Report on Publications and Information Services

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the current state of information production and dissemination in relation to the main revenue-generating products. Related issues are discussed separately: research (Agenda point 5), information services (Agenda point 7)

In brief, and despite personnel and financial challenges, work has continued normally and on schedule over the past period (as indicated in Doc. 4.1b).

An overview in relation to the work of previous years is presented in an accompanying table. The following is therefore restricted to exceptional issues.

1. **Yearbook of International Organizations**

   **Hardcopy:** This cycle has been distinguished by the further adjustment in the editorial team with the decreasing involvement of Jacqueline Nebel (approaching retirement), the increasing responsibility of Nancy Carfrae for the production process (notably for Volumes 2 and 3), together with preparations for the relocation of Joel Fischer. 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). The special challenges relating to the statistical volume (Volume 5) are discussed below (Agenda point 5).

   **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 in many improvements in the access facilities to this version: Yearbook Online. 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**

**Hardcopy:** 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 Yearbook and Calendar staff remains high as information is shared back and forth, increasingly with regard to information concerning web resources on NGOs. As a means of ensuring economies in 2005 and thereafter, it was decided to cease UIA production and distribution of the hardcopy version – except as an offprint from electronic pages generated from the new online version. (NB in contrast to the Yearbook, it is not distributed by SAUR)

**Online:** As previously indicated, the online version had not previously 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 2004 Associate Members meeting. It will continue to be a service independent of the contract with SAUR covering Yearbook Online – although users with subscriptions to both services can move freely between them in the integrated database (See further discussion below).

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

**Hardcopy:** As indicated previously, no current plans in relation to this publication, last produced physically in 1994-5. SAUR would be prepared to publish the version (revised under a European Commission contract from 1997-2000) as hardcopy. This 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**

**Hardcopy:** 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. Discussions on this possibility continues with SAR, the main constraint being the reallocation of limited editorial resources.

**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 had indicated 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. **The UIA journal “Transnational Associations”**

Specific issues relating to the form of this publications are discussed separately (Agenda point 10)

In terms of the current state of integration of the UIA databases, it should be noted that articles in *Transnational Associations*, current and past, are increasingly treated as documents retrievable over the web through the common interface to all UIA databases.

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**

These projects which notably contribute to Volume 5 of the Yearbook of International Organizations are discussed below (Agenda point 5: Research)

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. Integration of content

It is useful to recognize the unique degree of integration of the content of UIA information. From a technical perspective, this follows from the continuing development of software and hardware in relation to the internet, as discussed in a separate document.

From a content perspective however, the degree of integration can be recognized from the following table showing how many of the databases are directly or indirectly interlinked.

This integration offers, potentially, a degree of synergy between UIA information products that may increasingly constitute the principle advantage of the UIA information over other products and services. The key point here is that whilst other initiatives may be able to offer more, or even higher quality, information in certain areas – none can offer the degree of integration between them. This is notably evident in the case of the relationship between the Calendar and the Yearbook, which effectively “protect” each other’s viability in the commercial market. The same is true of the relationship with the “Encyclopedia” databases (world problems, strategies, values, human development, etc).

The key question for the UIA is how to promote the relevance of this integration and synergy for users. The core argument is that in an increasingly complex society, single issue approaches to information are of limited strategic relevance when successful campaigns must seek strategic windows of opportunity that strike a balance between the interests of multiple stakeholders.

The UIA’s strategy in relation to these issues is discussed elsewhere (Point #7.4)