



Statement

by

**H.E. Mr. Abdallah Mansour
Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and Emigrants of Lebanon**

**at the
Fourth Committee**

Questions relating to information

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Check Against Delivery

*Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, NY. 10017*

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau for your election and to assure you of my delegation's commitment to the work of this very important Committee.

I would also like to thank Mr. Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal the Under-Secretary-General and head of the Department of Public Information for his statement. Furthermore, I appreciate the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information.

Mr. Chairman,

Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family, these are not my words but these are the words of the former Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr. Kofi Annan.

Today more than ever, these words resonate in different parts of the world as they highlight the power of information and knowledge in improving the future of mankind.

Today more than ever, the Department of Public Information, its partnership with the committee of Information and its coordination efforts with the UN Communications Group continue to play a vital role as a worldwide voice to promote the purposes and image of the United Nations. It also raises awareness on issues of importance to the international community including among others : conflict prevention and international peace and security; sustainable development; Millennium Development Goals and progress made in implementing the internationally agreed development goals; human rights, including women's rights and empowerment; dialogue among civilizations, and culture of peace and tolerance.

Mr. Chairman,

The world today is witnessing new forums enabling the rapid and free spread of information; social media has become an important tool for global communication crossing borders and boundaries. These new arenas should complement traditional journalism, including radio and prints, in ensuring the free flow of information and disseminating the overwhelming amount of data in a meaningful manner. The UN Department of Public Information (DPI) should consider this balance when communicating information on the work of UN to people around the world.

The General Assembly, in its annual resolution on "Questions relating to Information", reaffirms its commitment to the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as well as to those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media, principles we highly value in my country. Furthermore, this resolution urged all member states to ensure that journalists can perform their tasks freely and effectively. Unfortunately, however, far too many journalists across the world have been censored, jailed, kidnapped or killed for their work. Lebanon condemns in the strongest terms all attacks against journalists.

Mr. Chairman,

While commending the Department's media and successful public outreach campaign for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio +20, Lebanon recalls its contribution to this public campaign by working closely with the UN Information Centre in Beirut to promote the said Conference. In this context, a week-long campaign was programmed on the MTV network entitled "Change your habits, save your energy".

For the International Year of Forests, and under the slogan of “Solid roots for a strong Lebanon,” the UN Information Centre launched, in collaboration with local partners, a tree-planting campaign to mitigate severe environmental impacts on soil and contribute to sustainability.

Lebanon attaches a great importance to raising awareness about the commendable services of UN Peacekeeping operations around the world. In this regard, Lebanon strongly supports the close collaboration between the DPI and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS), notably the commemoration of the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. One more time, The UN Information Centre in Beirut was part of this campaign, and celebrated this day by organizing a multimedia exhibit and panel discussion on UN Peacekeepers.

Lebanon urges the DPI to continue lending support not only to the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support but also to regional centers for information, in raising awareness about new realities on the ground, and far-reaching achievements as well as challenges of peacekeeping operations.

Furthermore, we welcome the availability of the United Nations peacekeeping website in all six official languages, and we note with great appreciation the ongoing editorial support to the DPKO on the gender section of the website.

Mr. Chairman.

Lebanon fully supports the DPI's Special Information Program on the Question of Palestine as it serves the crucial task of raising awareness of the Question of Palestine and supporting the efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. We further urge the DPI to intensify its activities in this regard, and to dispatch news teams to the region to convey the situation on the ground.

Mr. Chairman,

In their quest for freedom and dignity, Arab youth capitalized on the information tools and used the social media as a platform to call for freedom, dignity, democracy and a better future. Journalists also played an important role in mobilizing people and galvanizing support. Indeed, Tawakul Karman, the Chairwoman of "Women Journalists Without Chains," was awarded the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize. This award attested to the vital role of women and journalists, and it also illustrated what Mrs. Karman said: "No voice can drown out the voice of Freedom and dignity".

The work of the Committee on Information represents an opportunity to reiterate the need to respect the freedom of the press, freedom of information, freedom of expression as well as human dignity. It should be an opportunity to transform free information into liberating knowledge and to translate the liberating knowledge into just power.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.