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Questions relating to information

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

During the first half of 2007, the Department of Public Information continued to address key thematic priorities of the Organization, including issues relating to peace and security, climate change, the Millennium Development Goals and human rights. The Department has continued to expand its reach through the daily delivery of news and information products via radio, television and print and reaches an ever-widening global audience for text and audio-visual material via the World Wide Web. Using a combination of traditional means of communications and new information and communications technologies, the Department worked in close cooperation with Member States, United Nations system partners and civil society to expand its outreach and promotional activities. Increased emphasis was placed on reaching out to students and youth groups. The network of United Nations information centres played a key role in implementing the Department's communications goals. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library continued its transition to a knowledge service for the Organization. Further steps were also taken to strengthen the culture of evaluation at all levels of the Department's work. As a result, the Department's public information capacity was strengthened.

*A/62/150.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/121 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session and to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of the recommendations contained in that resolution. Accordingly, the Department of Public Information introduced three reports for consideration by the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session, held from 30 April to 11 May 2007 (A/AC.198/2007/2-4). The deliberations of the Committee with regard to those reports are reflected in its report to the General Assembly.¹
 2. The present report, prepared in response to the above-mentioned resolution, updates the information already provided to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session and describes activities undertaken in the past six months by the Department through its four subprogrammes: strategic communication services, news services, library services and outreach services.
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II. Strategic communication services

A. Thematic issues

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The Question of Palestine

11. The fifteenth International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East was held in Tokyo in June on the theme “Restoring the path to peace: re-engaging Israelis and Palestinians in the search for a comprehensive and lasting political settlement”. The main objective of the seminar was to promote continued dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian representatives. Nearly 100 participants attended, including 10 Israeli representatives, among whom were a member of the Knesset, two current mayors and a former mayor; 7 Palestinians, including the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, the Mayor of Ramallah and — via videoconference — the Director of the State Information Service and Media Adviser to the President; and representatives of international media.

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¹*Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/62/21).*