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Activities of the Department of Public Information

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The mandate of the Department of Public Information is to strategically communicate the work and purposes of the United Nations to achieve the greatest public impact. To accomplish this task, the Department has adopted a more strategic approach to its work, focused on setting well-defined communications goals, identifying target audiences, assigning roles to various actors and re-disseminators and establishing ways to measure the impact of its activities. The new communications strategy is built on a closer relationship between the Department and its network of United Nations information centres and the other United Nations departments and offices, the family of United Nations organizations and a global network of over 1,500 civil society organizations.

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 61/121 B, summarizes the key advances made by the Department over the past six months (from July 2006 to February 2007) in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience.



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/121 B, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its twenty-eighth session and requested the Secretary-General to continue reporting to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called on the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information, which met in January 2007, advised the Department that, in compliance with the current policy of streamlining reporting by the Secretariat, the information requested by the Assembly should be combined and clustered around three thematic areas. Accordingly, the first two reports submitted for the consideration of the Committee at its twenty-ninth session address requests for information on specific areas such as the activities and strategic directions of the network of United Nations information centres (A/AC.198/2007/2) and the United Nations website (A/AC.198/2007/3). The present, third, report covers the overall activities of the Department and provides information on the remaining areas about which the Assembly requested information. In addition, the Assembly, in its resolution 61/235, endorsed a recommendation by the Committee of Programme Coordination¹ requesting the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Committee on Information, on the further development of the knowledge-sharing initiatives of the Secretariat. This information is also contained in the present report.

II. General activities of the Department of Public Information: adopting a strategic approach

3. As a result of changes introduced over the past five years, the Department has adopted a more strategic approach to its work, focusing on setting well-defined communications goals, identifying target audiences, assigning roles to various actors and re-disseminators and finding ways to measure the impact of its activities. This new orientation is built on a closer working relationship with three distinct sets of collaborators: the network of United Nations information centres, other United Nations departments and offices and the family of United Nations organizations and a global network of over 1,500 civil society organizations.

Client orientation

4. The mission of the Department is to help fulfil the substantive purposes of the United Nations by strategically communicating the activities and concerns of the Organization to achieve the greatest public impact. In order to achieve this goal, the Department holds close consultations with some 50 departments and United Nations offices and 26 field missions, which are identified as its “clients”. As substantive offices supporting the implementation of United Nations priorities, these clients are responsible for generating the raw material the Department needs for setting

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 16 and corrigendum (A/61/16 and Corr.1), para. 377 (f).*

priorities and identifying key messages. The task of the Department, as a body specialized in providing information, is to take that content, repackage it for various target audiences and promote it globally. This is done using traditional means of communication such as print, television and radio, and, increasingly, through the use of new information and communications technology. This integrated approach is best illustrated in the successful implementation of communications campaigns on priority themes (see sect. III below).

United Nations Communications Group

5. The Department serves as the secretariat of the United Nations Communications Group, which was established in 2002 and now includes 41 offices from throughout the entire United Nations system of organizations. The Group, through its regular brainstorming meetings at United Nations Headquarters, issue-based task forces and annual sessions of heads of public information bodies, continues to coordinate the United Nations system's overall activities in the area of public information and communications. For example, the group has set up a task force on avian flu to craft communications and to coordinate the role of United Nations system participants. Similarly, United Nations system partners are working together on a common communications approach to climate change. A task force on sport for peace and development, which includes 25 United Nations programmes and agencies, has developed a business plan for the 2007-2009 period, providing a framework for implementation of the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace, as presented in the report of the Secretary-General.²

6. At the fifth annual meeting of the United Nations Communications Group, held in Vienna on 28 and 29 June 2006, it was stressed that while it was important for United Nations system partners to work together and speak with the same voice, it was equally important to recognize that each United Nations organization had its own expertise and priorities. The members agreed that the Communications Group remained the most effective platform for advancing the common agenda of the United Nations system.

Publicizing the activities of the General Assembly

7. Following the adoption in 2004 of a communications strategy to better publicize the work and decisions of the General Assembly,³ the Department continued to pursue additional ways to fulfil this task. Working with the staff and the spokeswoman for the President of the General Assembly, the Department collaborated on an information programme for the debate of the Assembly of 27 November 2006 on the Millennium Development Goals. It was a two-pronged effort: press materials on the Goals from over the course of the last year were provided for reference purposes to the President's team, while the Department drafted and distributed approved press materials and statements by Member States in the Assembly. A press conference was organized for the President of the General Assembly and a senior official of the Islamic Development Bank, who announced a major financial contribution for implementing the Goals. Collaboration with the Office of the President of the Assembly also extended to one of the outstanding United Nations events of the year, the successful conclusion of four years of

² A/61/373.

³ A/AC.198/2004/6.

negotiations on the draft Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. With support from the Department on content and timing, the President of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly addressed an enthusiastic crowd at the conclusion of the negotiations late in the night of 25 August 2006.

8. The President of the General Assembly also addressed two events organized by the Department in 2006 that were attended by students: the International Day of Peace; and Human Rights Day. Using multiple technologies, both events were video-linked and webcast, connecting hundreds of students, non-governmental organizations, teachers and distinguished guests at United Nations Headquarters with others at several global sites.

9. The *UN Chronicle* provided in-depth coverage of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly in both its print and online editions. Issue 3, 2006 of the print edition devoted its cover, “Bringing the UN Forward”, and its cover story, “An Uneven Past”, to the three women who have served as Presidents of the General Assembly, including an exclusive interview with the President of the sixty-first session. The Department also conducted a briefing for non-governmental organizations by the spokeswoman for the President of the General Assembly on the session’s general debate. Activities of the Assembly and its President were also featured in several publications by United Nations information centres.

Coordination between the Department of Public Information and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

10. The Spokesperson’s Office works closely with the Department to share information and ensure consistency in the messages communicated by the Organization. Each morning the strategic communications meeting brings together the Spokesperson and the Deputy Spokesperson with senior officials of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Department to discuss the communications aspects of the most pressing issues of the day and to provide guidance to the Spokesperson for the noon briefing. The Spokesperson’s Office then holds its planning meeting for the daily noon briefing with operational staff from United Nations Radio, the United Nations News Service and other colleagues in the Department as well as with the spokesperson of the President of the General Assembly. A preview of the noon briefing is shared with the Department. Throughout the day, the Spokesperson’s Office works hand-in-hand with staff of the Department to ensure the most efficient and effective media coverage of United Nations affairs. Staff of the United Nations information centres work closely in support of the Spokesperson’s Office during the Secretary-General’s official visits to countries where they are located.

Multilingualism

11. The report of the Secretary-General on multilingualism,⁴ submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/309, provides a comprehensive assessment of multilingualism in the Secretariat and highlights the role of the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information as the Coordinator for multilingualism. The United Nations information centres play a very important role in promoting multilingual communications by the Secretariat, ensuring effective

⁴ A/61/317.

distribution of United Nations documentation and wide dissemination of its work. Human resources remain the key to the success of effective multilingualism within the Secretariat. Various measures are analysed in the report, in particular the language training programme, training in general and recruitment for peacekeeping operations. A number of recommendations are also presented.

A culture of evaluation

12. With the successful completion of a three-year pilot project carried out in conjunction with the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Department has now integrated the systematic evaluation of its activities and products at all levels. Over the past year, in an effort to further expand and improve its outreach to young people, the Department focused on soliciting feedback from educators and students on its various products and activities. A survey of teachers found that they consider the United Nations to be a very authoritative source for information on global issues. Overall, 95 per cent stated that having the United Nations as a producer of an educational product played an important role in their decision to incorporate it in their lesson plans. In particular, 44 per cent believed that United Nations materials were useful for teaching students about specific global issues and 41 per cent stated that their primary usage of United Nations educational materials was to sensitize students to other cultures and experiences.

III. Thematic communications campaigns

High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development

13. The High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development of the General Assembly, held on 14 and 15 September 2006, provided an opportunity to focus on the increasingly important issue of migration and development. To publicize the event and introduce the issues to the public, the Department produced a 10-part press kit incorporating newly available statistics and policy analysis of the United Nations Secretariat. The kit included seven separate fact sheets, each covering a region or important subregion. Media coverage worldwide was not only ample in quantity, but objective and thoughtful in tone.

Box 1

Media coverage of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held on 14 and 15 September 2006, was generated, inter alia, by: the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service, National Public Radio, Reuters, the *International Herald Tribune*, *The Jakarta Post*, *Prensa Latina* and the *Hindustan Times*. Key messages on the role of migration framed by the Department were picked up in over 90 per cent of media coverage. Moreover, only about 1 per cent of the coverage took an overtly negative tack; the remainder was either positive or objective in tone.

World Summit on the Information Society

14. The first World Information Society Day, 17 May 2006, was the kick-off point for a campaign reaching into 2007 to bring global attention to the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, adopted at the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in November 2005, and to raise awareness of the advantages that the Internet and other technologies bring to development. Colourful web pages transmitted these messages worldwide in six languages, and the event was marked with celebrations around the globe (one attracting 10,000 celebrants), winning the event the informal title in the media of “World Internet Day”. A fact sheet, prepared by the Department for the board meeting of the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development on 27 September 2006, discussed prospects for closing the digital divide. This fact sheet, which charted the speed with which the information revolution is taking place in the developing world, as well as the gap that still remains, was used by the Executive Coordinator of the Global Alliance on a worldwide speaking tour.

15. The Department also brought attention to one of the main outcomes of the Tunis Summit, the Internet Governance Forum, and the holding of its first session in Athens from 30 October to 2 November 2006, which the Department attended in order to carry out media outreach.

Box 2

Major news outlets that covered the Internet Governance Forum included Agence France Presse, EFE, the leading Spanish news agency, Radio France Internationale, Kyodo News, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *The Observer* (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, *La Stampa* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

“Delivering as One”

16. In its effort to generate maximum media coverage of the launch of “Delivering as One”, the report of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment,⁵ the Department of Public Information adopted a two-tier system of messaging, one for the spokespersons of the Panel and another for United Nations spokespersons and Directors of United Nations information centres. Press products and activities included an in-depth question and answer session, providing forthright answers to critical questions as background guidance for the Directors of information centres as well as Panel members, a press kit with a signature “Delivering as One” design, an advance embargoed background briefing by the executive director of the Panel secretariat and a press conference by Panel members for the launch of the report.

⁵ A/61/583.

Box 3

Key media coverage of the launch of the report was provided by: the BBC World Service (two television stories), BBC Online, the *International Herald Tribune*, CNN Español, *The Washington Times*, CBS News, *Forbes* Magazine, the *Ottawa Citizen*, *The Scotsman*, *The Norway Post*, *The Guardian*, the *Toronto Star*, Voice of America, the *Hindustan Times*, the *Mail & Guardian*, allAfrica.com. Singapore's Channel NewsAsia, and Pakistan's biggest English-language newspaper, *Dawn*, along with the *Pakistan Times* and the *Business Recorder*.

The question of Palestine

17. The Department continued to implement the Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine by training nine Palestinian journalists (five women and four men) in November and December 2006. The programme included a week-long academic training at the graduate level at Columbia University and training in website development at Headquarters. All participants expressed satisfaction with the programme and urged that it be continued.

New Partnership for Africa's Development

18. The Department continued to promote the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Africa's blueprint for development, and to emphasize United Nations support for its implementation. In October 2006, the Department organized a press conference for the Special Adviser on Africa to help publicize and explain the findings and recommendations contained in the fourth consolidated report of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of and international support for NEPAD, which generated articles in the Associated Press, *The Washington Post* and the London *Guardian*, among other outlets. Stories on the goals, challenges and achievements of NEPAD also appeared regularly in the Department's quarterly magazine, *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau*, 35,000 copies of which are printed and disseminated worldwide. The stories, presented as part of a new series, "NEPAD in Action", also appeared on the magazine's website (<http://www.un.org/AR>).

"The Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations"

19. The Department continued to promote awareness of the need to prevent genocide and assist genocide survivors, as part of the two-year (2006-2007) "The Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations" outreach programme (mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/225). Following a round-table discussion at the United Nations on the twelfth anniversary of the Rwanda genocide in April and an event focusing on sexual violence against women in the Great Lakes region in May 2006, the Department launched other outreach efforts. It worked with a civil society organization to prepare a photo and text exhibit to promote awareness of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, actions to help prevent future genocides and the needs of women survivors of rape during genocide. The Department has also created and is finalizing a website, prepared background papers for distribution to civil society

groups and obtained the agreement of a number of film producers to make their films on this subject available for showings in Africa and elsewhere.

Alliance of Civilizations

20. The launch of the “Alliance of Civilizations” report of the High-level Group in November 2006 was marked by a press briefing at Headquarters and press materials and guidance for United Nations information centres to promote the event locally. Interviews with members of the Group were recorded in Istanbul by UN Television and disseminated via UNifeed to Associated Press Television News and Reuters.

Box 4

English coverage of the “Alliance of Civilizations” report in the Middle East was provided, inter alia, by *Al Jazeera*, *The Peninsula* (Qatar), the *Middle East Times*, the *Daily Times* (Pakistan) and the *Tehran Times*. The BBC World Service also provided significant coverage.

Violence against children

21. For the launch of the report of the independent expert for the United Nations study on violence against children (A/61/299) in October 2006, the Department provided communications support to the study secretariat, including media outreach to correspondents at Headquarters, and mobilized the network of United Nations information centres to conduct media outreach locally. Two op-ed pieces (one by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and one by the independent expert for the study), targeted at different regions, were successfully placed by the information centres in 26 publications in 20 countries. The Department also assisted in the organization of a press conference at Headquarters.

Box 5

The report on violence against children was widely covered in all regions, with articles featuring the Deputy United Nations High Commissioner and/or the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights appearing in *The Independent* (London), *The New York Times*, the *Toronto Star*, the *Irish Examiner*, *The Age* (Australia), Canadian Television (CTV) and *Prothom Alo* (Bangladesh).

Millennium Development Goals

22. To raise awareness of the Millennium Development Goals and to create momentum for their achievement, the Department worked with the Millennium Campaign office in organizing the “Stand Up against Poverty, Stand Up for the Millennium Development Goals” event, which was held on 16 October 2006 at Headquarters. The United Nations information centres carried out numerous “Stand Up” events in many countries. The Department also acted as coordinator for the

event and also for the observance of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, held at United Nations Headquarters on 17 October 2006.

Box 6

The “Stand Up” event succeeded in mobilizing the participation of over 23 million people worldwide, making it the largest event ever organized for a Guinness World Record.

IV. Role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping

23. With the recent surge in demand for United Nations peacekeeping, the work of the Department in the area of peacekeeping and the level of its cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have greatly expanded. One situation being given heightened attention is the crisis in Darfur. In addition to working closely with the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and the African Union on communications strategies, the Department also undertook the work of identifying and recruiting the public information staff who are being deployed to Darfur, as well as developing their operational plans and tasks. On a more global level, the Department continued to produce regular internal guidance on developments regarding United Nations involvement in Darfur. The Department has also been playing an important role in the planning of possible missions in Chad and the Central African Republic by participating in the development of an operational plan and public information strategy and by identifying and lining up rapid deployment staff for the advance team.

24. In 2006, coordination with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was further consolidated by the creation of a joint public information working group, which now meets on a daily basis. The focus of the group’s work is on developing an overall strategy to increase awareness of the achievements and challenges of United Nations peacekeeping and on the further development of internal communications promoting pride of purpose in the Organization’s peacekeeping efforts. Challenges in identifying and recruiting key public information staff at the senior level and increasing the roster, in particular of Arabic and French-speaking public information staff, are also issues on which the group is focusing.

25. The Department played an active part in creating a media strategy for and organizing coverage of the High-level Conference on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations and non-governmental organizations Personnel on 4 December 2006. The Department also played an advisory role in assisting the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the missions in responding to media reports of sexual exploitation and abuse involving United Nations peacekeeping personnel and in helping public information offices at the missions to use the standard operating procedures on communications and sexual exploitation and abuse jointly developed by the Department and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

26. Other activities of the Department during this period include:

(a) Participation in the technical assessment mission to Nepal and the development of a plan and a communications strategy to launch the public information dimension of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN);

(b) Production of the first magazine on United Nations police in November 2006;

(c) Continuous updating of a wide range of statistics on peacekeeping deployment;

(d) Issuance of the *United Nations Peace Operations: Year in Review 2006*;

(e) Initiating videoconferences between the Department, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and mission public information components to find mutual solutions to communications challenges and to increase coverage of each mission;

(f) Coordination with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the Strategic Military Cell of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on developing communications plans and civilian-military public information capacity.

27. In the run-up to the historic elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in July and November 2006, the Department created a communications strategy in tandem with the public information strategy of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Other landmark developments, such as the completion of the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) on 31 December 2006, were highlighted by the Department through its information outlets. In addition, the Department also organized a travelling photo exhibit of the Mission's work, inaugurated at Headquarters in January 2007 and replicated on the web.

Box 7

The Economist (United Kingdom), in a lead story in January 2007, featured United Nations peacekeepers on its cover and highlighted the success of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in overseeing the country's transition to free elections after decades of war. "But", the weekly added, "that is just one of 18 different missions, in which about 100,000 United Nations peacekeepers are deployed".

V. News services

New technology

28. The Department is leveraging the Internet and digital technology to provide enhanced and more integrated access to all its news products. The present News Centre, audio/visual and press release sites and their underlying production platforms are being revamped to provide a user-friendly gateway (including access for users with disabilities) to the wealth of news material produced on a daily basis.

Many of the revised pages will build user communities through user registration, surveys, polls, e-mail alerts and user feedback forms. Once the full package of pages is deployed, new functionalities will be offered.

29. In the audio/visual area, the phased introduction of new web pages is already automating many traditional functions. Users wishing to access United Nations photos can now conduct online research, download searchable photos, enter requests and have a personal history of all high-resolution photo requests, thereby saving staff time allocated to these functions. Also, in order to reduce the staff time taken to answer questions, an expanded “frequently asked questions” section anticipates and addresses common user inquiries. The radio pages, which will have a common organization for all language units while at the same time retaining the individuality of each unit, are being adapted to facilitate continuous updating of audio files and will be integrated seamlessly with an online audio library. The television pages will also be developed along the lines of the photo and radio pages. The new UNifeed page will be an important innovation, and its integration with the production hub will ultimately facilitate the distribution of searchable broadcast quality video.

30. Modernization of audio/visual production systems also continues. Much progress has been achieved with the “RadioMan” radio module, which was introduced in 2004. RadioMan is an online audio editing system with a database that permits the retrieval of audio for editing as live recording is under way. When the system is fully implemented with the on-air playback module, workflow in radio production and dissemination, as well as archiving, will be significantly streamlined. Web publishing will be automated and the benefit of having audio clips pre-positioned in the play list will permit the Department to update its daily radio news programmes more often and more easily.

31. To provide more resilience to the networked interactive content access (NICA) system, an IBM tool that provides the database for United Nations photos, the Department is working closely with the Information Technology Services Division to migrate the system to the United Nations standard Linux operating system this year. The Department is now posting high resolution photos on the web, and using the NICA system, entire photo galleries may now be posted easily to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management monitors throughout the United Nations complex.

Box 8

Three large plasma monitors will soon be placed in strategic locations in the United Nations Headquarters complex to display United Nations news and thematic photos.

Radio

32. In its ongoing efforts to bring the core messages of the Organization to the widest possible global audience, United Nations Radio has continued to expand and strengthen its partnerships with a broad range of local, national and regional broadcasters, increasing the number of such partners from 190 in June 2006 to 201 in February 2007, including: Radio Nacional del Perú; Rádio Guaíba and Jovem

Pan, Brazil; Real FM Radio of Grenada; Radio Citadelle, Radio Vénus and Radio Etense, Haiti; Radio Choice FM, Ghana; Voice of Maldives; and the trend news agency in Azerbaijan. The Department is currently negotiating partnership agreements with outlets in Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, which will significantly extend its outreach to that part of the world.

33. United Nations Radio programmes are now also available via the web to a number of media entities, including the World Radio Network, the Asia Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development and Université Radiophonique et Télévisuelle Internationale, which offer United Nations Radio programmes to a variety of radio stations.

34. In the past two years, United Nations Radio has vastly increased its audience in North America and Europe. Two producers, supported by the United Nations Foundation, offer short United Nations news reports and sound bites to radio stations over the web. Many stations and networks in the United States of America, including the 1,600-station Clear Channel group, air the material regularly, and the European Broadcasting Union disseminates this material to 79 national broadcasters.

35. The reach of United Nations Radio has also expanded in the francophone world. The Department recently began targeted distribution of United Nations Radio programmes in French to 200 private, commercial and community radio stations in Africa, using the World Space Afristar satellite and the Radio France Internationale network of stations, which access the programmes via its download service.

36. The nature of United Nations Radio's partnerships has become more dynamic. Radio Shanghai not only broadcasts United Nations Radio reports, it also sends information about the activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other agencies. Similar arrangements have been worked out with other partners, including Deutsche Welle and the Voice of Russia. Interactivity with audiences has also increased, providing valuable feedback.

Box 9

The United Nations Radio Chinese-language unit contributes a variety of United Nations-related issues to KWRM-AM, a California radio station that broadcasts a one-hour monthly live talk show targeting the local Chinese-speaking audience.

37. United Nations Radio continues to produce a 15-minute daily news and features programme in every official language. In addition, each language unit produces supplemental material such as weekly magazine programmes. The English-language unit produces the greatest number of these in order to serve regional audiences in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. The Department continues to produce programmes in several non-official languages, including Portuguese and Kiswahili.

Box 10

“According to my experience, United Nations Radio plays a crucial role in providing objective and accurate information, which is much needed in our world today. This information is also important as it is focused on people and populations. The United Nations has a mandate to look after the world ... United Nations Radio helps it substantially by playing this role”.

Dr. Fernando Henrique Cardozo, former President of Brazil in an e-mail message to the Department of Public Information.

Television

38. United Nations Television provides coverage of events at United Nations Headquarters that is accessed directly by the international broadcasting syndicators, Associated Press Television News and Reuters Television, as well as by a number of large broadcasting organizations, including ABC, Al-Arabiya, Al-Jazeera, BBC, CBS, CCTV, CNN, the European Broadcasting Union, FOX News, NBC and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). Other broadcasting organizations, including German and Japanese media, receive the signal indirectly. Particularly significant has been the growth of UNifeed, the United Nations Television satellite feed. This service, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), provides hundreds of broadcasters with video of three to four stories a day six-days-a week, some from Headquarters, some from the field, including from peacekeeping and other field missions.

Box 11

Since 1 May 2006, the Department has been tracking the usage of its videos. Of the stations that are monitored (which does not include all stations that receive video feed), results show that, by early February 2007, at least 558 stations and networks have used the UNifeed service.

39. The launch of the new monthly television magazine programme, *21st Century*, has provided a great opportunity to expand United Nations Television's global audience. The programme includes high-quality human interest stories, easily adaptable to language versions, reflecting some of the most important global issues in which the United Nations family is engaged. The programme is carried by a number of broadcasting companies, including: Al Jazeera English, CCTV, Bhutan Broadcasting Service, DK4 (Denmark), France 24, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, Namibia Broadcasting Corporation, SABC Africa, Radio televisión Española, Viet Nam Television and the Africa Channel, with many other stations also showing interest in the new format. Meanwhile, production continues on other products, including the award-winning *UN in Action* series.

Archives

40. The challenges of preserving and organizing United Nations audio/visual archives have become even more pressing with the impending commencement of the capital master plan to renovate United Nations Headquarters, during which time the archives must be relocated. Several steps are being taken to address this urgent matter: a core list of historical moving images is being prepared with a view to safeguarding this key collection in a suitable storage environment; a comprehensive selection of the Department's legacy photo records is being fed into the networked interactive content access (NICA) system; and the Department is playing an active role in an inter-organization group on archives at risk, which is concerned with safeguarding the world's premier audio/visual archives. An agreement has already been reached with the group to digitize selected materials showcasing United Nations milestones, which will be used to attract partners with expertise and resources to fully digitize the Organization's audio/visual archives.

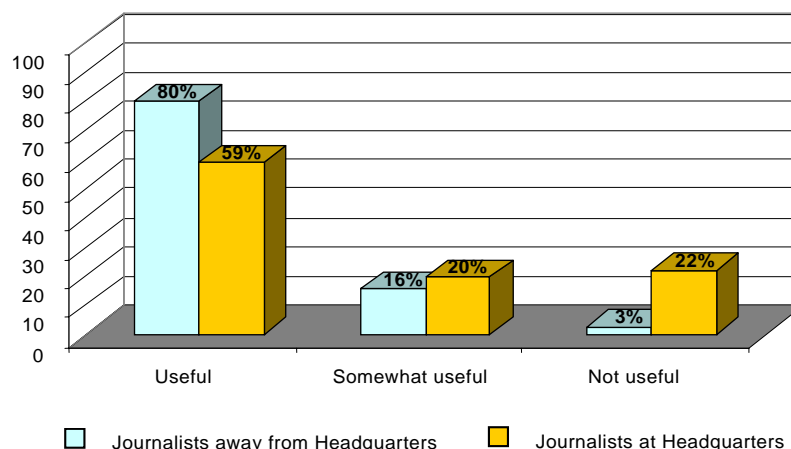
Press releases

41. In the year since the introduction of the new press release web page, launched in early 2006, Security Council and General Assembly statements continue to be posted on the Internet in batches in order to provide media and other clients with the materials they need well in advance of the issuance of the final press releases at the completion of official meetings. Efforts are currently under way to extend this service, on an as-possible basis, to selected meetings of the main subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Timely issuance of press releases has improved, with an increase from 70 to 80 per cent of the releases available within two hours after the end of a meeting. The Department makes every effort to harmonize coverage of all open meetings in the two working languages, English and French. While differences in style may sometimes occur, accuracy and objectivity remain the cornerstone in preparing press release summaries. Furthermore, as illustrated in figure 1, a combination of recent surveys and media analyses found that a majority both of journalists in the field and those accredited at Headquarters found press releases to be useful for their work.

News Centre

42. With its key focus on the provision of accurate and impartial coverage of breaking news about a wide range of United Nations activities, as well as easy access to related resources, the United Nations News Centre on the Organization's website continues to gain popularity among diverse audiences around the world. Traffic to the United Nations main news portal in all official languages has shown a steady increase, with the number of unique visits to the English site having grown from some 650,000 in December 2005 to nearly 997,000 in the same month of 2006. The site's e-mail service (in French and English) gained more than 3,000 new subscribers in 2006, along with increased use of the newly launched really simple syndication feeds service, which has facilitated access to the latest headlines from the United Nations News Centre for a variety of websites, personal web pages and individual users.

Figure 1
Usefulness of United Nations press releases for journalists
 (Percentage of respondents)



VI. Outreach services

Guided tours

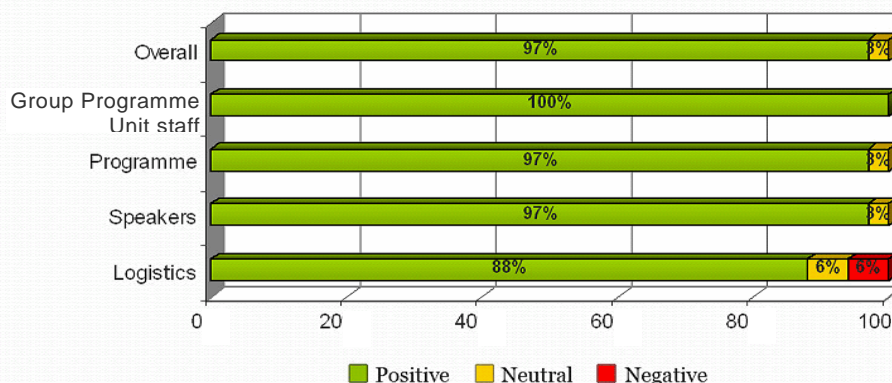
43. The Department continued to reach out to global audiences using innovative and less traditional means of communication, such as art exhibits, academic websites and seminars. In 2006, the number of people taking the guided tour rose to its highest level since 2000, to nearly 450,000, reflecting the rising trend of tourism in New York City. The guides adapt their tour narrative on a daily basis to reflect what is currently being considered by United Nations bodies and recent developments, and tailor their comments to better respond to the interests of their audience on any given tour.

Briefing programmes

44. In 2006, the Department continued to arrange in-house briefings, videoconferences and outside speaking engagements, reaching well over 40,000 individuals. Most of these briefings are organized in response to requests from educational institutions and teachers at the high school, undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as from non-governmental and civil society organizations. In a survey conducted in 2006, group leaders expressed a high rate of satisfaction (97 per cent) with regard to the services provided to them through the Speakers Bureau (see figure 2).

Figure 2
Ratings of the briefings programme

(Percentage of respondents)



Exhibits and special events

45. The nearly 1 million visitors who pass through the public lobby every year have free access to the major exhibits and displays organized by the Department, which numbered 15 in the last six months alone. An exhibition of cartoons from around the world was linked to the “Unlearning Intolerance” seminar on the role and responsibility of cartoonists in that endeavour. Other exhibitions dealt with the meeting of fourteenth century civilizations and was organized in the context of the initiative of the Alliance of Civilizations, together with a concert in the General Assembly Hall, which also paid tribute to outgoing Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Two other major exhibits flowing from Assembly mandates were those launched in January 2007 on the Holocaust against the Roma and Sinti, as well as one featuring the art of Holocaust survivors. A third was the exhibit commemorating the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, scheduled to begin in March 2007.

The capital master plan and the group programmes of the Department of Public Information

46. The outreach activities of guided tours, the organized group programmes and the United Nations bookshop will be drastically affected during the closure of the General Assembly Building during the renovation of the Headquarters complex, scheduled to take place between June 2008 and February 2011, since under the capital master plan, there will be no access for the general public or large groups to the Headquarters site. At the time of the writing of the present report, no provisions for the continuation of these services had been made, although alternative sites are being explored.

Outreach programme on the Holocaust and the United Nations

47. Since the establishment of the outreach programme on the Holocaust in January 2006, the Department has developed a truly international network of civil society groups, collaborating with world-renowned institutions and garnering the support of experts in the field of Holocaust and genocide studies. Through its film

series, briefings, discussion papers and innovative online information products, the key to the programme's success has been partnership. To that end, the Department has joined the working groups on Holocaust remembrance days and genocide prevention of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research. In January 2007, the Department organized a number of activities during Holocaust Remembrance Week, including: the annual observance, with a focus on the importance of education in ending discrimination; the screening of two films, "I Only Wanted to Live" and "Spell Your Name", co-sponsored by the Governments of Italy and Ukraine; and the launch of the Department's third discussion paper on the Holocaust. Distributed worldwide, these papers promote tolerance as a way to stop the spread of hatred that can lead to ethnic and religious violence. To facilitate the development of educational curricula by Member States, the Department, in partnership with Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris, the Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education at the University of Southern California and Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, launched a new online educational tool entitled, "Electronic notes for speakers", in English and French. One teacher said that this product made her job easier by combining visual testimony with factual information on the victims of the Holocaust.

Box 12

"We recommend that you use it in future events — it really helps [the teacher] make a point by putting faces and stories together with numbers."

Comment from a teacher who has used the "Electronic notes for speakers".

The Department also produced and distributed a DVD and other informational materials to the United Nations information centres and non-governmental organizations to assist them in organizing Holocaust remembrance days. A permanent exhibit at Headquarters is being developed. More details on the Department's activities are available in the report of the Secretary-General on the programme of outreach on the "Holocaust and the United Nations" (A/60/882).

Outreach to the academic community

48. Through its Academic Initiative Section, the Department continues to promote awareness of the role and work of the United Nations on priority issues and to inform and influence the public through academia and civil society organizations. With the help of its two flagship publications, the *UN Chronicle* and the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, as well as through its academic partnership programmes, the Department engages the worldwide public in dialogue on issues being dealt with by the Organization. During the reporting period, the fifty-eighth volume of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, covering events in 2004, was published.

49. A thorough evaluation of the *UN Chronicle* has determined that putting the journal online in all languages, beginning in 2007, and reorienting it more towards scholars and senior students will help increase its readership in all languages and

assist in the outreach efforts of the Department to the academic community and to the general public around the world. In November 2006, a focus group of academics and diplomats met to discuss and make recommendations on the thrust of the new academic initiative and the format and content of the *UN Chronicle*. Those recommendations are being taken into account in the re-orientation of the journal.

Box 13

Page views of the English and French online versions of the *UN Chronicle* totalled 1,716,310 from February 2006 to January 2007.

50. Working within the overall framework of its global agenda, the Department has continued to examine manifestations of intolerance, exploring ways to promote respect and understanding among peoples and ways in which education can help overcome intolerance. Particularly notable during this reporting period is the fifth “Unlearning Intolerance” seminar, entitled “Cartooning for peace: the responsibility of political cartoonists?”, held on 16 October 2006.

Publishing activities

51. The Department, through its Sales and Marketing Section, continues to extend the reach of the publishing activities of the United Nations and its agencies through its offices and bookshops in Geneva and New York, via 90 sales agents in 61 countries and, continuously, via its e-commerce driven website. The website is adding more than 200 new customers every month and currently features over 5,300 books and related products. Online sales from July 2006 through January 2007 increased by 33 per cent compared to the same period one year earlier.

52. United Nations bookshops continue to serve delegates, staff and visitors in New York and Geneva. A second location has been added at the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Pregny Gate, providing another outlet for sales and greater convenience for the community. Sales at the United Nations bookshop in New York increased by 15 per cent from July 2006 to January 2007, compared to the same period one year earlier. In an arrangement with UNDP, the Sales and Marketing Section provided logistical and distribution services for the 2006 edition of the *Human Development Report*, with the result that over 47,000 copies of the report were distributed to 145 UNDP offices worldwide.

53. In addition, *United Nations Development Business*, a print and online procurement publication of the Sales and Marketing Section, issued more than 3,000 procurement notices during the current reporting period, working with 15 agencies (including all the major multilateral development banks) and reaching more than 200 subscribers in over 100 countries.

The Department of Public Information and non-governmental organizations

54. The Department is continuously looking for ways to make its programmes and conferences more interesting and relevant. At the fifty-ninth annual DPI/NGO Conference (6-8 September 2006), entitled “Unfinished business: effective partnerships for human security and sustainable development”, speakers were

requested not to discuss theories and ideologies but rather to provide specific examples of projects, which, if emulated by others, could help to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Numerous projects and best practices were highlighted at the conference, including: the Millennium Villages Project, designed to alleviate poverty and promote sustainable development in rural communities; and a project sponsored by MTV that uses music videos to teach young people about HIV and AIDS. In addition, for the first time, a DVD-Rom was included with the final report, containing the archived webcasts of the entire conference.

55. The Department continues to expand the geographical representation of non-governmental organizations associated with it. Among the 28 newly associated non-governmental organizations there were four from Africa, one from Latin America, one from the Commonwealth of Independent States and four from the Asia and Pacific region.

Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists' Fellowship Programme

56. In 2006, 15 young journalists (6 from television media, 6 from print and 3 from radio) participated in the six-week Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists' Fellowship Programme, a training programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries and economies in transition. Ten of the participants were women. One of the innovations introduced in 2006 was briefings given by the chairman of the regional groups of the General Assembly. In their evaluation of the programme, the journalists found the two-day training at Columbia University, which included an advanced skills workshop in Internet journalism, especially productive for their professional development. As of 2006, approximately 378 broadcasters and journalists from more than 160 countries have taken part in the programme.

Box 14

"Before, I had this impression of a United Nations that was out of touch with 'normalcy' and small countries like mine, but through the briefings I have come to appreciate more all the efforts that the United Nations is putting into making this world a better place."

Written comment by a participant in the Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists' Fellowship Programme.

Messengers of Peace

57. On the International Day of Peace on 21 September 2006, the Secretary-General appointed world-renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma as the tenth United Nations Messenger of Peace. On the same day, five Messengers of Peace, Michael Douglas, Vijay Amritraj, Jane Goodall, Anna Cataldi and Mr. Ma, participated in a videoconference with more than 600 students at United Nations Headquarters and at three peacekeeping missions in Kosovo, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On 14 September 2006, Messenger of Peace Elie Wiesel and George Clooney participated in a highly publicized meeting of the Security Council on the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Two United Nations public service announcements, on

the illicit trade in small arms and the International Year of Microcredit, featuring Messenger of Peace Michael Douglas, were shown to large audiences at a United Nations film festival organized by the United Nations Association of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in December 2006. Mr. Douglas was featured in another public service announcement to promote a six-part United Nations Television series, entitled “A Dollar a Day”, which focuses on poverty and the broader Millennium Development Goals. Messenger of Peace Anna Cataldi spearheaded the development of a photographic exhibition and the creation of a DVD and public service announcement to raise global awareness about the dangers of tuberculosis. The project, to be launched at United Nations Headquarters in observance of World Tuberculosis Day 2007 (24 March), has been developed by the Department in close cooperation with the Stop TB Department of the World Health Organization (WHO).

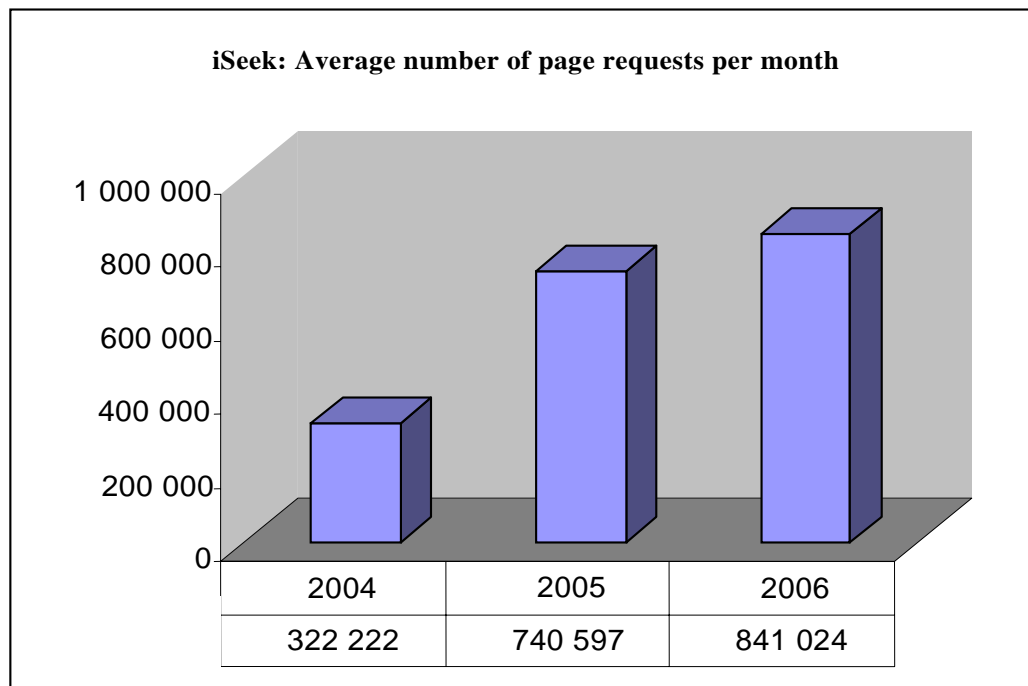
58. A website for the Messengers of Peace has been designed, with profiles of the prominent personalities appointed by the Secretary-General and an overview of all their outreach activities on behalf of the United Nations.

VII. Knowledge sharing and library services

Knowledge-sharing initiative

59. Over the last two years, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and Knowledge-Sharing Centre has developed three specific knowledge-sharing activities: the enhancement of the United Nations Intranet, iSeek; the setting up of a personal knowledge-management service; and the launching of a series of lectures and conversations. The report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the thematic evaluation of knowledge-management networks in the pursuit of the goals of the Millennium Declaration (E/AC.51/2006/2), contains a recommendation recognizing the role the Library plays in leading the Secretariat Task Force on Knowledge Sharing.

60. As a first step in developing a strategy on knowledge management for the Secretariat, as was recommended in the above-mentioned report, an internal communications strategy, focusing on the use of iSeek, was prepared in coordination with the internal communications working group. After approximately two years of progressive enhancement, staff are consulting iSeek with increased regularity to locate information and share stories and experience. Staff in all duty stations, United Nations information centres and peacekeeping missions participated in a needs assessment survey on iSeek conducted in the last quarter of 2006. Almost 2,000 staff responded, providing valuable data to evaluate the impact of the site. Nearly two thirds of all respondents stated that they were “overall very satisfied” or “satisfied” with iSeek. When asked about improvements or tools they would like to have access to on iSeek, respondents overwhelmingly quoted “search”, “document management tools” and “desktop videoconferencing” as their top choices. Portal technology, which is planned as part of the United Nations global information and communications technology (ICT) strategy, will help improve the ease of linking to currently discrete databases, management tools and applications and other information resources, although considerable work needs to be done to find better and more coherent ways of managing the Organization’s information and substantive content.

Figure 3

61. Through another knowledge-sharing initiative, personal knowledge management, coaching and consulting services are provided to staff and delegations to assist them in learning techniques for managing information more effectively. Technical briefing notes, called “knowledge pointers”, which were developed to support this new service, give tips on using software applications, managing e-mail archives and searching the Internet as well as a range of other information handling topics. The knowledge pointers are also used as training guides in courses and coaching sessions, and pointers on the core work of the United Nations are electronically accessible through iSeek.

62. With a view to providing an open forum for staff and delegations to discuss the core work of the United Nations, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Lectures and Conversations Series, supported by the Government of Sweden, was launched in 2005 during the Dag Hammarskjöld centenary. Over the last year, events covered the following issues: the role of the international civil servant; understanding knowledge management; and enterprise search and content management. In addition, the screening of a documentary on Dag Hammarskjöld’s tenure as Secretary-General was organized. The theme for the series for 2007 is “Managing change”.

Research services and training

63. In response to the increasing availability of online information, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library has developed new training courses on identifying, evaluating and making efficient use of the high-quality online tools and databases maintained by the Library, subscription databases and publicly available websites. Over 100 training sessions were held in 2006, at which the number of attendees

increased by 24 per cent over the previous year. Introductory research courses and online informational products (for example, United Nations Pulse or the United Nations Research Guide) remain popular, especially with new staff of the Secretariat and the Permanent Missions, owing in part to the complexity and uniqueness of United Nations documentation. The Library also provides customized training sessions for specialized audiences in conjunction with ongoing issues on the United Nations agenda.

Partnerships

64. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library is working with other libraries in the United Nations system through the inter-agency Knowledge Sharing and Information Management Group of United Nations System Libraries to identify common approaches and methodologies, an issue that was discussed at its annual three-day meeting in October 2006, which was attended by representatives of 20 libraries in the common system. Many libraries participating in this informal group are part of the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries. In addition, close collaboration among these libraries is carried out through the United Nations System Electronic Information Acquisition Consortium, which continues to negotiate significant discounts on electronic resources for United Nations system libraries.

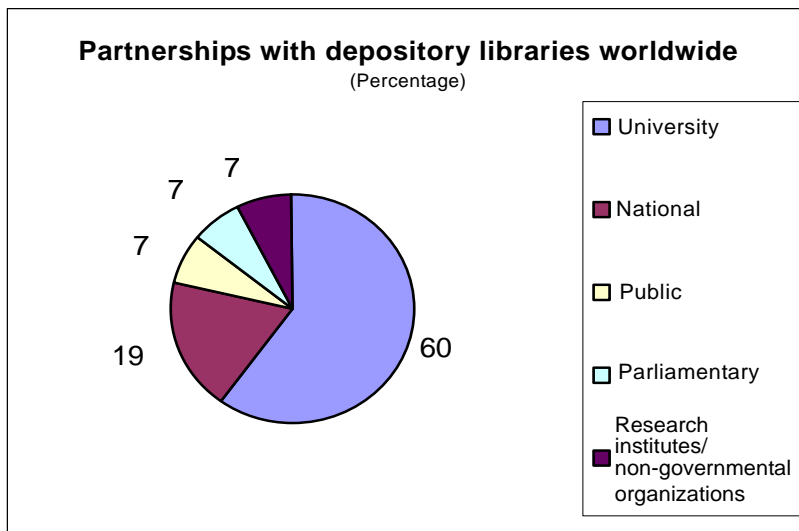
65. Libraries participating in the Steering Committee are working together on new activities to promote knowledge sharing and strengthened coordination and cooperation among United Nations libraries. Discussions at an annual meeting, which was held in October 2006 by videoconference, focused on activities in support of the new strategic directions for United Nations libraries outlined in previous reports to the Committee on Information (see A/AC.198/2005/4 and A/AC.198/2006/2). The Steering Committee's agenda is project-driven and focuses on achieving concrete outputs covering, inter alia, the management of United Nations documentation; information skills and learning; electronic resources and the use of the Web; and knowledge sharing. As a result of this collaboration, the above-mentioned knowledge pointers were produced with the support of the library at the United Nations Office at Geneva in order to assist library clients and staff throughout the Secretariat to understand how to use the technological tools already available on their desktops.

Depository libraries

66. Partnerships with the network of depository libraries worldwide (406 depository libraries in 145 countries) are being further developed. This network includes university, national, public, parliamentary, research and non-governmental organizations libraries (see figure 4). Increasingly, depository libraries access United Nations documents electronically through the United Nations Official Document System (ODS), which is available on the Internet. This trend has required a shift in focus to providing technical support and training to depository libraries in learning how to access electronic information. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library continues its effort to assist and support depository libraries, especially in developing countries, in their transition from traditional document repository libraries into libraries and knowledge-sharing centres for the twenty-first century and has actively sought external funding for training events and workshops. Regional workshops as part of this outreach initiative include one for Spanish-

speaking librarians in the Caribbean region, through a partnership with the United Nations Association in the Dominican Republic, with financial support from the Government of the country (January 2007) and another for depository librarians in Asia organized in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, to be held in Bangkok in the second half of 2007.

Figure 4



Managing content and collections

67. From its inception in 1945, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library has ensured the indexing of United Nations documents and other United Nations publications. Since the late 1970s, indexing data have been recorded in the United Nations Bibliographic and Information System (UNBIS) for online access. Retrospective indexing of important early documents is ongoing, as is the indexing of current documents. In 2006, almost 20,000 documents and publications produced at Headquarters and in regional offices were processed; this figure includes documents indexed by the Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library is also responsible for the UNBIS Thesaurus, which includes all six official languages. This resource serves as an essential tool for the analysis, categorization and retrieval of documents and publications by theme, subject or topic. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library and Knowledge-Sharing Centre has also been active in planning the enhancement of ODS with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management with the aim of setting up a more intuitive application.

68. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library continues to collect and maintain hard copies of United Nations and non-United Nations materials in the six official languages of the Organization, for the use of its clients, including delegations of Permanent Missions. Almost 30,000 items were borrowed from the collection for on-site consultation or taken out on loan during 2006. In view of the imminent capital master plan to renovate the United Nations Headquarters complex, which will necessitate the relocation of the Library's collections, an effort is being made to expedite the digitization of United Nations documents to ensure their availability

during the renovation. Discussions are under way with potential external partners for the digitization of those United Nations documents that are not yet in electronic form.

Educational outreach

69. In view of the rapidly changing media environment, in which young people use the Internet, social networks and mobile phones to communicate and obtain information, the Educational Outreach Section of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and Knowledge-Sharing Centre has developed new strategies to target this key group. Public and private partnerships have been forged to raise the United Nations profile and reach a wider audience. The UN Works programme partners with celebrities and media networks such as MTV, with its programming expertise and global reach (accessible in 179 countries and in 22 languages), providing opportunities to educate and engage young people. For example, a global on-air, online campaign about climate change will be broadcast by both MTV and Nickelodeon, a children's network, which together have a potential audience of over 570 million viewers worldwide. In another first, MTV and its affiliated network, VH1, are collaborating with the UN Works on a television series hosted by celebrities to promote the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Key components include the UN Works and MTV co-branded websites with classroom resources, and advocacy toolkits that encourage educators and the public to join the United Nations in support of the achievement of the Goals.

Box 15

The "Water for Life" campaign featuring a documentary about water and sanitation in Africa, initiated by the UN Works in partnership with MTV, was launched in 2006. The campaign's website, which includes educational and advocacy resources, received over 900,000 "unique visits" in the past 12 months. The impact is inspiring. A group of young students in a school in the Bronx, New York City, where 98 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, raised \$1,500 in a month to send to the Angolan school featured in the documentary.

70. The Global Teaching and Learning Project, which is also a part of the Library's education outreach, created a multimedia web portal for the first United Nations Global Youth Leadership Summit, held at United Nations Headquarters from 29 to 31 October 2006. With over 400 youth delegates from almost every Member State, the new portal serves as the main source of information on youth activities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations Cyberschoolbus website sponsored several essay contests on the achievement of the Goals and received entries from many countries. Its "Ask An Ambassador" feature, which aims to make the United Nations more accessible to young people, has grown in popularity. The site received approximately 2,000 queries in 2006.

Box 16

The total number of unique visitors to the United Nations Cyberschoolbus website in the last six months of 2006 was 1,644,178, a 105 per cent increase over the number of unique visitors during the same period in 2005. The UN Works website is receiving an average of 300,000 page views per month.

71. The Department also supports the Organization-wide print and electronic publications programme by offering a complete design and production service. In 2006, its design of the “Remembrance and Beyond” poster for the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust received an “American Inhouse Design Award” from Graphic Design USA, a leading magazine for professional graphic designers in the United States of America.

VIII. Conclusions

72. The Department of Public Information, by better defining its communications goals, making optimal use of new information and communications technology and expanding its partnerships with United Nations system entities, as well as with public, private and non-governmental sectors, has made important progress towards enhancing public awareness about the United Nations.

73. By creating new information and communications tools and better utilizing the opportunities created by the Internet, the Department has expanded its outreach and made significant inroads among students, teachers and the academic community. At the same time, surveys of programmatic activities show that, in addition to utilizing these tools, the Department must continue to tailor its products to target audiences in order to achieve the greatest public impact for its work. The Department, on this solid foundation, is prepared to embrace the challenges ahead.
