

Merci Monsieur le President [*in French*],

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you and extend our wishes for a very successful meeting of the Committee on Information. My delegation extends to you and the Bureau our full support and cooperation to the work of the Commission.

My delegation would also like to extend our appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Akasaka for his statement and his work on behalf of the United Nations system. Similarly, I wish to congratulate the entire DPI team for their extensive work, professional standards, commitment, and dedication.

My delegation also expresses its appreciation for the cooperation that exists between members of the Committee on Information and the DPI and Committee Secretariat. In this regard, we welcome the reports of the Secretary-General, entitled “Activities of the Department of Public Information,” all of which highlight key advancements made by the DPI to promote the work of the United Nations to a global audience.

Mr. Chairman,

Information is no longer contained by traditional borders and boundaries. It is precisely why Israel supports the DPI as it expands into new mediums and technologies to reach an ever-increasing number of people. Israel applauds the DPI’s flexible approach and innovative use of technology to serve the international community.

In this regard, my delegation applauds efforts to increase the number of non-governmental organizations that participate in DPI programs and events. Increased engagement and coordination with partners within the United Nations system introduces new segments of society to the important work of the United Nations.

In reaching new audiences, Israel is particularly encouraged by the first-ever Global Model United Nations Conference. The Mission of Israel in New York has played an active role meeting and briefing Model UN delegations, and we are pleased to see the DPI encouraging young people to engage and to learn about the important issues related to peace, security, human rights, and development.

As the DPI reaches out to an increasing share of civil society and young people, Israel is honored to participate and contribute to thematic DPI functions that serve to inform, educate, and inspire. One such event was the second annual World Autism Awareness Day.

As part of this event, a special DPI evening brought together the Israel Society for Autistic Children with the Permanent Mission of Israel, as well as leading experts and political figures to better understand autism. Israel commends the DPI for this activity and we will gladly participate in similar efforts in the future.

Another such thematic event was the fifth Annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. One of the most important lessons the United Nations must imbue upon younger generations — as well as all citizens of our world — is the dangers of hate, racism, and xenophobia. As such, Israel would like to express its deep appreciation to the DPI for its ongoing work related to Holocaust remembrance and education.

Beyond the moving commemoration ceremony, Israel is encouraged by the many Holocaust-related events that took place both in New York and around the world. Programs in Namibia, Columbia, Myanmar, and Romania, were welcome additions to remembrance activities, as was the NGO briefing in New York entitled “The Legacy of the Jews in Morocco.”

On all of these and related programs, I wish to commend the DPI for their superb and tireless efforts in promoting Holocaust remembrance, education, and awareness of the threat posed by genocide, racism and crimes against humanity. Furthermore, Israel is pleased that throughout the years more and more Member States are participating in these events, and we hope that additional efforts will be made to increase the participation of as many Member States as possible, representing all regions, in the future.

Yet as time distances us from the horrors of the Holocaust, we approach an era in which the living memories of this unique genocide will become mere history. A child born today will likely not be able to meet a Holocaust survivor or hear first-hand the stories of those who struggled, those who perished, and those who survived during the darkest hours of humanity.

As such, passing on the torch of remembrance becomes an even more critical task. Therefore, Israel is confident that The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme will continue to enjoy the appropriate resources that would enable it to maintain, or even enhance, the level and scope of its activities.

Mr. Chairman,

I also wish to highlight the DPI’s “Unlearning intolerance” seminar on the theme of “Cyber hate: danger in cyberspace” that dealt with issues of hatred, prejudice, and Holocaust denial.

At a time when the world is witnessing a proliferation of Holocaust denial, as well as increasing displays of anti-Semitism, the DPI can play a critical role in pushing back against these dangerous tides. With Holocaust deniers in positions of prominence within revered academic institutions, at the helm of media organizations, and even as leaders of national governments, and with displays of anti-Semitism on the rise, the DPI’s work has never been timelier and we applaud these efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

As in the past, Israel remains concerned about one particular information program. The Palestinian Information Programme is based upon an anti-Israel resolution that focuses on a specific conflict. Furthermore, my delegation is concerned by the fact that the work related to the Palestinian Information Programme offers a narrative of our region that is one-sided, biased, and misleading.

My delegation maintained in the past dialogue with the DPI and Member States regarding the General Assembly resolution on the Special Information Programme on the question of Palestine. Indeed, we recognized the DPI's efforts to offer objective materials and events on the subject. Yet problems persist.

As a result of the DPI mandate that established this programme — a direct result of a one-sided General Assembly resolution — Israeli government officials are obliged not to attend or participate in these seminars until it is modified to reflect a more even-handed approach.

As such, Israel would be willing to engage in the formulation of a new, more constructive, and more balanced resolution to mandate future activities. Such a resolution must be aimed at the promotion of peace education, tolerance, mutual understanding, and the prevention of incitement. Members of the Secretariat — as well as Member States — have privately supported this idea.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel is proud to have been a member of the Committee on Information for a number of years, and we are once again participating in this discussion with the hope that we can improve and expand the vital work of DPI in a fair, constructive, and evenhanded manner.

Israel remains committed to the productive and cooperative work of the DPI and a positive outcome to our deliberations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.