA offices.

As a consequence, and following a meeting with SAUR, new hardware and software was installed in June 2003 to provide a more robust system and to increase levels of security (and backup) in an increasingly virus and hacker prone environment. An important objective has been to open access to more editors working at a distance (using virtual private network technology, VPN) and to eliminate the current weekly costs of file transfer (between London, Leuven and Brussels). This should increase flexibility in relation to personnel options. SAUR agreed to participate extensively in the financing of this acquisition.

Separately software has been purchased to improve the user interface for editors, notably those working at a distance, and especially in order to reduce their learning/training time. This will however require further work.

With the advance in computer telecommunications, the UIA has switched its internet access from its original (more expensive) leased computer line to a faster and cheaper SDSL line.

The above developments open the possibility of both increasing the security levels for the dynamic web server (located in-house) and relocating the static web server (housed outside Brussels) back to the UIA offices. Although the latter move would reduce costs, it would also reduce physical security and therefore is currently not envisaged.

6. **Marketing**

It should be recalled that two main approaches to marketing are taken by the UIA:

- via SAUR/Gale: The UIA benefits from the marketing machine of these specialists in international reference books, including their web marketing

- via UIA website: The UIA static website has over recent years been the prime marketing tool for UIA publications and services, as well providing descriptive and informative materials. Links to the SAUR website are provided where appropriate.

The continuing concern for further development of UIA external relation, notably in relation to marketing, has resulted in the engagement of a part-time person to assist in this process, whether via the web or by other means.
It is within this context that a new paper brochure, descriptive of the UIA, is being prepared at the request of the Council.

7. Challenge of the Internet

The Council requested a report on this topic. A summary report on the UIA Web Strategy has been provided. Any comments will help to refine the report for discussion at the next Council meeting.

8. Maison des Associations Internationales (MAI)

Major alterations to the building by the owners have resulted in considerable inconvenience to tenants. The high level of dust was directly responsible for aggravating the condition of the UIA’s network server, to the point that it had to be replaced. The future status of the building remains unclear as further work is undertaken. It is difficult to avoid the impression that when these works are completed the rent will be increased (as already intimated) and that the owners may seek to allocate it to other purposes. The Secretariat may therefore be faced with the prospect of having to move in the medium term.

V. Département Congrès et Services

Depuis la dernière réunion, les activités du Département Congrès ont été poursuivies et développées dans la continuité.

La banque de données du Calendrier des Congrès comprend plus de 203,634 réunions internationales qui ont eu lieu depuis 1986 ou prévues dans les années à venir, soit une augmentation constante.

Le tirage et les ventes du Calendrier (trimestriel) sont stables.

Selon les indications ci-dessus, le document annuel “International Meeting Statistics” a été confectionné et distribué aux Membres Associés.

Le thème de la réunion des membres associés (6/7 octobre 2003) est : "The international meetings industry in the light of the current global situation".

Ref : NLWork/Conseil et AG Octobre 2003/Summary of activities 09 2003.rtf