

62nd SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Check Against Delivery

Statement by
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Deputy Permanent Representative

During Open Debate

30th Sessia

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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of 30th session of the Committee on Information, and wish you much success in guiding our work. My delegation extends to you and the Bureau our full support and cooperation.

I also wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Akasaka for his statement, and offer compliments to him and the entire Department of Public Information on their tireless efforts to spread the United Nations' message around the world.

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 report of the Secretary-General, "Activities of the Department of Public Information", A/AC.198/2008/2-3, parts one and two, which highlights key advancements made by the DPI during the past six months to promote the work of the United Nations to the global audience, and offers a comprehensive picture of the strategic challenges and opportunities facing the UN in the realm of public information and communication.

Mr. Chairman,

As the DPI's many activities span a wide range of fields and issues, I wish to limit my comments today to a few choice areas.

This coming Thursday, Israel and the Jewish world will observe , the annual day of Holocaust remembrance. Hence, it is only fitting that my delegation takes this opportunity to express its support for and praise to the DPI team upon the successful outcome of the third International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, which took place this past 28 January – which included, as we all remember, a one of a kind concert – and was simultaneously observed in cities around the world. We have no doubt that this year's program was highly successful due to the passion, enthusiasm, and commitment of the DPI team. And we thank them for this.

The Outreach Programme

UN each year. Through the exhibit, DPI has made a significant contribution to Holocaust remembrance, and we applaud those efforts.

We continue to support DPI's activities on Holocaust remembrance, and we reiterate our anticipation for the continuation of such outreach programs and activities within the UN system and within educational systems of all Member States. We look forward to seeing other variations of the programme, at headquarters in New York and in UN centres and campuses around the world.

Mr. Chairman,

Notwithstanding the admirable work of the DPI, we are disappointed that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to feature as the only conflict in the world that still has a Special Information Programme, and certainly the only conflict having a programme which conveys – by the very definition of its mandate – a one-sided, biased, and misleading picture.

My delegation has been in continuous dialogue with the DPI regarding its implementation of the General Assembly resolutions on the Palestinian Information Programme. In the past, we recognized the DPI's efforts to make the seminars and materials emanating as objective as possible. But problems still remain. As a result of the Palestinian Information Programme, Israel continues to be the only Member State that is the target of such political bias. So long as the mandate for the programme stems from an anti-Israel resolution that is inherently one-sided and biased, we will be obliged not to attend or participate in these seminars.

It is our position, Mr. Chairman, that this programme should be substituted with a more balanced and constructive joint effort concerning peace in the Middle East, aimed at the promotion of tolerance, peace education, mutual understanding, and the prevention of incitement. At this time when Israel is deeply engaged with the moderate Palestinian Authority leadership in a dialogue to advance the negotiations, it is all the more bewildering that one-sided initiatives and one-sided narratives that potentially undermine our efforts are supported by the membership. Israel has previously expressed its interest in partnering on a programme that is balanced and does not resort to singular narratives on the conflict, and we look forward to seeing S m n