



the number of partnership arrangements with additional radio stations in the Caribbean region.

Mr. Chairman,

Turning now to the question of the further rationalization of the network of UN information centres, CARICOM delegations have taken due note of the fact that the initial policy approach leading to the consolidation of UNICs into one or more regional hubs has had to be recalibrated due to the difficult financial situation confronting DPI and consequently its inability to open fully staffed and resourced new regional hubs.

The UNIC Port of Spain already has regional outreach for the English speaking Caribbean. We have noted that it is among those centres whose host Governments DPI will be approaching in light of the cost of its operations. This matter is receiving the careful attention of the competent authorities in Port of Spain. The UNIC Port of Spain has, as part of its mandate, important public information dissemination functions regarding the United Nations in Trinidad and Tobago and in the Caribbean States which it serves. It is our hope that a mutually satisfactory arrangement can be arrived at between the host Government and the UN whereby the UNIC Port of Spain can continue to operate from Trinidad and Tobago and would at the same time be able to discharge efficiently and cost effectively its responsibilities, not only to the Government and People of Trinidad and Tobago, but also to the other countries of the Caribbean sub regions which fall within its sphere of operations. We, accordingly, look forward to the initiation of those consultations between our respective authorities.

In this connection as well and notwithstanding the financial strictures under which the Department continues to operate, CARICOM delegations would wish to reiterate their request that favourable consideration be given to posting a national information officer to satisfy the UN information needs of the northern Caribbean Island territories as well as Belize, which person could be housed within the UNDP office in Kingston, Jamaica.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, CARICOM delegations pay particular attention to the work of the DPI in the dissemination of information on UN activities world wide, are supportive of additional funding being made available to DPI to discharge its responsibilities at Headquarters and in the field and are firmly of the view that telling the UN story to as wide an audience as is possible is an absolute imperative if the UN is to command world wide respect and admiration for all the admirable ways in which it has helped humanity to achieve its common goals over these almost sixty (60) years.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.