



General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 February 2022

Original: English

Committee on Information

Forty-fourth session

3 May 2022–13 May 2022

Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

Consideration of reports submitted by the Secretary-General

Activities of the Department of Global Communications: outreach and knowledge services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution [76/84](#) B, provides a summary of the advances made by the Department of Global Communications from 1 July 2021 to 31 January 2022 in promoting the work of the United Nations to global audiences through its outreach and knowledge services.

The outreach and knowledge services subprogramme, one of three subprogrammes of the Department, is implemented by the Outreach Division, which works to enhance the understanding of the principles, activities and concerns of the United Nations and to encourage the exchange of ideas, information and knowledge in support of the goals of the Organization.

The activities of the other subprogrammes of the Department, namely strategic communications services and news services, are described in separate reports of the Secretary-General ([A/AC.198/2022/2](#) and [A/AC.198/2022/3](#), respectively).

* [A/AC.198/2022/1](#).



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [76/84 B](#), the General Assembly took note of the reports by the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Global Communications submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its forty-third session ([A/AC.198/2021/2](#), [A/AC.198/2021/3](#) and [A/AC.198/2021/4](#)) and requested the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on the activities of the Department.
2. The Department hereby submits the information requested on its outreach and knowledge services.
3. The present report on the activities of the Outreach Division of the Department from 1 July 2021 to 31 January 2022 provides an overview of the work and direction of the outreach and knowledge services subprogramme and highlights its efforts in building partnerships, engaging the public and sharing knowledge. The report also provides a summary of the activities conducted by the Department through its library services and its support of internal communications.
4. In the report, the Secretary-General shows the ways in which the Department reached out to numerous constituencies around the world, such as young people, students, teachers, researchers and artists, as well as local communities, academic institutions, the entertainment and publishing industries, the private sector and civil society, in order to foster deeper understanding of and support for the activities and concerns of the United Nations through participation in its work. Particular focus was placed on the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the empowerment of women, peace and human rights.
5. The report also serves to illustrate how, in the face of the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Department made use of online tools, including virtual meetings, to amplify its outreach and target new and larger audiences in more languages in an effective and quantifiable fashion, serving the needs of its many constituencies as well as those of Member States, delegates and United Nations staff.

II. Responding to the pandemic

6. The Outreach Division of the Department of Global Communications continued to support the “Verified” campaign in combating misinformation around the pandemic by collaborating closely with the permanent missions of Member and observer States at Headquarters in New York and helping to amplify the reach and impact of the campaign around the world.
7. On 27 September 2021, the Department and the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Technology jointly organized a panel on the theme “Promoting transparency to counter disinformation and build trust” – featuring experts from Latvia, Pakistan and South Africa, and representatives of technology companies such as Facebook and Twitter, along with speakers from the United Nations – that encouraged the dissemination of the “Verified” campaign material.
8. In support of Global Media and Information Literacy Week, the Department organized a virtual panel discussion on 28 October with experts and celebrities who were participating in localized versions of the “Verified” campaign in Brazil, India, Latvia and South Africa. The event was focused on lessons learned from the campaign on the best ways to fight the COVID-19 “infodemic” that was undermining the global response to the crisis and jeopardizing measures to contain the disease.

III. Building partnerships

A. Civil society

9. Through the Civil Society Unit, which includes the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, the Department of Global Communications continued to engage civil society organizations in virtual events, advocacy campaigns and social media amplification to raise awareness of the work of the Organization and to advocate United Nations priorities.

10. The Unit held numerous virtual briefings, including a youth-led briefing in November on gender and climate that was organized in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme, the Civil Society Youth Representatives Steering Committee and civil society youth representatives. A virtual town hall in December on enhancing civil society collaboration with the United Nations in 2022 was organized jointly with the Global NGO Executive Committee representing civil society organizations associated with the Department.

11. Young people were important partners in promoting issues on the United Nations agenda. The Unit regularly connected with the Steering Committee and some 600 civil society youth representatives, including through virtual table talks held in July and September 2021 as part of the lead-up to the United Nations Food Systems Summit.

12. The Non-Governmental Liaison Service facilitated the applications of more than 1,300 civil society stakeholders to participate in United Nations events, including the second United Nations Global Conference on Sustainable Transport (from 14 to 16 October 2021), the high-level debate on the theme “Delivering climate action: for people, planet and prosperity” (26 October), the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (22 and 23 November) and the fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (from 23 to 27 January 2022), as well as a hybrid global civil society town hall with the President of the General Assembly (17 November) supported by the Unit and attended by some 580 representatives from more than 76 countries. The Service also convened two meetings of civil society focal points from across the United Nations system.

B. United Nations Academic Impact

13. The United Nations Academic Impact initiative of the Outreach Division continued to inspire higher education institutions around the world to align themselves with the goals and mandates of the Organization. The website – available in the six official languages of the United Nations – and social media accounts for the initiative showcased contributions from students, researchers and academic institutions to the work of the Organization, while the initiative encouraged them in particular to make use of their aptitude for innovation and expertise in solving global challenges.

14. More than 45 articles were published on the initiative website, including multimedia material such as the virtual magazine *The Art of Climate Action*, which registered more than 4,000 views, and original series such as “COVID-19 and Youth: Learning and Employment” and “Refugees in Higher Education”. Under the initiative, the Division coordinated with the Sustainable Development Goals hubs – member institutions that devote special attention to a selected Goal – on publishing a YouTube video for United Nations Day (24 October) compiled from material provided by the hubs in which students answered the question: “What does the United Nations mean to you?”

15. For the initiative, the Division organized seven virtual events (two in Spanish, one in Portuguese and four in English) with speakers from the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders on issues pertaining to the Sustainable Development Goals and matters of global concern. The events were attended by more than 1,700 participants from around the world, about half of whom were university students. Feedback surveys indicated that more than 90 per cent of participants felt that they had gained a better understanding of the topics discussed. In addition, the Division held two dedicated webinars under the initiative for its Goals hubs.

16. Some 40 institutions were admitted as new members of the initiative, including six from Member States relatively underrepresented therein: one each from Albania and Ireland, two each from El Salvador and the Syrian Arab Republic, and one from Andorra, a previously unrepresented State. Membership of the initiative increased to a total of 1,520 participating institutions from 147 countries.

C. Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth

17. The Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth continued to lead the coordination and monitoring of the United Nations Youth Strategy, as well as the advocacy of the Organization on youth issues, while adapting its programme delivery to the exigencies of the pandemic. Online events allowed for the broader participation and engagement of young people worldwide. The Office led a series of youth dialogues with the Deputy Secretary-General that served as a forum for young people to speak directly with United Nations leadership and share their views and concerns. Topics addressed in the dialogues included disability inclusion, climate action and innovation.

18. To promote data-driven advocacy and raise awareness of the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals with youth-specific indicators, the Office launched the "Youth SDG Dashboard" at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2021.

19. Also in July, the Office, together with the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and the Global Queer Youth Network, launched the "Queer Youth Dialogues". In August, the United Nations Free and Equal #YouthLead campaign conducted by the Office Youth, together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), was concluded, having registered over 7.7 million views and 3.4 million engagements on its platforms since the campaign began in May.

20. Building on its publication in June 2021 of its report entitled "'If I Disappear': Global Report on Protecting Young People in Civic Space", the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth collaborated with Twitter in August to issue the first online brochure of its kind, entitled "Staying safe with Twitter. Youth Activist Checklist: Guidance on Digital Safety and Online Protection of Young People".

21. To mark International Youth Day (12 August), the Office staged the #YouthLead Innovation Festival in August 2021, in which over 6,000 young people worldwide participated. Aimed at countering misconceptions about young people, the event highlighted the importance of their contributions to innovation and technology in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and supporting recovery from the pandemic, with a parallel social media campaign showcasing more than 100 youth-led solutions to those challenges.

22. From 28 to 30 September 2021, almost 400 youth delegates from around the world gathered at the event entitled "Youth4Climate: Driving Ambition" in Milan, organized by the Government of Italy and supported by the Office along with the

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the youth constituency of the Convention and the Connect4Climate partnership programme of the World Bank Group. Recommendations formulated by the delegates on concerns ranging from climate education to climate financing were presented to Government ministers ahead of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held from 31 October to 12 November in Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Key contributors to the recommendations included the Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change set up by the Secretary-General and supported by the Climate Action Team and the Office.

23. The Office continued to host the secretariat for Youth2030, the United Nations system-wide youth strategy, and to spearhead the coordination and implementation of the strategy. Between June and November 2021, it conducted an in-depth analysis on the topic of youth and Sustainable Development Goal accountability across 35 countries towards preparing a corresponding report on the topic. The Office also finalized the Youth2030 Scorecard, a tool for tracking the progress of United Nations system bodies on implementing or contributing to the strategy, with the corresponding reporting from those bodies expected in 2022.

24. With the support of Colombia, Finland and Qatar, and in cooperation with the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security, along with the wider United Nations system, the Office retained the lead role in organizing the High-level Global Conference on Youth-Inclusive Peace Processes, to be held virtually in 2022. The Conference is expected to see the launch of guidelines to advance the country-level operationalization of the agenda for youth-inclusive peace processes and a five-year strategy for strengthening those processes.

D. Creative community outreach

25. Ahead of World Food Day (16 October), the Department of Global Communications collaborated with Sony Pictures Entertainment, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Foundation to launch a global digital campaign, including a video public service announcement, featuring the animated character “Peter Rabbit”. The campaign raised awareness of the importance of healthy eating, food waste reduction and other sustainable practices that contribute to personal health and the health of the planet. Exemplifying its impact, a single campaign post on United Nations social media platforms generated some 245,000 views, with an engagement rate of 10 per cent. The campaign reached 42 countries in 11 languages, and the hashtag #PeterRabbitFoodHero had generated nearly 3,700 social media posts by mid-December 2021. Campaign-related material represented the primary content featured on the ActNow website and the related mobile app aimed at encouraging individual action on climate change, with nearly 60,000 page views from mid-June to mid-August 2021 and thousands of people logging personal actions on the website.

26. A similar campaign organized in collaboration with DreamWorks Animation, FAO and the United Nations Foundation in support of the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables (2021) featured the “Trolls” animated characters. The centrepiece of the campaign, a video public service announcement encouraging “Trolls” fans to be “food heroes” by eating more fruit and vegetables for a healthier diet and reducing food waste, was launched in nine languages ahead of World Children’s Day (20 November) and World Television Day (21 November). As at mid-December, the public service announcement had generated nearly 1.9 million views.

27. The fourth in an ongoing series of virtual workshops organized jointly by the Department and the Producers Guild of America, which was held in January 2022, explored the ways in which film and television producers, writers and directors could work with the Organization to highlight human rights challenges. The workshop showcased stories of United Nations human rights defenders in the field.

E. Celebrity advocacy

28. The Department of Global Communications continued to call upon the support of the Messengers of Peace, Goodwill Ambassadors and other advocates and influencers to amplify messaging from across the United Nations system, especially on initiatives of the Secretary-General and those in support of the “Verified” campaign. Messengers of Peace helped to boost messaging related to the address of the Secretary-General at the opening of the Conference of the Parties in Glasgow. Social media posts by Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, Daniel Barenboim, Leonardo DiCaprio, Jane Goodall, Lang Lang, Yo-Yo Ma, Midori and Edward Norton, amplified through other such posts by Goodwill Ambassadors, generated well over 1 million engagements on social media and drove increased visits to the United Nations climate action website.

F. Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists’ Fellowship Programme

29. As a result of COVID-19-related travel restrictions, the Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists’ Fellowship Programme was held virtually from 20 September to 8 October 2021. The 19 selected fellows – 11 women and 8 men from Albania, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, the Gambia, India, Nepal, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Senegal, the Sudan, Togo and Zambia – had experience in print and web outlets as well as television news, radio and multimedia, including podcasts.

30. Participants took advantage of the virtual access to the events and activities of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly. Senior United Nations representatives, including the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications, along with the Envoy on Youth, gave tailored briefings focused on topics including global health, climate change, refugees and human rights. The fellows, who during the programme produced 86 news pieces in English, French, Russian and Spanish, as well as Nepali and Portuguese, provided positive feedback in which they indicated that the opportunity had enriched their knowledge of and interest in the Organization and proved beneficial to their work and career.

IV. Engaging the public

A. United Nations at Expo 2020

31. Following a postponement of one year because of the pandemic, Expo 2020 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, opened its doors to in-person visitors on 1 October 2021 for six months. As of mid-December 2021, it had received millions of attendees both physically and virtually. The Department of Global Communications has been leading the United Nations presence at Expo 2020 – reflected in many ways and locations throughout the venue – through its focus on programming and activities around international days and thematic weeks, the Sustainable Development Goals and multilateralism while engaging more directly with numerous national and

thematic pavilions on site, most of which have integrated sustainability into their exhibits and programming and feature the Goals.

32. The United Nations presence at the event was made possible by the support of Expo 2020, the Government of the United Arab Emirates, several other Member States, private donors and United Nations entities. Its presence included a dedicated space named the #UNHub in the Mission Possible–Opportunity Pavilion, a thematic pavilion featuring the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, along with a video message from the Secretary-General highlighting the importance of individual engagement and action to achieve them. The more than 50 events and initiatives led by the Department included the commemoration of United Nations Day, including a five-kilometre run on the Expo grounds with the participation of dozens of Commissioners General and staff from national pavilions, the United Nations and Expo 2020; the screening of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) video entitled *Don't Choose Extinction* and the promotion of the related campaign to end fossil fuel subsidies; the screening of the Indian film *Son Rise*, in cooperation with the pavilions of India and New Zealand as well as the Women's Pavilion, and the promotion of 16 days of action to end violence against women; and a symbolic walk at the venue by the Goodwill Ambassador for Climate Action appointed by the Regional Bureau for Arab States of the United Nations Development Programme, Michael Haddad, to promote his planned 100-kilometre Arctic walk for climate action.

33. The Department collaborated with Expo 2020 on promoting thematic weeks on climate and biodiversity; space; urban and rural development; tolerance and inclusivity; knowledge and learning; and travel and connectivity, as well as on promoting Global Goals Week. United Nations observances prominently celebrated at Expo 2020 included World Food Day; World Cities Day (31 October); International Day for Tolerance (16 November); World Children's Day; International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December); International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development (3 December); Human Rights Day (10 December); International Universal Health Coverage Day (12 December); Arabic Language Day (18 December); International Human Solidarity Day (20 December); and International Day of Education (24 January).

34. The Department welcomed to Expo 2020 the President of the General Assembly, the Deputy Secretary-General, members of royal families, Government ministers and youth advocates for the Sustainable Development Goals and the work of the United Nations, and engaged with numerous Messengers of Peace and Goodwill Ambassadors promoting United Nations activities and concerns. In January 2022, the Department curated, together with Expo 2020 and the United Nations Global Compact, Global Goals Week, which included a Goals media zone devoted to media partnerships on the Goals and the ActNow campaign in the Middle East. The United Nations presence at Expo 2020 received coverage in over 150 media articles and more than 20 broadcast interviews in multiple languages at the global, regional and local levels during the reporting period.

B. Education outreach

35. Throughout the pandemic, the Department of Global Communications has continued to expand its outreach to students, teachers, academics and the public through using online platforms. During the reporting period, the Education Outreach Section supported United Nations priorities regarding human rights, peace and security, young people and multilingualism.

36. In August 2021, the online screenings and discussions of the television series co-produced by Canada and the United Kingdom entitled *Enslaved: The Lost History*

of the *Transatlantic Slave Trade*, conducted under the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery, were concluded. Some 905 people from 19 countries took part in the discussions during the reporting period.

37. In November, the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme marked the eighty-third anniversary of the November 1938 pogrom (Kristallnacht) with an online screening and discussion of the documentary produced in the United States of America entitled *Stories from the Violins of Hope*, at which the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations delivered welcoming remarks. In addition, to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Programme also organized a discussion entitled “Ethics, justice and the Holocaust” that addressed historical atrocities against persons with disabilities and their implications for ethical leadership in the twenty-first century.

38. The Programme continued its collaboration with the European Commission, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on the social media campaign conducted using the hashtag #ProtectTheFacts to raise awareness of the dangers of Holocaust denial and to provide facts to counter Holocaust disinformation. The social media messaging was promoted on the United Nations Twitter account.

39. In October, the outreach programme on the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the United Nations and the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme jointly organized an online panel discussion on the theme “Making learners more resilient to disinformation, ‘fake news’ and conspiracy theories”. The event formed part of a multi-stakeholder forum on addressing hate speech through education that was organized by the Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect and UNESCO.

40. The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme organized a virtual ceremony to mark the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust (27 January). The theme for the ceremony and other activities throughout 2022, “Memory, justice and dignity”, underscores the way in which safeguarding the historical record and affording victims of the Holocaust dignity through remembrance can achieve a form of justice for those whom the perpetrators sought to obliterate. The ceremony, which included testimonies from Holocaust survivors as well as remarks from the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of Israel and of the United States to the United Nations, was streamed live on United Nations Web TV and other platforms and shared widely with broadcasters. The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme created, curated and hosted the exhibition entitled “After the end of the world: displaced persons and displaced persons camps” at Headquarters in New York from 20 January to the end of February. The exhibition used artefacts from the Archives and Records Management Section of the Department of Operational Support and the archives of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. The Programme also provided support for the Holocaust remembrance and educational activities of United Nations information centres.

41. Under the Model United Nations programme, a video series entitled “UN Q&A” was launched that featured the recorded answers of United Nations experts to questions frequently asked by Model United Nations organizers and participants. Two of the first episodes were focused on peacekeeping and on organizing Model United Nations conferences in hybrid format, respectively. Under the programme, whose website has been translated into the six official languages of the United Nations, a survey was conducted with the United Nations information centres to better understand Model United Nations activities in areas served by the centres and provide support tailored to their needs.

42. In advance of the International Day of Peace (21 September), observed in 2021 under the theme “Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world”, the Education Outreach Section organized a virtual international youth observance event that was live-streamed on United Nations Web TV, the United Nations channel on YouTube, and Twitter. The event featured statements from the Secretary-General and from Messengers of Peace Paulo Coelho, Jane Goodall and Midori, along with an interview of a student from Gaza by a Deputy School Principal from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. Young people from 24 countries and territories – Albania; Brazil; the Central African Republic; Egypt; France; Germany; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Malawi; Mali; Myanmar; the Philippines; the Republic of Korea; the Russian Federation; South Africa; South Sudan; the United Republic of Tanzania; Ukraine; the United Arab Emirates; the United Kingdom; the United States, including Puerto Rico; and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) – delivered messages and statements on peace. A student with disabilities from the Central African Republic delivered a statement on peace and human rights in French sign language. As at 8 October, the observance had been viewed approximately 33,000 times. In a feedback survey, 95 per cent of respondents stated that they had learned more about peace as a foundation for recovering better from the pandemic, and 89 per cent that they had learned more about actions to promote peace, equity and sustainability.

C. Exhibitions

43. Online exhibitions in New York held during the reporting period concerned United Nations observances and activities as well as priorities such as climate action, human rights, peace and security, young people, and the impact of the pandemic. Selected exhibitions were available in multiple languages, such as the exhibition entitled “#TheWorldWeWant” – based on a photo competition held on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Organization for which contributors were invited to share images of the world as they imagined it in the future – which was staged in the six official United Nations languages. As at mid-November, the exhibition website had registered 80,000 page views for 2021 – a 75 per cent increase compared with 2020.

D. Special events

44. On 21 October, in compliance with COVID-19 restrictions, the Department organized the United Nations Day Concert, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, on the theme “Building back together for peace and prosperity”. Some 300 delegates, staff and guests of the Mission gathered in the General Assembly Hall to enjoy the hybrid concert, which consisted of two live performances and remarks from the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, along with several pre-recorded musical performances. Segments of the concert received over 700,000 views on United Nations social media accounts.

45. The Department supported the creation and launch of the UNDP-led global campaign entitled “Don’t choose extinction”, highlighting the impact of fossil fuel subsidies on climate change. The centrepiece of the campaign, a video filmed in the General Assembly Hall featuring the animated character “Frankie the Dinosaur”, received international media coverage.

46. In support of the Sustainable Development Goals Moment on 20 September, the Department coordinated arrangements with the Permanent Mission of the Republic

of Korea to the United Nations for the production of a music video by the pop group BTS in which the group appeared in their capacity as special envoys of the President of the Republic of Korea. On the United Nations YouTube channel, the music video attracted more than 44 million views, raising awareness of the Goals among new audiences. An interview with the President of the Republic of Korea and BTS conducted by the Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications garnered 5.6 million views on the channel.

47. In the context of the launch of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda” (A/75/982) in the run-up to the opening of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Department, in collaboration with the Government of Switzerland, supported the installation of a monumental piece of land art by the artist Saype on the North Lawn of Headquarters in New York. Entitled *World in Progress II*, the artwork depicted two children creating a vision of their future in chalk drawings and origami. Both the creative process and the finished artwork itself, executed freehand in biodegradable paints on the Lawn and only visible from above, received widespread international media attention.

V. Sharing knowledge

A. Visitors’ Services

48. The United Nations Office at Geneva reopened to the general public in August 2021. As at 10 November, the Visitor’s Service there had welcomed 2,116 visitors, of whom 55 per cent were schoolchildren and students. An additional 105 people had joined online tours, and 35 protocol tours for dignitaries had also been conducted. The reopening coincided with the adoption of a new tour route owing to the refurbishment of the Palais des Nations, the implementation of a new online booking and management tool, and the development of a new private tour. The smaller groups necessitated by COVID-19-related restrictions were welcomed by visitors. In line with the global communications strategy for the United Nations, the Service created a toolbox for online use and in-person tours that was focused on personal stories linked to the activities and concerns of the Organization using simplified texts conceived for children, including on the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow. The Service also tested a new online tour on the subject of art and architecture at the Palais des Nations.

49. In consideration of local conditions, the Visitors’ Service of the United Nations Office at Nairobi continued to offer virtual programmes to interested groups. The highlight of the reporting period was the launch of a new website for online ticket sales options in preparation for the reopening of the Office to the general public in 2022.

50. Over 6,500 people joined virtual sessions conducted by the Visitors’ Service in New York, including online briefings for more than 2,700 participants in over 80 groups. In addition to regular virtual tours, the Service continued to offer a range of thematic and specialized virtual tours. These included United Nations architecture tours conducted during the public design festival entitled “Open House New York” in October, as well as two human rights-themed events: a virtual session co-hosted by the Service and OHCHR in New York to celebrate the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples (9 August), and an online event marking the International Day of Sign Languages (23 September) that featured the first-ever American Sign Language-interpreted virtual tour and career session. In December, the Service resumed limited in-person tours for the general public before local conditions required their renewed suspension.

51. The flexibility of online briefings enabled outreach in numerous countries to new groups that had never heard a United Nations speaker before. The United Nations

Speakers Bureau in New York arranged briefings in several languages in addition to English, including Japanese, Korean and Spanish, with the topics of greatest interest proving to be the Sustainable Development Goals, climate action, human rights and the rights of women, refugees and global health. Online briefing highlights included a bilingual programme for the Inter-American Defense College featuring the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – an alumna of the College – with participants from throughout Central and South America; a programme for Palestinian women entitled “Skills for Success”; and programmes for high school and college students. The Service continued to assist educators in teaching about the Organization by providing curated lesson plans and educational resource materials.

52. The United Nations Office at Vienna reopened to the general public in September 2021. As at 10 November, 2,456 people had joined in-person tours and a further 45 people had participated in virtual tours. Of that total, about 70 per cent were schoolchildren and students. The Visitors’ Service offered an interactive online version of its long-standing holiday games programme for children from 6 to 13 years of age and launched a virtual art tour showcasing the artworks on display at the Office. In October, the number of visitors reached about 30 per cent of the regular volume, with highly positive visitor feedback. While in-person visitors represented more than 50 nationalities, three quarters were German speakers. In November, the Service resumed limited in-person lecture programmes.

B. *UN Chronicle*

53. The *UN Chronicle* online magazine continued to support the global communications strategy by publishing original articles on priorities of the Organization. Twelve articles on the pandemic were also published. Distinguished authors provided factual information and analysis and offered solutions for reaching a global “post-pandemic” status that included renewed action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

54. *UN Chronicle* published nearly all of its 2021 articles and more than half of its 2020 articles in the six official languages of the United Nations. More than 180 articles in official languages other than English were posted on the magazine website between 1 July and 31 December 2021.

55. In addition to maintaining its focus on the impact of the pandemic and on sustainable development, *UN Chronicle* published several articles supporting United Nations observances, including an article by the Belgian recording artist and Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Ozark Henry, on the occasion of World Day against Trafficking in Persons (30 July). The magazine also featured a contribution from the President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Tribunal.

56. The *UN Chronicle* website recorded 2.7 million page views during the reporting period.

C. *Yearbook of the United Nations*

57. In September 2021, the Department of Global Communications migrated the website of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* to the new United Nations online platform, resulting in an increase in users of 266 per cent over the two subsequent months compared with the same period in 2020, with the highest increase coming from users in China. In October, the Yearbook Unit conducted its annual training sessions for delegates and United Nations staff, as well as participants in the Reham

Al-Farra Fellowship, with a special focus on the use of the *Yearbook* as an authoritative reference tool for combating misinformation. In their feedback, the fellows indicated that the training session had helped them to better understand where to search for United Nations information and resources. Also in October, the United Nations hub at Expo 2020 was opened with a display of a timeline of key moments in United Nations history, created for visitors by the Unit. Following the completion of the 2015 Yearbook in early 2022, the writing and editorial capacity of the Unit will be redirected towards updating and creating new publications that address younger audiences and publications with a wider audience and higher marketing potential.

D. Library services

Steering Committee for Libraries of the United Nations

58. The Steering Committee for Libraries of the United Nations, co-chaired by the Chief of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the Chief of the Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva, introduced a virtual community of practice focused on operational issues of United Nations information and library management. Two online sessions of the community addressed library projects on innovative virtual services, data management and social media.

Library, research and knowledge services

59. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library provided research and knowledge services online, with a total of 8,086 information and research interactions conducted through the virtual research desk. The Library also organized 19 online group training and customized briefing sessions for 311 participants and 13 one-on-one training sessions, with 55 videos on United Nations documentation in English, French and Spanish – 19 of which were created during the reporting period – accessed more than 2,500 times. The online database “United Nations Member States on the Record” registered 49,365 page views. Among the up-to-date digital resources of the Library, the 109 research guides, which are available in the six official languages of the United Nations, received 1.5 million page views. “AskDag”, the knowledge base of 817 frequently asked questions available in Chinese, English, French and Spanish, received a total of 821,953 page views, an average of 136,992 per month.

Digitization and preservation services

60. Of the approximately 20 million United Nations documents and publications available only in print and stored in the basements of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, 3 million have been identified as “important”, including normative and United Nations parliamentary documents and related materials. Over the course of 22 years, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva have digitized around 500,000 of those documents and publications – some 6.4 million pages – including core Security Council documents and official records of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council. With a contribution from the Government of Qatar, the Department was able to purchase a robotic scanner for in-house digitization in November 2021. The scanner will enable the Library to accelerate the digitization of 1.5 million of the important documents and publications. The challenge with regard to the remaining 1 million important documents and publications that are in dire condition owing to paper acidification and other environmental risks is that they cannot be digitized in-house. They are at very high risk of permanent damaged, and the urgent need for their immediate digitization cannot be met with existing resources, as a result of which additional voluntary and in-kind contributions will be required.

61. In response to General Assembly resolutions [52/214](#), [71/262](#), [72/19](#), [73/270](#) and [74/252](#), as well as to paragraphs 390, 398 and 405 of the financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2018 and report of the Board of Auditors ([A/74/5 \(Vol. I\)](#)) and paragraphs 118, 122 and 124 of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its report for the year ended 31 December 2018 on the United Nations ([A/74/323](#)), the Department prepared a project proposal to outsource the digitization, including pragmatic metadata creation, of the 1 million “important” parliamentary and normative documents and publications in dire condition. It plans to continue to employ in-house resources to digitize and preserve the 1.5 million “important” parliamentary and normative documents and publications that are not in dire condition but also need to be digitized.

62. The Department has prepared a proposal for \$10,512,500 for a five-year period to achieve the full preservation of the “important” 1 million print parliamentary and normative documents in dire condition before the knowledge and deliberations of Member States that they represent is lost to history. The proposal includes the outsourcing of the digitization of the 1 million documents, including pragmatic metadata creation; the introduction of a digital preservation system, the first system of its scale in the Secretariat; and the development of the current digital repository into a robust second-generation system offering diversified electronic services such as repository metrics and analytics.

63. During the reporting period, 24 peacekeeping maps and 16,727 United Nations parliamentary documents from the collection of “important” documents (representing 108,707 pages) in the six official languages of the United Nations were digitized.

Digital curation services

64. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library continued to provide access to reliable information resources for staff and delegates to help counter misinformation around the pandemic. On average during the reporting period, more than 20,000 related electronic articles and books were consulted per month, while 1,600 unique users benefited from accessing resources remotely. In support of the United Nations peace and security reform to enhance peacebuilding and ensure the better prevention and management of crises, the Library instituted a partnership to extend remote access to electronic resources for peacekeeping, special political missions and the resident coordinator system in a co-financing accord while limiting subscription costs. More than 700 United Nations staff in the field have connected to Library resources since the start of the partnership in January 2020.

Outreach and community engagement

65. From 21 to 23 July 2021, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized the second United Nations Open Science Conference, under the theme “From tackling the pandemic to addressing climate change”. Some 35 policymakers, scientists, infrastructure managers, librarians, academics and publishers from 26 countries delivered presentations and participated in panel discussions, with over 5,000 individuals joining the specialized event or streaming it live on United Nations Web TV. The conference outcome publication *Open Science for Climate Action* is a compilation of lessons learned from tackling the pandemic that are considered relevant for meeting the challenge of climate change.

United Nations central repository and information system services

66. In December 2021, the Library introduced a new digital workflow for analysing United Nations parliamentary documents. The new workflow, a digital operation interconnected with similar United Nations information systems, is intended to replace the existing decades-old system and its paper-based workflow. During the reporting period, the United Nations Digital Library, which is the evolving central repository of the Organization, was enhanced to comply with the cybersecurity standards of the Office of Information and Communications Technology. The Digital Library recorded more than 5 million unique downloads from over 4,000 cities worldwide every month during the reporting period.

Information analysis service

67. Over 6,600 official United Nations parliamentary documents and publications were analysed, enabling users worldwide to find, access and share official United Nations documents and publications easily in a timely manner. New analytical records of 341 voting submissions and 7,900 speeches made at meetings of the main deliberative organs of the Organization were also created and made available online. The *Index to Proceedings of the Economic and Social Council: 2020 session* and the *Index to Proceedings of the Security Council: Seventy-fifth year – 2020* were completed and published on the Library website. To ensure compliance with gender-based approaches to thesaurus management, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library updated its standardized personal names list for searching and discovering speeches and related Member State information.

VI. Other services

A. Sales and marketing

68. The Sustainable Development Goals Publishers Compact launched by the Department of Global Communications in 2020 gained the support of over 150 signatories as it celebrated its first anniversary in October 2021, at the Frankfurt Book Fair. Publishers associations and other publishing entities from all continents have signed up to the 10 commitments for sustainable practices, with new signatories being recorded every month. In addition, the Sustainable Development Goals Book Club, which provides an opportunity for children between 6 and 12 years of age to discover age-appropriate books on relevant topics from around the world in the six official languages of the United Nations, continued to attract national and regional participants worldwide.

69. The acquisition of COVID-19-related content by the United Nations Publications Sales and Marketing Section continued, bringing the total number of book chapters and journal articles in the United Nations iLibrary – the online publishing platform of the Department – on different aspects of the pandemic to approximately 1,050. The content originates from the entire United Nations system and is multilingual.

70. As at the end of January 2022, the United Nations iLibrary had grown to contain some 10,000 titles, including flagship and recurrent publications, journals, and eight databases, as well as working and discussion papers and policy briefs aggregated from within the Secretariat and the bodies of the wider United Nations system. Approximately 28 per cent of publications on the platform are multilingual texts or translations.

71. Production continued on the French edition of the *United Nations Guide to Model UN*, which offers participants, student leaders and organizers of Model United Nations conferences and clubs an overview of the structure, procedures and processes of the Organization, along with tips for students on the best ways to participate in the conferences.

72. The accessible e-book programme for persons with barriers to reading such as blindness, low vision, dyslexia or other physical disabilities continued to expand. Notable new additions to the programme included the colour version of the *2021 Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization*; *Our Common Agenda: Report of the Secretary-General*; the *World Public Sector Report 2021*; the new *United Nations Disability-Inclusive Communications Guidelines*; and the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy – all in the six official languages of the United Nations.

73. The e-commerce platform of the Section was redesigned to facilitate the online sale of print and digital publications as well as merchandise while promoting United Nations priorities.

74. United Nations Development Business is a subscription-based platform providing the private sector and academia with access to an aggregated database of contracting opportunities in international development projects financed by multilateral development banks and other international financial institutions. During the reporting period, some 1,000 active subscribers used the website to access over 13,000 procurement notices and 30,000 contract awards. The automation of parts of the website workflows facilitated a significant increase in the publication of notices and awards in 2021 compared to previous years.

75. By providing a platform for widely advertising procurement notices and contract awards in order to achieve increased efficiency and transparency in public procurement processes, United Nations Development Business continued to facilitate access to funding for vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

B. Internal communications, knowledge solutions and design

76. The United Nations intranet, iSeek, published approximately 600 stories in English and French. Its dedicated COVID-19 resource page registered approximately 30,000 page views.

77. On the e-deleGATE portal, events, reports and training, as well as selected iSeek stories, were shared with Member State delegations, with an average of 9,000 page views per month.

78. The Graphic Design Unit provided visual communications and graphic design solutions – such as social media and web graphics, brand identities, animations, special emblems, posters, signage and promotional items – for campaigns, conferences, events and publications, at the request of departments and offices across the Secretariat. For example, the Unit – which creates material in the six official United Nations languages as well as in Hindi, Portuguese and Kiswahili, as needed – completed design products for the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly, Expo 2020, the ActNow campaign, the United Nations Food Systems Summit, human resources guidance on the return of Secretariat staff to Headquarters in New York, the colour version of the *2021 Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization* and *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*. In support of the global communications strategy, the Unit developed a page on iSeek, accessible by all Secretariat departments and offices, containing the regularly updated brand

guidelines for the Organization, along with related templates and visual communications material.

VII. Conclusion

79. The Department of Global Communications reached out to the global community to build support for the United Nations in a variety of ways: building partnerships, engaging the public and sharing knowledge through direct engagement with civil society and the private sector, specialized websites, virtual public events and commemorations, social media, and print and electronic publications. The wealth of activities and events and the array of publications issued for its diverse audiences show that the Department has successfully adapted to the constantly evolving pandemic situation in order to promote United Nations priorities such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the need for climate action, peace and security, human rights, gender equality, and the empowerment of young people. Supported by its outreach and knowledge services, the Department will continue to pursue its mission of enriching and stimulating public debate around the vital challenges of our time and galvanizing action to meet them.
