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Activities of the Department of Public Information: news services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolutions [71/101 A](#) and [B](#), provides a summary of the key advances made by the Department of Public Information from September 2016 to February 2017 in promoting the work of the United Nations to a global audience through its news services.

News services is one of three subprogrammes of the Department and is implemented by its News and Media Division. Its objectives are to support the United Nations through high-quality, relevant and timely information products about the Organization's activities across multimedia platforms in multiple languages and to increase the geographic range and frequency of the use of its products by media outlets and other users.

The activities carried out under the other two subprogrammes of the Department, namely, strategic communications services and outreach and knowledge services, are described in separate reports of the Secretary-General ([A/AC.198/2017/2](#) and [A/AC.198/2017/4](#), respectively).



I. Introduction

1. In its resolutions 71/101 A and B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-eighth session, and requested that the Secretary-General continue to report to the Committee on the activities of the Department.
2. In the same resolutions, the General Assembly called upon the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach and knowledge services.
3. The present report, which covers the news and media-related activities of the Department, highlights progress made in the area of multimedia production, including radio, television, video, photography, print, Internet and social media. It also places emphasis on the use of multilingualism with respect to the Department's website and all content created by the Department, whether for digital or traditional platforms.

II. News services

A. Overview

4. The Department has begun to update its products to increase their impact on multilingual audiences through both traditional and social media platforms, partly on the basis of industry best practices in the digital media domain. Drawing on the expertise of major dissemination networks and training institutes in order to better understand the kinds of digital tools being introduced in newsrooms around the world, the Department has continued to incorporate multimedia skills into its workflows.
5. By utilizing new content-creation technology, including graphics, data visualization, podcasting and other digital tools, the Department has made its news coverage more mobile-responsive and tailored to new consumption habits. Content in each official United Nations language as well as Kiswahili and Portuguese is being migrated to an enhanced news platform that will provide a multidimensional and more intuitive and engaging user experience. The Department is constantly finding new ways to bring to diverse audiences the United Nations perspective on global events and is aware of the need to produce targeted content that can be easily shared, embedded and adapted into both official and non-official languages by United Nations offices, including United Nations information centres, around the world. For example, when the incoming Secretary-General recorded a New Year's Day video message on peace to be distributed across regions and in multiple languages, the Department ensured that a generic version was shared that could be customized into non-official languages for use across digital and social media platforms.
6. During the reporting period, the Department provided communications support for four major international conferences away from Headquarters: the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, held in Quito in October 2016; the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Marrakech in November 2016; the Global Conference on Sustainable Transport, held in Ashgabat

in November 2016; and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in Dubai in November 2016. The Department deployed multimedia and multilingual teams to provide coverage in the six official languages as well as Kiswahili and Portuguese and, at the Global Conference on Sustainable Transport, provided other services, including media accreditation.

7. In November and December 2016, at the request of the Committee on Information, the Department conducted an audience impact study to obtain information about its partnerships with global broadcasting stations and to assess their multiplying impacts on potential audiences. United Nations news teams interviewed a range of broadcast partners to collect direct feedback regarding audience reach and the methods and extent of the use and dissemination of the Department's products, and to gauge the overall satisfaction of the partners and their audiences with those products. A copy of the study can be made available to interested members of the Committee.

B. Television

Video production

8. The Department is modernizing its production of video content to better serve external media outlets through the updating of the on-demand and live streaming of video coverage and the creation of timely news videos and those that lend themselves to social media. More broadly, it is continuing its process of reviewing products and dissemination patterns, exploring more vigorous partnerships and co-production options, and drawing more on the narrative provided about United Nations field activities and accounts from beneficiaries of the Organization's actions and programmes.

9. Every long-form documentary or feature is now produced with a condensed trailer for social media purposes. More microvideos are being produced in connection with events, conferences and interviews for embedding in news stories. More short-form videos are being created for major United Nations observance and commemorative days, and are being produced in the six official languages. A redoubled effort is being made to tailor messages of the Secretary-General to social media and mobile viewing, as well as to produce them in multiple languages. It is routine for many of these videos to be shared without narration with United Nations information centres, which can then translate them into local languages.

10. The Department continues to produce video stories, both long- and short-form, for global dissemination through broadcast clients and the web and on social media communications platforms. These video features reflect United Nations priorities, including climate change, peace and security, human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals. The platforms on which they are made available include social media in multiple languages (such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and Sina Weibo), the United Nations Television channel (available in New York City through Spectrum, Channel 228), United Nations Web TV (www.webtv.un.org), United Nations Radio, the United Nations News Centre and other internal outlets.

11. The United Nations Television Section works closely with partners in the United Nations system to produce relevant and up-to-date content focusing on human stories that highlight the activities of the Organization in the field. Additional partnerships are being sought, including with external production houses, to create content for United Nations Television.

12. Throughout 2016, the Department produced several special editions of the flagship series *21st Century* to highlight priority United Nations themes and events. In September, a special programme on refugees and migrants was produced to draw global attention to the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. In addition to programmes featuring interviews with senior United Nations officials, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Special Adviser on the Summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, the Television Section covered a story from Afghanistan on how people decide to migrate to another country or remain in their own. This feature has been used as part of the United Nations “Together” campaign and was screened at Headquarters to mark International Migrants Day.

13. In December, linking Human Rights Day and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, a special programme on the rights of persons with disabilities was shared across broadcast and social media. The long-feature piece followed the lives of two autistic young men and their families in Paraguay over two decades. The film was also screened at an event at Headquarters to mark the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

14. On the issue of climate change, the Department produced several short videos. One of these, created for the opening of the Climate Action Summit, held in September 2016, was screened in the General Assembly Hall and shared widely on social media. Another video, a compilation of messages from Member States confirming their commitment to ratifying the Paris Agreement, was produced and screened at the Summit in September. In addition, a short video marking the ratification by India of the Paris Agreement and a turning point in the Agreement’s entry into force was shared widely across social media platforms, garnering thousands of views in record time owing to its retweeting by the Prime Minister of India.

15. The Television Section continued to produce videos in all six official languages that highlighted activities around the world connected to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Linked to international days on the United Nations calendar, the videos covered issues including good health and well-being, climate action, life underwater and life on land, and were widely shared on websites and social media. Feature stories for broadcast were also produced, covering issues highlighting elements of the Goals, ranging from the Zika health risk to United Nations support for the promotion of democracy and from protection of the endangered tiger to global efforts to protect citizens from fatal road accidents.

16. The Section continued to produce its regular products in the six official languages, namely, *United Nations in Action*, *United Nations Stories* and *Year in Review*. The 2016 edition of the latter was produced in various lengths to maximize its distribution and reach, particularly across social media. The *21st Century* series is produced in English, Chinese and French, with a new partnership for a Spanish version planned. Efforts continued to identify partners to produce Arabic and Russian versions. The Department also continued to be more responsive to the needs of partners by adjusting the periodicity and angle of stories. The distribution of the series continued to expand, and new broadcast partners were added on a regular basis, including a major African broadcaster, Channels TV of Nigeria, which reaches 25 million viewers in the immediate region and across the diaspora. Channels TV has the largest number of YouTube subscribers in Nigeria (more than a quarter of a million), with almost 23 million views registered in 2015.

17. The Department is actively working with the Department of Peacekeeping, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs to explore how best to raise the profile of United Nations efforts in mediation, peacemaking and

peacekeeping through audiovisual means. Ahead of the International Day of Peacekeepers on 29 May, plans are under way for an ongoing production partnership with audiovisual staff at United Nations peace operations to ensure that important stories highlighting the work being undertaken in the field are brought to international audiences.

18. To mark the International Decade for People of African Descent, several videos were produced and shared across all platforms in all six official languages, including stories from Brazil and India on descendants of slaves. Another objective of the Department's video production is to reveal the lesser-known aspects of the work of the United Nations system; for example, a story on how nuclear medicine is being used to neutralize mosquitoes that carry the Zika virus.

19. In line with the latest technologies, television products are now digitally watermarked using Civolution technology, providing information to the Department on how its products are being utilized by partner broadcasters.

Live coverage

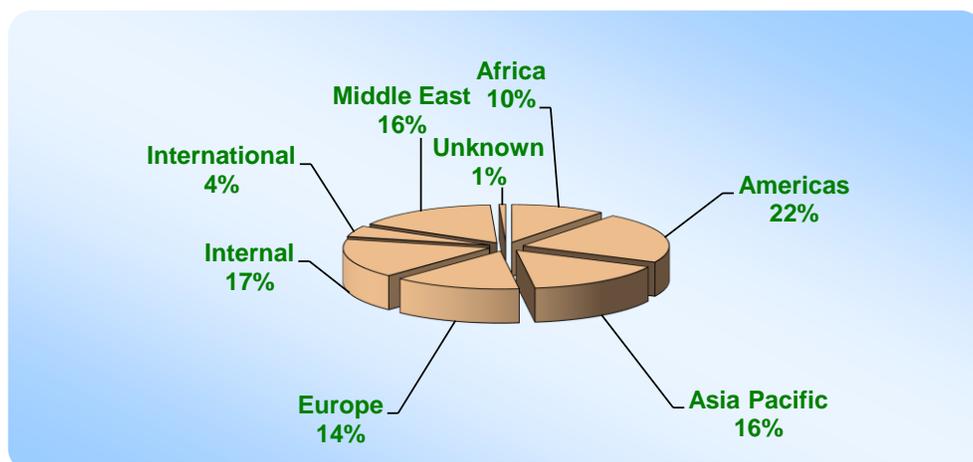
20. The Department provided to broadcasters gavel-to-gavel, broadcast-quality live feeds of the meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and other intergovernmental bodies and major events, as well as press conferences and encounters at Headquarters and the United Nations Office at Geneva. International conferences sponsored by entities of the United Nations system were also covered. In addition, coverage of all meetings of the Assembly and the Council was streamed live on United Nations Web TV in all six official languages and the original or floor language.

UNifeed

21. UNifeed, which provides timely broadcast-quality video from throughout the United Nations system, delivered video news stories through Associated Press Television News to more than 1,000 broadcast points globally, with content from Headquarters and more than 40 partner agencies, funds and programmes as well as peacekeeping missions. Select stories were also distributed by Reuters TV and the European Broadcasting Union. Reuters provides video news packages to more than 650 broadcasters, with a potential reach of 1 billion viewers. The Union is a confederation of 85 broadcasters from 56 countries, and 37 associate broadcasters.

Figure I

UNifeed clients by region, November 2016



22. UNifeed provides broadcast-quality videos on its website for smaller broadcasters, most of them in Africa, that are not subscribers of Associated Press Television News or Reuters TV. Registered users include media professionals, government agencies, non-governmental organizations and educational institutions. Some downloaded UNifeed stories are redistributed through registered users' online and social media platforms. New partners are actively being sought as demand grows for shorter format stories.

23. Stories were used an average of 6,335 times per month by major broadcasters, as registered by Teletrax. This indicates an increase in usage of 32.1 per cent compared with the previous year.

24. During the reporting period, UNifeed coverage of Hurricane Matthew in Haiti received exceptionally high pick-up, while the appointment process of the new Secretary-General, the Zika emergency and the conflicts in South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic were also among the most downloaded and repurposed stories.

Webcasting

25. The Department continued to seek ways to improve and expand the Organization's live and on-demand webcast services in order to directly reach a global audience on multiple web platforms and mobile devices and in multiple languages. All major meetings of the United Nations in New York, Geneva and The Hague, as well as press briefings, media stakeouts, special events and conferences, were covered live and on-demand through United Nations Web TV, some in all six official languages.

26. During the reporting period, United Nations Web TV made available more than 40,000 videos that were accessible to people worldwide through desktops and mobile and handheld devices.

27. The Department made efforts to strengthen the services provided by United Nations Web TV, particularly its multilingual capacity. In addition to the existing live webcast coverage in all languages, the Department began, during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly (in September 2016), to make available on the Web TV website on-demand videos of Assembly and Security Council meetings in all six official languages. Depending on the availability of language resources, the Department will continue to work towards language parity with respect to webcast coverage of all mandated events.

United Nations channel on YouTube

28. At the end of 2016, the audience of the United Nations channel on YouTube (www.youtube.com/unitednations) exceeded 26 million, reflecting a 33 per cent increase compared with the previous year. The number of subscribers to the channel has grown to more than 114,600. A round-the-clock live-streaming channel is available on the channel, engaging users who have provided comments and shared views.

C. Photos and audiovisual archives

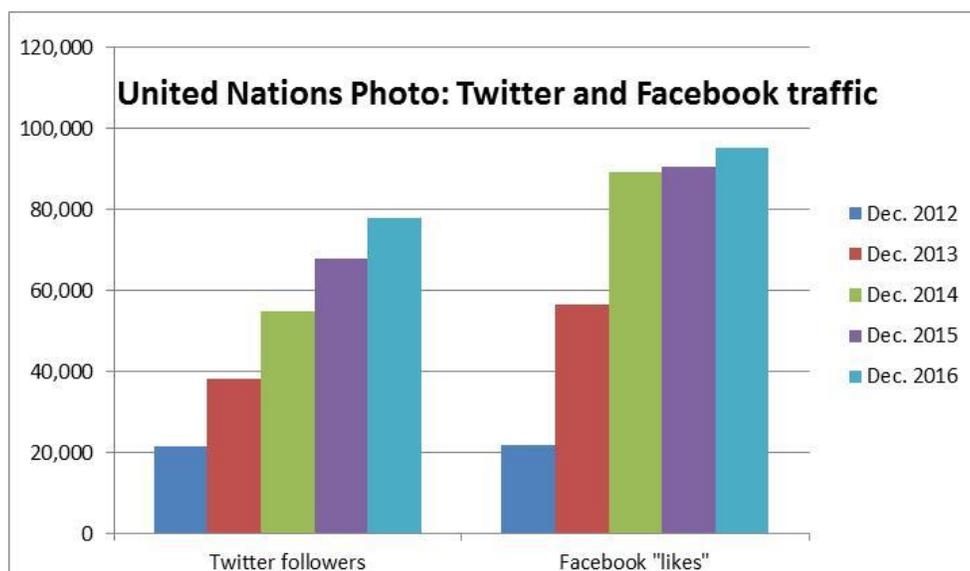
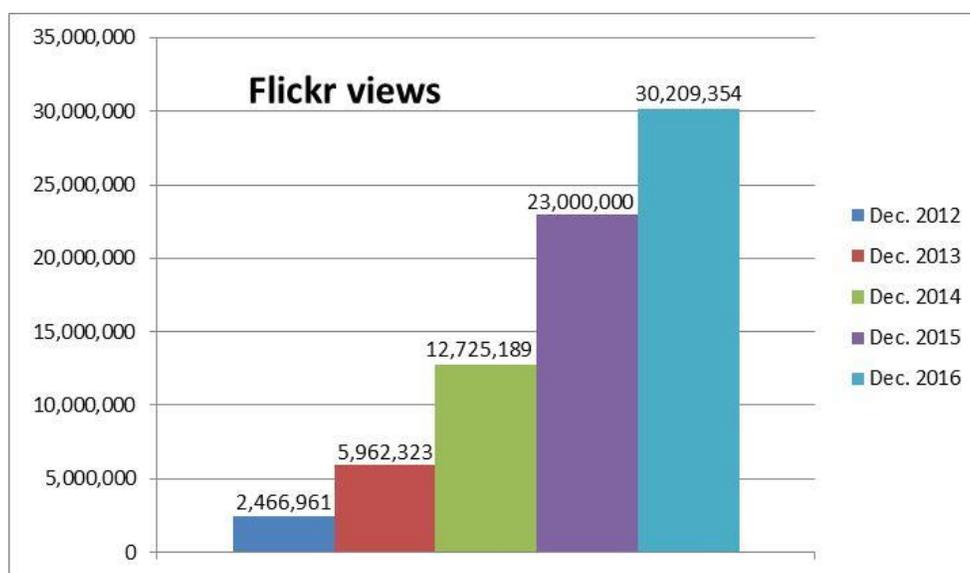
United Nations Photo

29. During the reporting period, some 5,700 high-resolution images were selected and made available to the public on the United Nations Photo website. In total, approximately 29,000 images were added to the photo database.

30. Visitors from around the world downloaded more than 140,000 high-resolution photos for further publication and distribution and other uses. This represents an increase of 20 per cent compared with the previous reporting period, as the Department promoted its photos through its social media accounts and those of other United Nations offices, such as the United Nations information centres and the various flagship accounts in the official languages. The United Nations Photo library receives more than 8,000 requests annually from Permanent Missions to the United Nations, publishing companies and members of the public for content from its database.

31. The United Nations Photo website also registered more than 3 million unique page views during the reporting period, and its social media channels continued to be a popular place for users to find photos of both current and past events (see figure II).

Figure II
United Nations Photo content on social media platforms



Audiovisual archives and library services

32. The Department began to implement a five-year digitization project aimed at preserving the unique audiovisual heritage of the United Nations and providing access to it for present and future generations. The project, funded through a donation of \$4.5 million by Oman, will involve the mass digitization of some 70 per cent of the audiovisual archives of the Organization.

33. The Department hired archivists to establish workflows for metadata management and quality assurance procedures for integration into the United Nations media asset management system and publication on the Audiovisual Library website. The website will be translated into the six official languages to make the audiovisual archives accessible to a worldwide audience.

34. The Department was engaged in discussions with the Office of Information and Communications Technology to ensure a secure backup system for disaster recovery, as well as the implementation of long-term audiovisual archive migration policies and procedures needed to support a sustainable and compliant archive information system.

35. The Department will continue to seek creative partnerships to fund the digitization of the entire collection and to ensure the long-term sustainable management of the Organization's audiovisual archives.

D. Multimedia news production

36. As part of a rethinking of how United Nations content is shaped for consumption by multiple audiences across media platforms around the world, ranging from Member States to journalists to members of the public, a redesigned United Nations News multimedia website with a range of new functionalities was expected to be launched in early 2017. The project was to begin with the launch of the website in Russian and Spanish, which would be followed in its next phases by the other official languages and Kiswahili and Portuguese. Pooling the content generated by news teams in the Department — United Nations Radio and the United Nations News Centre — the new website would provide a consolidated presentation of United Nations news in a variety of media formats (text, audio, video and photo), with the aim of providing a comprehensive and engaging experience for the audience. New kinds of digital tools would be introduced, including timelines and story maps. One example is the curation of content increasingly used by external digital media outlets, called “In Case You Missed It”, which provides a look back at noteworthy news developments in the United Nations system during the previous two weeks. In addition, a working prototype of United Nations News Stream was to be launched. The interactive website would provide a real-time display of United Nations News products as they were posted, along with consolidated views from social media channels.

United Nations News Centre

37. In advance of the launch of the redesigned consolidated website, the multilingual United Nations News Centre portal provided timely, accurate and balanced news coverage of the latest developments in the United Nations system in all six official languages, as well as a range of multimedia content and in-depth resources. In doing so, it coordinated with relevant substantive offices and departments and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General.

38. The News Centre portal was designed to be a go-to place for highlighting a coordinated view of the work of United Nations agencies in the field, including on

crises such as Zika or combating and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse; on campaigns such as “Together”, on fighting xenophobia against refugees and migrants; and on work being carried out in United Nations country and regional offices, especially on issues such as the Sustainable Development Goals that extend beyond the immediate news cycle.

39. During the reporting period, the United Nations News Centre portals in all six official languages received more than 13.3 million page views, averaging about 1.1 million views per month. Unique visitors to the news portals in all languages totalled more than 5.3 million for the year, or approximately 435,000 per month. The most-read English-language news story for the year, the appointment of António Guterres as Secretary-General, garnered more than 44,500 page views from the time of its publication on 13 October 2016 through the end of the year. The French-language news portal experienced the largest increase in the number of page views, which rose by 6 per cent to 536,886. The Spanish- and English-language news portals also experienced steady growth in the number of their users, which rose 7 per cent compared with the same period last year.

40. In addition to breaking news, the United Nations News Centre portals covered a broad range of issues and developments. These outputs were posted on the portals and included “In focus” pages, which continued to serve as a “one-stop shop” for information on a variety of topical United Nations themes and issues. “In focus” pages were created for the topic of refugees and migrants and for the new Secretary-General, while existing pages were updated regularly.

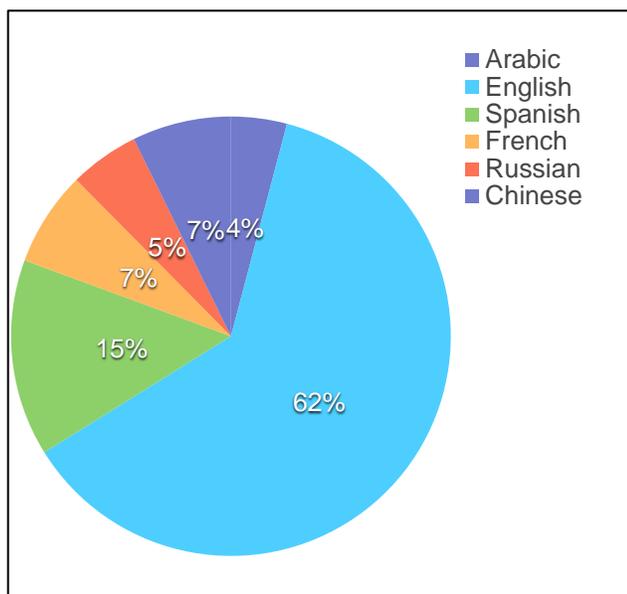
41. The “In focus” page on the United Nations response to cholera in Haiti contained a range of multilingual content designed to highlight what the United Nations system is doing in relation to the epidemic both internationally and on the ground, using both hard news and multimedia features. The issue also proved to be a useful example of how news teams collaborated across languages and platforms to provide a constant source of information products that focused on the United Nations response.

42. The News Centre portal spotlighted senior United Nations officials in high-profile interviews across languages, introduced newly appointed senior officials on key issues, and often featured United Nations agency officials from crisis zones. As part of the drive to highlight the role that women play in the United Nations, effort was made to ensure that the portals regularly featured prominent content reflecting the role of women in key positions, and that gender perspectives on issues were included wherever possible.

43. Of particular note has been the increased production of microvideos for news, to illustrate stories and to feed social media platforms across all languages. These short news items are included within daily multimedia news coverage, as they play an important role in highlighting United Nations news on social media. For example, the Arabic Unit quickly produced an Arabic-language version of raw video footage from the Syrian Arab Republic, which significantly amplified United Nations messages in the Arabic-speaking world. These microvideos are used on social media, with a high number of “likes” and shares across various platforms.

44. There was continued growth on social media, with the number of Twitter followers of the United Nations News Centre (English) surpassing the milestone of 250,000, while the number of Facebook followers edged up to 415,000. United Nations News Centre (English) Facebook fans engaged most with stories related to the appointment process of António Guterres, which reached more than 570,000 people.

Figure III
United Nations News Centre page views by language, 2016



United Nations Radio

45. While there is a strong emphasis on increased digital production of content, the provision of services to United Nations Radio partners continues, with a mix of news and feature reports in the six official languages, plus Kiswahili and Portuguese, highlighting the value of radio in reaching audiences in many countries and regions.

46. Alongside this effort, and on the basis of industry trends and feedback, initiatives have been taken to explore how best to serve partners in the light of their own media landscapes and audience needs and developments in media technologies. Capitalizing on changing media technologies, United Nations audio content is increasingly shared on platforms such as SoundCloud and Facebook, including the live-stream option, and through new magazine programmes, encouraging engagement by audiences. Given the predisposition of audiences to use mobile devices, even where digital media is less accessible, United Nations Radio expanded its output across all languages to include all media formats: audio, video and social media.

47. In that context, United Nations Radio partners, together with television clients, were surveyed in November and December 2016 to obtain a better sense of what their needs are and how best to meet them. The initial feedback resulting from the study demonstrated the changing trajectory of listening habits, the need for timeliness, the importance of storytelling and its relevance to people's lives, and the multimedia nature of consumption patterns.

48. Based on equitable geographical and language representation, as well as audience reach, with regard to the use of United Nations media products and services and feedback on them, the study involved interviews with staff from 56 radio stations in 43 countries and 8 television stations in 8 countries.

49. Clients overwhelmingly expressed satisfaction with United Nations broadcasting products as being timely, of high quality and a source of objective and diverse international news. They requested closer, more collaborative and reciprocal

relationships with language news teams at Headquarters. Another key finding was a preference for shorter audio segments and short videos, both for social media use and to meet clients' needs, which allowed for "mixing and matching" according to audience demand.

50. Smaller radio stations reported that, because of a lack of resources for the production of their own content, United Nations content was essential, since in many cases it was the sole source of international news.

51. Audio delivery of key messages of the United Nations continued to draw large audiences in several countries and regions and at peacekeeping missions, with a focus on peace and security, humanitarian operations, human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Arabic Unit expanded its coverage of United Nations activities, especially those relating to the Middle East and North Africa region. Its website and social media channels have been a reliable source of information in Arabic for major media outlets. Many traditional media outlets rely increasingly on United Nations-produced stories for their coverage of United Nations activities. Multimedia elements produced by the Unit helped to broaden the reach of the Organization's message. The Unit also expanded cooperation with the permanent missions of Member States to the United Nations, sharing and retweeting content.

52. The Chinese Unit conducted live link-ups with China National Radio during prime-time national broadcasts on a regular basis and during the general debate of the General Assembly, as well as during Security Council meetings at which important resolutions were adopted. The Unit also began to produce video stories on a daily basis, especially for social media platforms, receiving positive feedback from its audience.

53. The English Unit launched a new podcast series entitled "The lid is on", which tackled key United Nations issues in a comprehensive manner in long-form audio. The episodes focused on violent extremism, HIV and AIDS, migration and human trafficking. The Unit continued to build partnerships with online and traditional broadcasters around the world, especially in developing countries. Some radio partners rebroadcast stories multiple times a day, reaching tens of millions of people, particularly in countries where Internet connectivity is poor or non-existent.

54. The French Unit continued to increase the number of its partnerships with broadcasters around the world, especially in developing countries, and also through collaborations with United Nations peacekeeping missions deployed in French-speaking countries. According to the first available data gathered through a recent study, audio programmes have reached more than 20 million francophone people. During the reporting period, French audio products were downloaded from the United Nations Radio website more than 301,000 times, up from 229,000 during the same period in 2015/16. Some of this is attributable to the increased use of social media platforms such as SoundCloud, Facebook and Twitter. In addition, the Unit was instrumental in producing French-language versions of videos for use on news and social media platforms across the United Nations system.

55. The Kiswahili Unit made significant gains by expanding the use of multimedia production (videos and photo stories) in its coverage and by streaming live on Facebook, which helped to increase the number of followers by 160 per cent to almost 175,000 during the six-month period through December 2016. The Unit succeeded in signing on seven new partners, including radio stations in the region and in the United States of America. Although technology is still a challenge in the target area, progress was made steadily as the number of page downloads of the website of Kiswahili Radio went up by more than 100 per cent from 2015 to 2016.

56. The Portuguese Unit produced a series of quote cards and graphics for social media on a range of United Nations issues, which were shared by United Nations agencies across lusophone countries, and by United Nations goodwill ambassadors and special rapporteurs and ministries for foreign affairs, as well as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Engagement with audiences around the world increased dramatically, with the number of followers on Facebook rising by more than 85 per cent. One of the highlights on social media was the Facebook live event at the General Assembly on the appointment of the next Secretary-General, António Guterres. The Unit was instrumental in creating Portuguese-language versions of United Nations interviews and videos of the new Secretary-General and sharing them across the system.

57. More than 25 partnerships were established and revitalized during the reporting period, including an agreement with Rede HOPEM (“Men for Change”) in Mozambique, a media network that promotes the elimination of violence against women and girls; *Globo Rural* magazine, for farmers and the agricultural sector; and TV Globo Internacional, which broadcasts to Portuguese-speaking people living abroad. The international channel serves more than 400,000 households and has 3.4 million fans on social media.

58. The Russian Unit increased its use of multimedia elements, such as videos, slideshows and quotes, as part of the updating of United Nations multimedia news production. The Unit provided content through traditional means, with partners in the Russian Federation as well as in Australia, Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. It widely covered a range of issues and themes, including the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and human rights. Its stories on female genital mutilation in post-Soviet republics, according to its partners, contributed to a rise in interest in that topic and public discussions of it in the Russian Federation. The coverage of the situation in Ukraine continued to generate interest among the Unit’s audiences, especially because it now included not only news, feature stories and interviews, but also photos and videos.

59. In addition, the Russian Unit’s social media accounts showed dramatic growth. For example, during the month of November 2016 alone, the total reach of the Unit’s Facebook account grew by 127 per cent, page “likes” by 63 per cent, post engagements by 128 per cent and video views by 245 per cent. There were twice as many followers on Twitter compared with the previous year, and the Unit’s presence on VKontakte as well as SoundCloud increased substantially. Especially popular was a project on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with all of its articles being posted on social media in the run-up to Human Rights Day on 10 December 2016. Russian programmes became a major source of information about the United Nations in the region, its materials being used by Russian outlets such as RIA Novosti, Interfax and RT, as well as major news websites in other post-Soviet countries.

60. The output of the Spanish Unit garnered tremendous interest, with more than 1,950 downloads per day by users around the world during the high-level segment of the General Assembly. Its website received 42,600 page views during the same period. The peace process in Colombia and the role of the United Nations in that regard was one of the stories that elicited the most interest, along with those related to key global crises, such as the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, the refugee crisis, Zika and the United Nations response to cholera in Haiti. Spanish-language audio programmes saw increased production and audience engagement. With average weekly downloads numbering 7,924, the increased use of social media platforms such as Facebook Live resulted in record-breaking audiences reached. As part of a more integrated approach, interviews with a number of Spanish-speaking Heads of State or Government who attended the high-level segment of the Assembly

were broadcast live on Facebook. The social media news platforms showed huge growth, with the number of Facebook followers growing by one third during an 11-month period.

E. Press releases

61. As a key part of its news-related services, the Department's Meetings Coverage Section provided fast, accurate and comprehensive coverage of all open intergovernmental meetings and selected press conferences at Headquarters and other locations. Between July and December 2016, the Section produced 2,059 press releases, with 10,007 pages in English and French. This output comprised meetings coverage summaries (673), other press releases (1,162) and summaries and transcripts of briefings and press conferences (224).

62. Coverage was made available in hard copy at Headquarters and distributed to worldwide audiences online and through the United Nations information centres, and included:

(a) A total of 411 press releases relating to the main session of the General Assembly, including plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees, from mid-September to December 2016;

(b) A total of 376 press releases covering the Security Council, including ministerial-level meetings and substantive debates on conflicts and crises in numerous countries, as well as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the international criminal tribunals, the protection of civilians, the trafficking of persons, and Council press statements;

(c) At least 40 press releases on the Economic and Social Council, including coverage of its substantive session held at Headquarters in 2016;

(d) A total of 1,162 other press releases, including statements, remarks and messages from the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General, as well as materials from other United Nations offices and departments.

Table 1
Total output of the Meetings Coverage Section

	<i>1 July-31 December 2016</i>		<i>Seventy-first session, 14 September-23 December 2016</i>	
	<i>No. of press releases</i>	<i>No. of pages</i>	<i>No. of press releases</i>	<i>No. of pages</i>
General Assembly meetings	426	4 780	400	4 650
Security Council meetings	200	1 729	156	1 433
Economic and Social Council meetings	40	413	10	17
Other meetings	7	65	4	39
Meetings coverage	673	6 987	570	6 139
General Assembly press releases	15	34	11	11
Security Council press releases	176	263	90	137
Economic and Social Council press releases	0	0	0	0
Secretary-General's press releases	783	1 102	531	768
Deputy Secretary-General's press releases	48	124	34	84

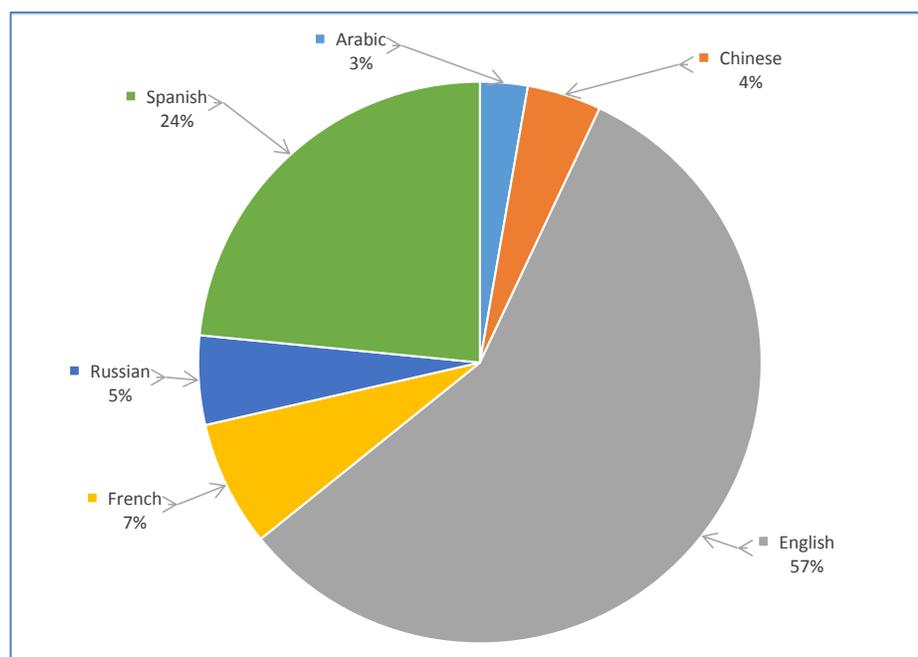
	1 July-31 December 2016		Seventy-first session, 14 September-23 December 2016	
	No. of press releases	No. of pages	No. of press releases	No. of pages
Other press releases	140	185	68	89
Press releases	1 162	1 708	734	1 089
Noon briefings	212	1 283	128	787
Press conferences	12	29	6	15
Briefings	224	1 312	134	802
Total	2 059	10 007	1 438	8 030

III. United Nations website

Table 2
United Nations website traffic by language, 1 January-29 November 2016

Language	Session	Users	Page views	Pages per session
Arabic	1 657 144	1 149 470	3 754 619	2.27
Chinese	2 150 650	1 618 697	5 860 906	2.73
English	32 937 203	20 048 970	78 721 447	2.39
French	4 403 150	2 896 474	9 954 026	2.26
Russian	3 187 769	1 991 335	7 056 471	2.21
Spanish	16 253 057	11 460 837	32 265 098	1.99
Total	60 588 973	39 165 783	137 612 567	2.31

Figure IV
United Nations website page views by language, 1 January-29 November 2016



63. During the reporting period, the Department improved and increased the volume of its content in all six official languages on the United Nations mega-website (www.un.org). The Department worked to extend consistent and harmonized visual branding across the site and to introduce new features such as the mobile photo upload interface available on the redesigned website of the President of the General Assembly. In its role of managing website governance, the Department published standards for website multilingualism in terms of all official languages in order to reach a wider audience. Partnership agreements for translation into Chinese have been strengthened, with new partnerships established with three universities in China (Soochow University, Shanghai International Studies University and East China Normal University), in order to improve language parity on United Nations websites.

64. Coverage for new United Nations observance days was launched through the development of new websites in all six official languages, including for World Diabetes Day (14 November), World Tsunami Awareness Day (5 November), the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims (third Sunday in November) and International Civil Aviation Day (7 December). Twenty existing United Nations observance day websites were also updated to reflect new United Nations website branding that is mobile-friendly and fully accessible. A redesigned and updated version of the “Global issues” section of www.un.org, which explains in depth the Organization’s approach to 18 distinct issues on the global agenda, was migrated to the new design with the latest data, improved multimedia and better illustrations, including infographics.

65. The Department provided ongoing support for the website presences of the main United Nations bodies. A new-look General Assembly website was launched in time for the seventy-first session. The site is fully multilingual and has been redesigned to be mobile-friendly and compatible with the new United Nations web brand. The website of the President of the General Assembly was also relaunched in an updated design that improves the presentation of the key priorities of the President of the Assembly, such as achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and the appointment process of the Secretary-General. The latter was also reflected on the website of the Secretary-General, which underwent a substantial modification with the introduction of new digital and design elements, while ensuring that content could be regularly updated in multiple languages. The Department also launched a new, fully redesigned and multilingual version of the website of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#).

IV. Social media (multilingualism)

66. Given the ever-increasing popularity of video as a source of United Nations digital messaging, the Department has continued to focus on the production of video content in all official languages, especially for dissemination on regionally appropriate social media platforms. For example, the Russian United Nations channel on YouTube has continued to demonstrate solid growth, tripling its number of views over the past 12 months. The Spanish YouTube channel has reached the milestone of 3 million views, with an increase of 100 per cent over the past 12 months, and the French channel has shown a steady 8 per cent annual increase, now reaching 864,000 views.

67. The Department began live video streaming on social platforms, which proved to be a popular way to digitally promote the United Nations. For example, followers watching the informal dialogues with candidates for the post of Secretary-General generated 25 million “likes”. More than 800 short videos were uploaded to the

smartphone apps of Weishi, Miaopai and Meipai, which were viewed 800 million times. At least 1,600 United Nations videos translated into Chinese were uploaded to the Chinese-language United Nations channels on Youku, Tudou, Sina Video and Tencent Video, which resulted in approximately 52 million views.

68. The Department's multilingual social media activity continues to build a sizeable audience. The official United Nations Arabic-language Twitter account has seen an increase in the number of its followers of more than 40 per cent to over 280,000, while the number of followers of the official United Nations Arabic-language Facebook account has grown to 376,000. On Sina Weibo, a popular Chinese-language microblogging platform, the United Nations channel now reaches more than 8 million followers, the highest among all United Nations social media outlets. In addition, the current number of United Nations WeChat subscribers has reached more than 347,000.

69. French-language social media are growing at an annual rate of around 5 per cent, and there are now more than 111,000 French-speaking followers of the United Nations flagship Twitter account and at least 263,000 French-speaking Facebook fans. The Spanish-language Twitter account has reached 672,000 followers, reflecting a 26.7 per cent annual increase, and the Spanish-language Facebook account has reached 355,179 followers, a 15 per cent annual increase.

V. Other services

Services to the media: media accreditation and liaison

70. Between August and December 2016, the Department's Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit processed approximately 4,200 media accreditation requests to cover events held at Headquarters, including the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, and other high-level events. The Unit also processed more than 300 media accreditation requests to cover the Global Conference on Sustainable Transport.

71. From August to December, the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit provided information and logistical assistance for more than 200 stakeouts and press briefings, attended by some 2,800 journalists. It facilitated media coverage of more than 150 bilateral meetings and photo opportunities with the Secretary-General. The Unit also distributed information and key documents to members of the press and other clients through e-mail and its Twitter account, which at present has approximately 37,000 followers.

72. Given the continuing need to support the press corps covering the United Nations, a new website for the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit was launched. It is fully multilingual and mobile-friendly and conforms to the latest United Nations web branding. To streamline the accreditation application process, the Department collaborated with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to expand the capabilities of the e-accreditation system, making media accreditation an entirely online process.

News monitoring

73. With the aim of informing and guiding the work of the Organization at all levels, the Department monitored global media coverage of the United Nations and major international issues related to its mission. The daily clippings and news bulletins on the latest developments in the world are distributed to the Secretary-General, senior officials and staff at the Secretariat and are published on iSeek.

74. The Department is reviewing its news monitoring products and the underlying technology to improve their relevance and timeliness and to provide remote access across various platforms away from the office and in the field.

Partnerships

75. During the reporting period, the Department launched partnerships with two airlines, Finnair and Xiamen Airlines. Both will use United Nations Television and other United Nations-produced media products in their in-flight entertainment offerings. Xiamen Airlines also agreed to show United Nations-produced content in its airport lounges, to include United Nations content in its in-flight magazine and to paint one of its newest aircraft with a design reflecting its support for the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, the Department partnered with Iberoamerican University of Mexico to produce a Spanish-language version of *21st Century*, enabling the Department to reach new audiences in Spanish-speaking regions. The Department continues to explore multiple avenues in order to co-produce other language versions of United Nations Television programmes, including in Arabic and Russian.

VI. Conclusion

76. The Department will continue to examine its news and media services to ensure the highest standards of quality and the maintenance of timely, accurate and balanced news reporting in all six official languages, as well as Kiswahili and Portuguese. As industry standards and consumption patterns change, the Department will adapt its products and services accordingly, while bearing in mind that traditional media are still an important form of media in many parts of the world.

77. Great progress has already been made by the Department in aligning its news teams across languages to make the most impact for its audiences and to continue its commitment to multilingualism. Radio and television products have been adapted to new formats and shared on both traditional and new media platforms to reach the widest possible audiences.

78. The audience impact study conducted recently by the Department confirmed that many of its products are often the only source of information available about the work of the Organization in some countries and areas, and that programmes need to be adjusted to fit the way news is consumed as well as the broadcasting schedules of partners, to make them shorter pieces that are informative and engaging. The Department will continue to review the recommendations resulting from the study as well as the feedback received from broadcast partners to ensure that its products remain useful and relevant, while initiating new partnerships to expand the reach of its news and media content to new audiences.

79. The digitization of the Organization's audiovisual archives is well under way and continues to be of great importance to the Department. In an effort to find the most effective means to preserve this invaluable collection, the Department has been looking at best practices of other institutions known for their preservation and archival expertise.