Historical review of UIA collaboration with SAUR
notably during the period of Jacques Raeymaeckers’ role as Secretary-General

The Union of International Associations (UIA) has been engaged in a range of documentation modes and initiatives since its origins in 1910 under the inspired leadership of the Belgians Paul Otlet and Nobel Prize winner Henri La Fontaine. It was in June 1973 that the UIA was first contacted by Klaus Saur suggesting a meeting to discuss mutual interests of UIA and Verlag Dokumentation München. The first visit seems to have taken place on 5th July 1974 and the follow-up was focused on distribution of UIA publications in Germany and a display at the Frankfurter Buchmesse 1974. As publishers, our relationship remained for a number of years one of publisher-distributor.

It was only in mid-1982 that UIA asked Klaus Saur whether he would be interested in publishing the Yearbook of International Organizations – following the UIA’s unsatisfactory experience publishing the 19th edition through the International Chamber of Commerce (Paris). Agreement was rapidly reached -- with expansion from the single annual volume with ICC into a three-volume annual edition from the 20th edition in 1982, considerably increasing the number of pages. The two additional volumes were considered experimental, but sales justified their continuation thereafter. At the same time arrangements were made for K G Saur Verlag (KGS) to distribute the quarterly International Congress Calendar. Data for both publications was processed into film for many years via the UIA sub-contractor Computaprint (London) – later to become a subsidiary of Reed-Elsevier.

Another aspect of the UIA’s extraordinary relationship with Klaus Saur also became evident at that time. On leaving a meeting in Brussels, at which contractual details were finalized in 1982, he was asked whether he was aware of an earlier initiative resulting in the UIA publication in 1976, of the Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential. This had been jointly financed by Mankind 2000, directed by James Wellesley-Wesley with the participation of Robert Jungk – whom Klaus Saur knew well. Klaus took a copy of the Encyclopedia with him on the plane. The following morning he telephoned to propose that KGS produce a new edition.

This proposal led to the publication of a further three new editions of the Encyclopedia: the single volume 2nd edition in 1986, a two-volume 3rd edition in 1991, and a three-volume 4th edition in 1994-5. The extraordinary flexibility and flair of Klaus Saur was evident in the “evolution” of the 4th edition – initially conceived as a two-volume publication (“World Problems” and “Human Potential”). Late in the editorial work it was collectively, and suddenly, decided that a third volume of the Encyclopedia would be produced (on “Global Strategies” in response to the world problems). The editorial work on this volume was significantly funded by James Wellesley-Wesley once again. However, from a commercial point of view, it was clear that KGS was not making a fortune out of these unconventional publications. Indeed it is somewhat of a miracle that both KGS and UIA were prepared to
tolerate projects that could only survive through “creative” financing – and the enthusiasm of both editorial and production teams.

The early success with the *Yearbook* encouraged Klaus to respond to UIA suggestions to produce a series of *Guides to International Organization*. Four were produced in the period 1984-5: *African International Organizations; Arab-Islamic International Organizations; International Organization Abbreviations and Addresses; and Intergovernmental Organization Directory*. Klaus was right. They were not destined to be a success – but his willingness to experiment with the UIA remained undaunted.

The same period saw the publication of the first (and only) volume in a heroic new series to document the statutes of international nonprofit organizations. Volume 1 of *the International Association Statutes Series* appeared in 1984. The data capture was done in an extraordinary kamikaze operation by a group from the Institute of Cultural Affairs International (Brussels), who subsequently produced a three volume *Directory of Rural Development* (1985-8) through KGS.

Another venture was the publication of *Who’s Who in International Organizations* – of which the UIA had produced a mini-precursor in 1962. The 1st edition appeared in 1992; a second was to appear in 1995; the third in 2000 (in 3 volumes); a fourth is in preparation for 2002.

In parallel with these various paper products, the capacity of computers to totally transform editorial work and production operations became increasingly evident – and remained a continuing challenge. In mid-1985, UIA computer files dating from 1974 were transferred to an in-house network – one of the first in Belgium. This was to totally transform editorial work. The transformation was achieved with technical assistance from the Institute of Cultural Affairs. In 1986, the *Yearbook* post-editorial data processing at Computaprint (London) was received the Printing World Award of Her Majesty’s Stationery Office “for the most innovative application of computers to typesetting”.

These technical successes were a stimulus to the wonderfully flexible project dialogue with Klaus Saur, whether directly or through Manfred Link. The early 1990s was a period when the possibility of reference books on CDs was under very active review by many. There was much dialogue with Klaus and Manfred -- and with KG Saur Verlag partners in the USA who had experience with this technology.

Just as the *Encyclopedia* production had been used as the first test of computer editing and typesetting, it was used by the UIA to test CD technology – leading to the production by KGS of *Encyclopedia Plus* in 1995. Klaus manifested his qualities of patience in response to UIA insistence that a cut price variant be simultaneously marketed. Later in 1995 the first annual edition of the *Yearbook* appeared finally on CD in parallel with the book edition – with UIA supplying the master disk based on Folio software. Experiments were subsequently made with extension of the content into multilingual formats -- notably by including in 1996 the *Annuaire des Organisations Internationales* (translation funded by governments of francophone countries) as a substitute for a nonviable hardcopy edition (last published by UIA in 1979). These experiments were subsequently abandoned in favour of the English-only product with
multilingual indexes -- but also including the *Who’s Who in International Organizations*. In 1996 the Yearbook was also extended to four volumes with the publication of the first edition of a *Bibliographic Volume: International Organization Bibliography and resources*.

This period saw many transformations in the relationships between KGS, Bowker-Saur, Reed-Elsevier in which Klaus too a variety of roles. Ironically both UIA’s key sub-contractors, Computaprint and Folio, became part of the Reed-Elsevier group. From 1996 however UIA no longer provided data for film production through Computaprint but through Microcomposition (Munchen) a sub-contractor of KGS that made use of the Revelation software central to UIA’s data management flexibility. These transformations have been followed in the autumn of 2000 by the sale of KGS by the Reed-Elesevier group to Thompson/Gale – a prime UIA competitor with respect to the *Yearbook* series. It has been the skills of Klaus that have ensured the continuity of the UIA relationship with KGS under these unique circumstances.

Vital to the stability of this productive relationship over such an extended period of time has been the unusual style of Klaus Saur – very much in the tradition of the creative publisher, attentive to quality, valuing editorial content, and respectful of editorial expertise and technical competence. This contrasts starkly with many conventional approaches to publishing where short-term financial margins and returns dominate most decisions. Ironically it is the qualitative partnership relationships – now that they have become rare -- that are increasingly extolled by management gurus as the way of the future.

The fecundity of the relationship is further illustrated by the production of an *International Biographical Dictionary of Religion* (1994) that was extended and transformed into a *World Guide to Religious and Spiritual Organizations* (1996). This was followed by a *World Guide to Logotypes, Emblems and Trademarks of International Organizations* (1997) that represented the first joint excursion into image production and indexing – with a number of unusual features.

These more recent years also saw the emergence of the Internet, Web diffusion of information, and the many new challenges to producers and distributors of information faced with subsidized competition. Klaus was very canny, to use a Scottish term (possibly of German derivation), in his response. His long experience of the publishing world enabled him to avoid the traps into which many fell. For that the UIA is extremely grateful to him as it experimented independently from 1998 with web distribution of the *Encyclopedia* databases as a marketing entry point to the *Yearbook*.

In the light of these tests, it was therefore with the greatest prudence that Klaus finally agreed in 2000 to commence distribution of *Yearbook Online* in parallel with both the CD and book versions of the *Yearbook*. This has now made it possible to hyperlink together all the UIA database entries (organizations, problems, strategies, biographies; bibliographies, meetings, human development, values) within the Web environment. The arrangements between KGS and UIA in this respect could only be viable with the mutual confidence and trust of which Klaus has long proven to be the prime guarantor.
A new agreement in 2001 adds a statistical/graphics volume into the 38th edition of the Yearbook series (now to be 5 physical volumes) – the first addition since the arrangements began in 1982. This makes the total number of pages published through the UIA-KGS agreements enabled by Klaus Saur close to 120,000 -- bringing the total number of characters published close to one billion (depending on Manfred Link’s verification)! Truly a fruitful partnership of which Paul Otlet would have approved.