

73rd UNGA

Fourth Committee

Agenda Item : 58

Questions relating to Information

INDIA STATEMENT

By

Mr. Deepak Misra, Minister

19 October 2018

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to thank the Under Secretary General Ms. Alison Smale for her presentation of the detailed report on the activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI).

Mr. Chairman,

The United Nations represents our collective endeavour to jointly address common global challenges and to build sustainable peace and prosperity for all.

The UNGA resolution 13(I) adopted at its first session on 1 February 1946 states that *“The United Nations cannot achieve its purposes unless the people of the world are fully informed of its aims and activities”*. The activities of the Department of Public Information are to be geared towards this purpose.

Over the past several decades, the DPI has done commendable work in bringing the UN’s work closer to people around the world through its outreach activities. The Programme of Work of the DPI continues to reflect the above purpose.

Mr. Chairman,

We appreciate the efforts of the DPI to promote the UN’s work on some of the most important issues and challenges facing us today. These range from the importance of

achieving the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; urgency of climate action; counter-terrorism; migration; peacekeeping to water management to name a few.

Mr. Chairman,

In the third year since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is heartening to note the DPI's efforts to raise awareness about the inter-linkages of the SDGs. The wide range of activities undertaken by UN Information Centers around the world in this regard is commendable.

We welcome the work of the Department to highlight progress as well as the need to do more for accelerated implementation of Paris Agreement on climate change. We welcome the Department's work with UN partners on developing a new system-wide communication strategy aimed at energizing the climate action agenda in preparation for Secretary General's Climate Summit to be held in 2019.

Mr. Chairman,

We also note the extensive work done by the DPI with other Departments to inform about the Peacekeeping operations in various parts of the world. The launch in January 2018 of a multimedia multilingual campaign 'Service and Sacrifice' for building greater public recognition of individual service and sacrifice of peacekeepers from troop and police-contributing countries is noteworthy.

While we appreciate DPI's collaboration with Department of Peacekeeping Operations in maintaining the peacekeeping website in all six official languages, it would be useful to add the main languages of the major Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) in the website to further enhance the outreach of these messages.

India supports DPI's endeavors to promote greater awareness and collaboration on countering the growing menace of terrorism.

We welcome the extensive work done by the News and Media Division and the Outreach Division of the DPI. In this context, India continues its support to the UN Academic Impact Initiative and are pleased to see that membership of institutions from South Asia has seen an increasing trend.

It is heartening to note that motivated by the response, there has been an expansion in the UN guided tours in multiple languages. The guided tour has been very popular with

Indian tourists to New York and as highlighted by our delegation last year, we urge the addition of a guided tour in Hindi, India's official language, to facilitate Indian tourists.

Mr. Chairman,

Genuine multilingualism promotes unity in diversity and international understanding by recognizing the importance of communicating to the peoples of the world in their languages by bringing the common goals and ideals closer to the people.

The United Nations, since the time of its inception more than seven decades ago, has placed emphasis on genuine multilingualism as a basis to promote and strengthen multilateral engagement on global issues.

It was in this spirit that the DPI was tasked to work on enhancing the UN's outreach in a range of languages, in addition to those recognized as the UN official languages.

In recent times, declining financial resources have presented a serious constraint on the ability of the DPI to carry out its mandated tasks especially in non-official languages. DPI, therefore, needs to look at innovative ways to raise resources beyond the regular budgetary allocations, including through voluntary contributions to expand its global outreach activities, especially in the widely-spoken non-official languages.

Such activities have become even more essential today than seven decades ago with the growing understanding of the inter-connectedness of challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, India appreciates DPI's extensive work and will continue to extend support to the Department.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman