



THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of this committee. I also wish to thank your predecessor, Mr. Rudolf Christen, for his commendable stewardship during previous session. I would also like to express our appreciation for the work and efforts of the Department of Public Information (DPI).

Mr. Chairman,

Last year, we were shocked by the attack against the United Nations in Algeria. The incident signaled us that there exists misperception about the work of the United Nations. It reminded us how important it is for the United Nations to clearly deliver its message – what it works for and whom it works for – to the locals as well as the global public. Only when the peoples understand better and sympathize with the United Nations, will its goals and activities be more attainable. It is no other but the peoples for whom the United Nations exists.

This task of letting the world know about the United Nations is the responsibility of this Committee and the mandate of the Department of Public Information (DPI). That is why the Republic of Korea has always attached great importance to the work of the DPI.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation supports the efforts of the DPI to work more efficiently. In particular, I would like to commend DPI's efforts to maximize public impact by identifying four priority themes of development, peace

and security, human rights and climate change in its strategic communication plan, and by maintaining a good balance between new and traditional means of communications. For instance, it has wisely utilized the web to approach the public in countries with good internet connections.

Spotlighting the activities of the Secretary-General would also increase public impact, considering his symbolic status in representing the United Nations. The DPI should work intimately with the Office of the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General and strengthen information sharing and coordination of communication campaigns.

With regards to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), my delegation would like to commend the efforts made by the DPI to provide communications support and guidance to the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS) in highlighting their invaluable efforts to maintain security in conflict and post-conflict areas. At the same time, considering that misconduct of few personnel could unjustly damage the credibility of the entire UN system, I would like to call for the DPI to work more closely with the DPKO in better informing the public about the activities and goals of peacekeeping operations.

Concerning the United Nations Information Centers (UNICs), we believe that the network of UNICs is essentially the public information hub of the United Nations. It plays a key role in disseminating the messages of the UN and in building relationships with the local public and media. It is noteworthy that the hub of UNICs has recently taken a more rationalized and creative approach in its regional activities, such as partnerships with host governments, civil society, and local media outlets. I'm of the view that UNICs are most useful to those communities where information technologies are not readily available or where one of the six official UN languages is not widely spoken. Accordingly, we hope the rationalization of the UNICs will be done in such a way to enhance the Organization's outreach to those Member States currently outside the scope of the DPI. Utilizing the benefits of information technology and the advancement of communications environment in some regions, it is high time we search ways to maximize the scope of the beneficiaries of information services with minimum cost.

The United Nations website has been the main source of information on activities of the UN, and we commend the DPI's efforts for continued improvement. We note the DPI's efforts to foster parity among six official languages and to enhance accessibility for the disabled. However, given the limitation of resources, my delegation feels that it would be practical to focus on more widely used language in strengthening the UN website.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by expressing the Republic of Korea's deep appreciation for the DPI's efforts and achievements in promoting the work of the United Nations. However, my delegation notes that the UN is burdened with a variety of challenging issues daily, from peace and security to development and environmental issues. The international community has a high expectation for the role of the Organization to resolve these issues. The stark reality is that trust for the UN will decline if there is a gap between expectation and performance. The UN will not be able to achieve its goals without first garnering the support and cooperation of the global public; the DPI must establish itself as the most effective bridge-builder between the UN and the peoples.

Thank you.