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Dear Colleagues:

A number of you had requested a copy of my remarks which I gave at the IAMCR General Assembly meeting in Barcelona, July 20, 1988.

Since there was no opportunity for distribution of this paper at the time of the conference, I am enclosing a copy for your consideration.

Cordially,

Hamid Mowlana

Speech delivered at the General Assembly of the International  
Association for Mass Communication Research, Barcelona, Spain,  
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IAMCR AND ITS FUTURE ACTIVITIES:

SOME SUGGESTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

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1) The Office of the Presidency

It is necessary to establish a new infrastructure for IAMCR in which the president and the other executive committee officers can divide the labor and be more effective in their own specific tasks and operational work. IAMCR cannot continue to count upon the administrative facilities available to the president and certainly not if, in the future, there is going to be a new president every four years.

The current infrastructure, although useful and in many instances very effective in the past, at the present rate of growth of the association, is not the best model for an international organization of this size. The current infrastructure establishes and reinforces the dependency situation which is neither desirable nor, in my opinion, in the interests of the association.

## 2) Sound Financial Base for IAMCR

IAMCR must have a sound financial base. A working group or a committee should be set up to investigate the financial and practical problems involved in the operation of IAMCR and to propose viable solutions to take effect before the next General Assembly.

My own review of other associations' financial bases indicates that IAMCR is in a better financial situation than is sometimes expressed. Given the very minimal production of IAMCR in the way of publications, monographs, journals, etc., and the fact that all sections are completely supported by the institutions of their respective presidents, I believe that a reasonable course of action can be drawn to generate a secure financial base for IAMCR at the current rate of membership. But I believe we must go beyond what we have today.

A number of rigorous steps and campaigns can be launched to enhance the financial bases of IAMCR. These may include grants from international organizations which would be attracted to the present and future activities of IAMCR and grants from a number of non-profit organizations and independent foundations which might offer grants and endowments. A serious and aggressive effort on the part of the IAMCR must be made to recruit new members, to provide sound administrative procedures for annual collection of the association's dues, and to arrange special seminars and workshops in which further income might be generated.

## 3) Increasing and Broadening Membership

IAMCR membership has grown over the last two decades, but so have the research, scholarly, and policy activities in the field of communication, especially on the international scene. We should not be at all content with the numbers of our current membership. Steps must be taken to broaden the membership of the association to bring to our activities scholars from different disciplines whose backgrounds might not necessarily be in mass media or journalism but who are engaged in and are making substantial contributions to all fields of communication for which IAMCR has been active and has different sections and interest groups. Most important of all, women members must be brought to the IAMCR's decision-making process.

In short, a rigorous and systematic recruiting effort must be undertaken by the association designed to recruit young researchers and scholars from around the world, especially from the Third World.

4) Participation of Members in the Association's Affairs

We should ensure more participation of members in the association's affairs. This would require establishment of a number of working groups or ad hoc committees which might study or engage in some aspects of the association's developmental work. This participation can take the form of establishing formal program committees, membership committee, publications committee, etc., which would review, analyze, and make recommendations to the executive committee and the international council.

5) More Third World Membership

Traditionally, the association has had a large membership from Europe and North America. This is understandable given the history of the association and the political, economic, and financial factors contributing to this situation; however, the time has come in which the association must make further efforts to internationalize and globalize itself. This can be done only if diverse geopolitical and cultural areas are represented and are given responsibilities for active and greater participation. Communication over the last ten years has been a growing area of inquiry and research in a number of regions. The growing number of working scholars and researchers in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and other parts of the world must be brought into the association's activities and membership. Thus, one of the major efforts of the association must be to design a program to materialize these objectives.

6) Cooperation with International Organizations

The association has had a long and profitable cooperation with UNESCO and a number of other international organizations, but the time has come for the association to make further efforts in establishing scholarly and scientific linkages and bridges between itself and other social science and international organizations active and interested in communication. Again, this will require programs and a commitment beyond the acknowledgment of the importance of these items.

In the past, a number of joint symposia and meetings have been arranged between IAMCR and various international groups. These have provided very useful ground for further expansion that, if not realized, might end up being only a one shot process and being detrimental to more long range and permanent associations and relationships.

7) Establishment of Formal Newsletter and International Journal

Serious and urgent efforts ought to be taken to establish a formal and regular newsletter for IAMCR. Furthermore, similar efforts must be taken to find both the financial as well as the intellectual resources for the establishment of an international journal that can be a true forum of research, policy issues, and dialogue. In short, we need to have a completely new infrastructure for the association's scientific and scholarly communications.

8) Better and Balanced Flow of Information Among Membership

The association is in need of better and more balanced flow of information than is now currently available to its members. This can be done in great part, in my opinion, if the above factors are taken seriously and programs and plans are designed and implemented to realize these objectives. Our association must give a sense of community, solidarity, and internationalism to its members. And this can be done only if we improve the quality of information flow among our membership.

9) Support for Workshops, Symposia, and Seminars

The association's major assembly is of course every two years with a number of small meetings in between. Over the years, a number of sections and many individual members have been actively participating in many other associations and fora along the lines of the IAMCR's activities. These individual and at times group activities have been extremely useful, and it is precisely this participation which the association should enhance and develop further. This can be done only if the association takes the leadership in promoting these ideas by giving financial, technical, and other supportive facilities for workshops, symposia, and seminars in which members can participate.

Therefore, the association must go beyond its conventional conferences and meetings and explore the possibilities of joint research on comparative and international levels with other international organizations in the social science field as well as policies areas.

10) Research and Dialogue

Finally, IAMCR must encourage diverse research, explore progressive and critical issues of contemporary communications fields, and provide the climate for dialogue and discussion on the role of communication in international community.