



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

3 April 2017

Excellency,

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter from the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (AHWG), His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Drobnyak, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia and Her Excellency Ms. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, circulating the presentation by the Under-Secretary-General of DGACM, Ms Catherine Pollard, on innovative proposals on the Journal of the UN.

I look forward to your active participation in the next meeting of the AHWG on 10 April 2017.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson'.

Peter Thomson

All Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations
New York



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK

31 March 2017

Excellency,

In our capacity as Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (AHWG), we wish to express our appreciation to all delegations for their active participation at the Thematic Debate of the AHWG on Working Methods held on 28 March.

Following the request from Member States, we have the pleasure of enclosing the presentation delivered by Ms. Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management, on innovative proposals on the Journal of the UN.

As announced during our last meeting, the date of the fourth thematic debate of the AHWG will be moved to 28 April – from the originally proposed date of 20 April. We ask delegations to prepare accordingly and look forward to their active engagement on the Strengthening the accountability, transparency and institutional memory of the Office of the PGA.

The Co-Chairs remain available for consultations in the months to come.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Vladimir Drobnyak
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Croatia

Lana Zaki Nusseibeh
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of the United Arab Emirates

To: All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations, New York

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**Second thematic meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the
Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly**

28 March 2017, 10:00 a.m., Trusteeship Council Chamber

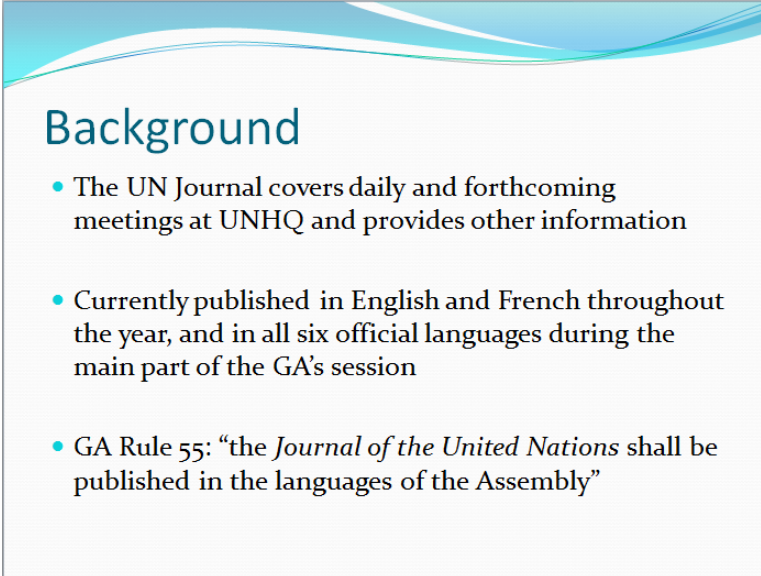
**IMPROVING WORKING METHODS:
INNOVATIVE PROPOSALS ON THE JOURNAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**Briefing by the Under-Secretary-General
for General Assembly and Conference Management
Ms. Catherine Pollard**

Esteemed Co-Chairs,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

1. I have the honour to brief you today on innovative proposals on the Journal of the United Nations using the presentation which you are seeing on the screen.

Slide 2: Background

A presentation slide titled "Background" with a blue and white wavy header. The slide contains three bullet points: "The UN Journal covers daily and forthcoming meetings at UNHQ and provides other information", "Currently published in English and French throughout the year, and in all six official languages during the main part of the GA's session", and "GA Rule 55: 'the Journal of the United Nations shall be published in the languages of the Assembly'".

Background

- The UN Journal covers daily and forthcoming meetings at UNHQ and provides other information
- Currently published in English and French throughout the year, and in all six official languages during the main part of the GA's session
- GA Rule 55: "the *Journal of the United Nations* shall be published in the languages of the Assembly"

2. Over the past seven decades, the content and volume of the Journal of the United Nations, which covers daily and forthcoming meetings at UN Headquarters and provides a wide array of other useful information, has expanded significantly. Currently, the Journal is published five days a week in the two working languages – English and French. During the main part of the General Assembly's regular sessions (September-December), the Journal is issued in the six official languages.

Slide 3: Mandate

Mandate

In resolution 70/305, the General Assembly:

- *reiterated* the need to fully implement and observe rule 55
- *expressed* concern about the lack of implementation
- *requested* innovative proposals on possible changes through resource reallocation and cost efficiency

3. In resolution 70/305, the Assembly reiterated the need to fully implement and observe rule 55 of its rules of procedure, which provides that during the sessions of the General Assembly, the Journal “shall be published *in the languages of the Assembly*”. In the resolution, the Assembly expressed concern about the lack of implementation of this rule. For this purpose, it requested the Secretary-General to provide, during the seventy-first session, “*innovative proposals on the possible changes to the format, production and editing of the Journal, by reallocating existing resources and economizing on the costs of publishing it*”.

Slide 4: Structure

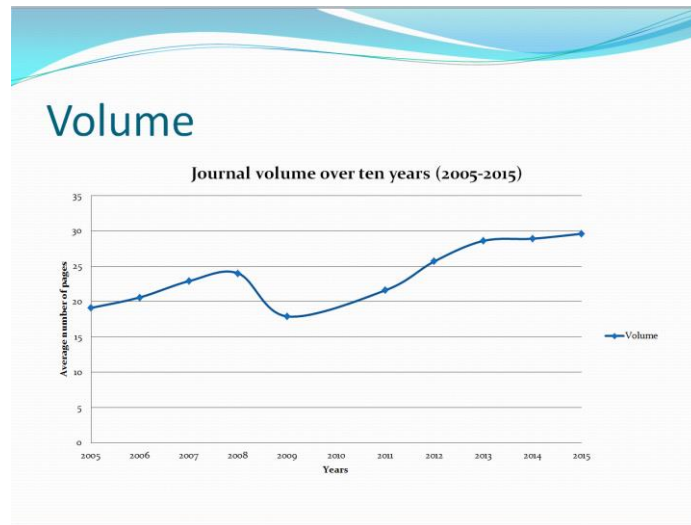
Structure

Today	Forthcoming	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official meetings • Informal meetings • Other meetings • Press conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official meetings • Informal meetings • Other meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcements • Summaries • Signatures • General info • Documents

4. The Journal’s current structure, for analytical purposes, may be summarized as follows: (a) today’s meetings; (b) forthcoming meetings; and (c) other information. The first section

includes official meetings being held by intergovernmental bodies, including the General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOC, and their subsidiary bodies; informal meetings on draft proposals convened by delegations; other meetings and events organized by Member States, Secretariat offices and other entities; and press conferences. The second section includes official, informal and other meetings to be held in the future. The third section contains miscellaneous information, including announcements by Secretariat offices and departments; summaries of official meetings; signatures and/or ratifications of multilateral treaties; general information; and documents issued at Headquarters.

Slide 5: Volume



5. In terms of volume, the Journal has grown over the past ten years from an average of less than 20 pages per issue in 2005 to around 30 pages in 2015. Available data for 2016 shows a similar upward trend.

Slide 6: Options (structure and languages)

		Option 1		Option 2
<i>Structure</i>	Part I Official meetings only, including meetings of the day and forthcoming, plus meeting summaries	Part II All other meetings, with links to relevant information	Current practice (issued in one volume year round)	
<i>Languages</i>	6 (ACEFRS) year round	2 (EF) year round	6 (ACEFRS) year round	

6. In response to the request made in resolution 70/305, the Secretariat has examined various options for the publication of the Journal in a way that satisfies the requirements of rule 55 in the most cost-efficient manner. Options have been narrowed down to two.

7. Under **Option 1**, the Journal would be divided into two parts. Part I would be limited to official meetings only, including meetings of that day and forthcoming meetings, and would also include meeting summaries. Part II would include all other meetings and information. While Part I would be available in the languages of the Assembly throughout the year, Part II would be published in the two working languages only. Parts I and II would be published in one single document. For instance, for the Chinese version of the Journal, part I will be in Chinese, while part II will be in English and French. Or, if you think it is more convenient to have Part I and Part II in two separate volumes, this can also be done without additional resource implications.

8. Under **Option 2**, the current one-volume structure would be maintained, and the Journal would be issued in the six languages all year round. But this would imply additional substantial cost, as you will shortly see on slide 9.

Slide 7: Options - continued (rationale and precedent)

	Option 1	Option 2
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet requirements of GA rule 55 Extend GA rule 55 requirements to other main bodies (SC, ECOSOC..) and their subsidiary bodies and allow "economizing on the cost of publishing it" as requested by GA in resolution 70/305 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet requirements of GA rule 55 Extend GA rule 55 requirements to <u>all</u> meetings
<i>Precedent</i>	From 1993 to 2003, the UN Journal was issued in two parts during the resumed session	Since 2003, the UN Journal has been issued in one volume throughout the session

9. Under **Option 1**, the requirements of rule 55, which applies to the General Assembly only, would be met and extended to other major intergovernmental bodies, including the Security Council, ECOSOC and their subsidiary bodies. Under **Option 2**, the requirements of rule 55 would be met and extended to cover *all* information and meetings, including those convened by delegations and groups of Member States, as well as Secretariat offices and other entities.

10. Regarding the two-part format, you may recall that there has been a precedent in this respect. From 1993 to 2003, the Journal was issued in two parts during the resumed session of

the General Assembly. Since then, it has been published in its current form, i.e. one volume throughout the session, with six language versions - in separate editions – during the main part.

Slide 8: Options - cont'd (changes)

Options (cont'd)		
	Option 1	Option 2
Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content streamlined through use of standard language, character limits, and links to relevant info/webpages Digital user-friendly format Automatic translation significantly increased Manual translation significantly decreased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content streamlined as in option 1 Digital user-friendly format Automatic translation relatively increased Manual translation relatively decreased

11. Under both options, content would be streamlined through the use of standard language, character limits and hyperlinks, and the Journal would be available in a digital user-friendly version. However, given the nature and the size of content, Option 1 would allow more room for standardization and automated translation, which are key to reducing the cost of production.

Slide 9: Options - cont'd (cost and timeline)

Options (cont'd)		
	Option 1	Option 2
Cost	Within existing resources, due to significant amount of standardized and pre-translated content	Up to \$2.14 million, due to significant amount of non-standardized content, requiring overnight translation
Timeline	By 31 December 2017	

12. While **Option 1** could be implemented within existing resources, **Option 2** would carry a significant additional price tag of up to USD 2.14 million to cover the cost of translation, even after the Journal content would be streamlined through the automation of translation, introduction of character limits, and the increased use of links to relevant information and webpages.

13. The Working Group may wish to consider these proposals in light of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 70/305, with a view to fully implementing and observing rule 55 of the Assembly's rules of procedure. DGACM is ready to support your decision-making process as required.

14. Subject to the decision taken by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of this Working Group during the seventy-first session, the targeted implementation date for either of these two options would be 31 December 2017.

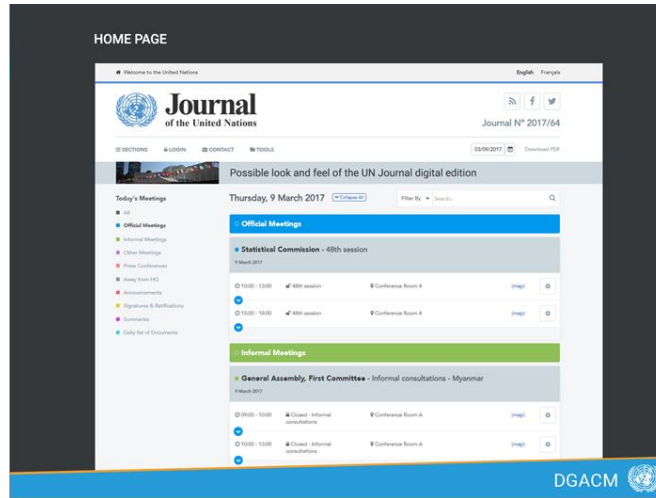
Slide 10: Digital Version



15. Now in the second part of my presentation, let me introduce the digital version of the Journal that DGACM is developing as part of our *“innovative proposals on the possible changes to the format, production and editing of the Journal”*, in line with the provisions of resolution 70/305. This digital version will be developed based on your decision on the options I've just presented. It will be accessible from any computer, tablet or smart phone, with many additional features, and will be much more user-friendly than any paper Journal. Let me reassure you again though, that a paper version would still be available. Please allow me to give you a preview of its overall look and feel regardless of the options you choose. Please note that this is not a prototype or a live presentation, but a general preview. Once the option is chosen by the Member States, DGACM will develop the web-based Journal and offer to you a live presentation of its prototype.

16. The goal of the web-based design is to better address Member States' needs, with an emphasis on making use of the latest technologies and communications media. It will ensure availability on mobile devices; multilingualism; and compliance with the latest accessibility standards; increased translation efficiency; improved workflow from submission to publication. The information will be more logically structured and consistent across the Journal; and it will be possible to show the information and updates in real-time – a comparative advantage over the paper-based approach.

Slide 11: Home Page



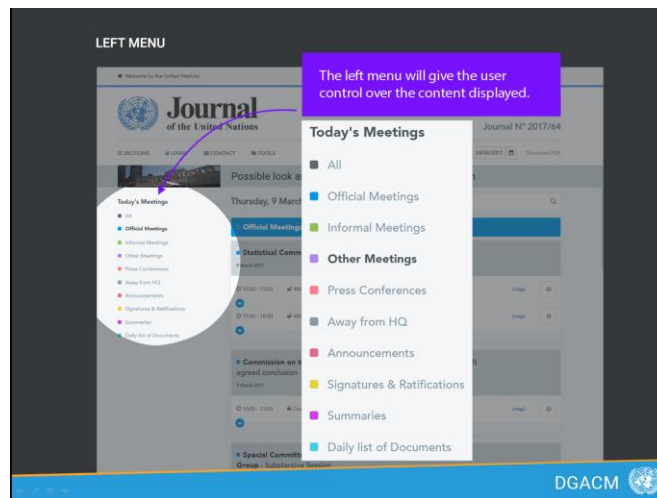
17. This image shows the proposed look and feel of the digital Journal which is being designed based on a multimedia approach. While you will notice English and French tabs on the current test page, let me emphasize that there will be a language switcher on top which will accommodate all six languages taking into account your decision. Various options are provided on the website to find the appropriate information (calendar, search, download, share, etc.). At the centre of the page, you would have the latest information on meetings with a search function.

Slide 12: General Assembly/Security Council



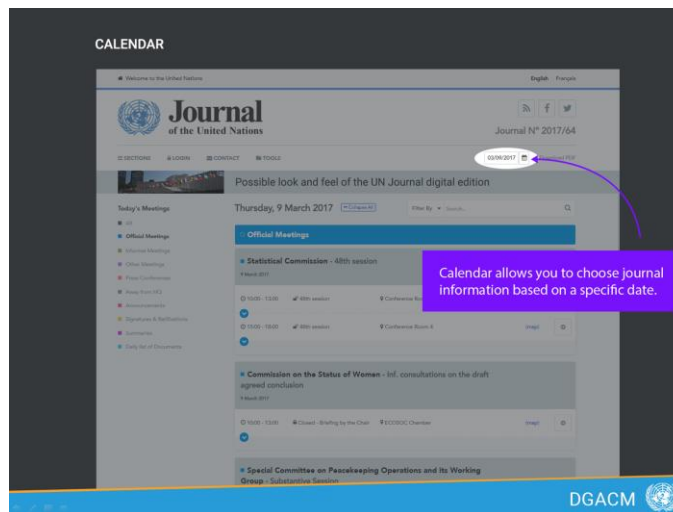
18. In accordance with resolutions 60/286 and 66/294 on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, the current pattern for announcing meetings of the General Assembly and of the Security Council will continue to be observed. As you can see, they are both shown in the vertical split column on the same level and in the order stipulated in Article 7 of the Charter.

Slide 13a: Left Menu



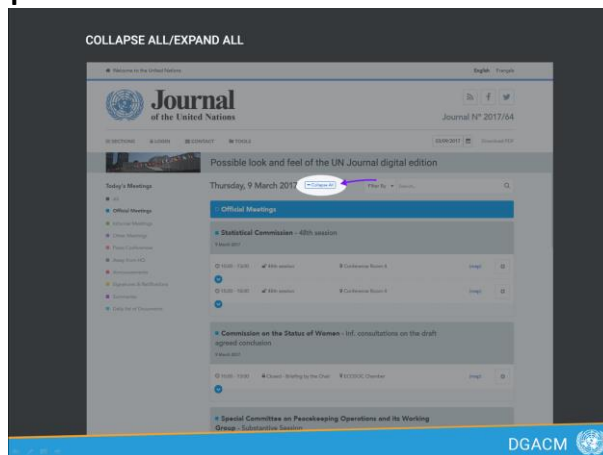
19. The left menu would give the user the ability to filter the different types of meetings that are displayed in the center of the page.

Slide 13b: Calendar



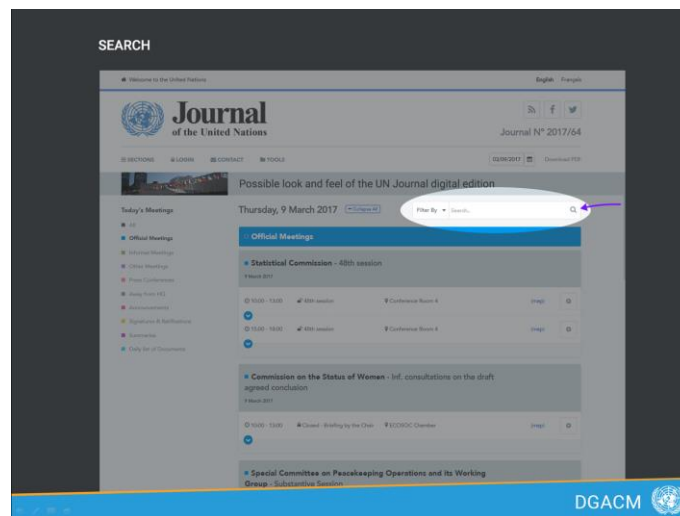
20. The date picker would allow users to choose the Journal information based on a specific time: present, past and forthcoming.

Side 13c: Collapse All/Expand All



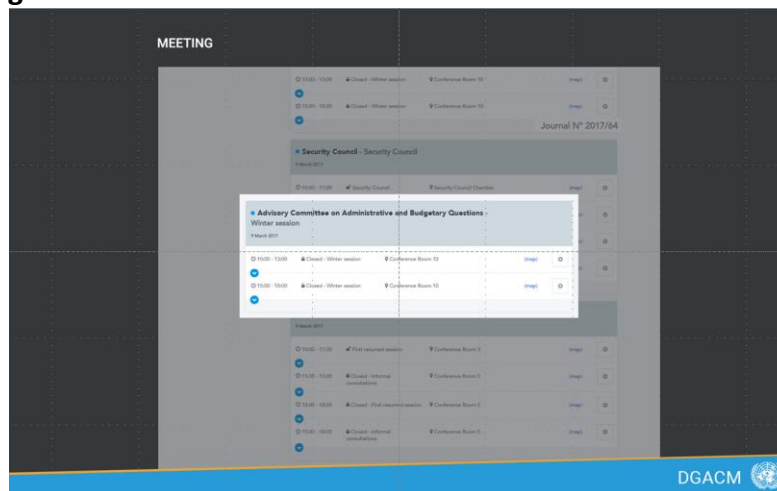
21. The collapse all/expand all button would help the user to switch between an expanded view of the meetings and a condensed one that would give an overview of the planned meetings.

Slide 13d: Search



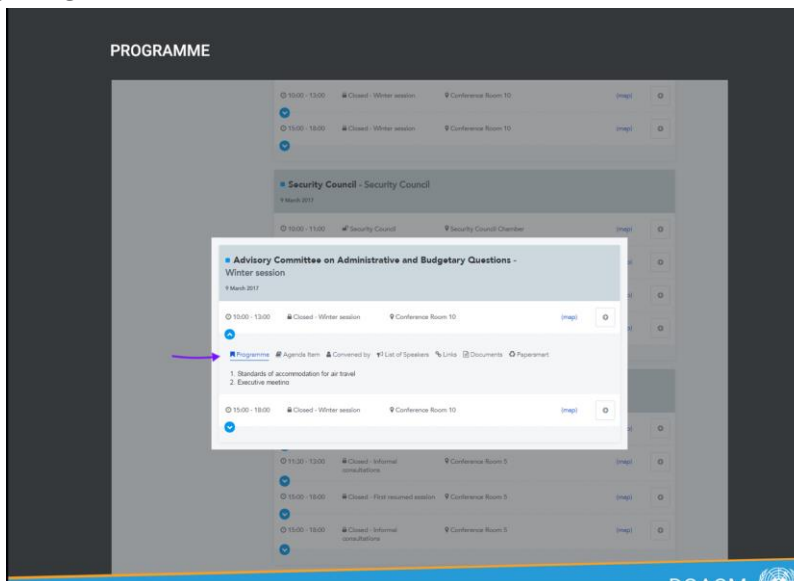
22. The user could search for specific meetings by using the full text search. For example, by typing a meeting body, only meetings of this body would be displayed.

Slide 14a: Meetings



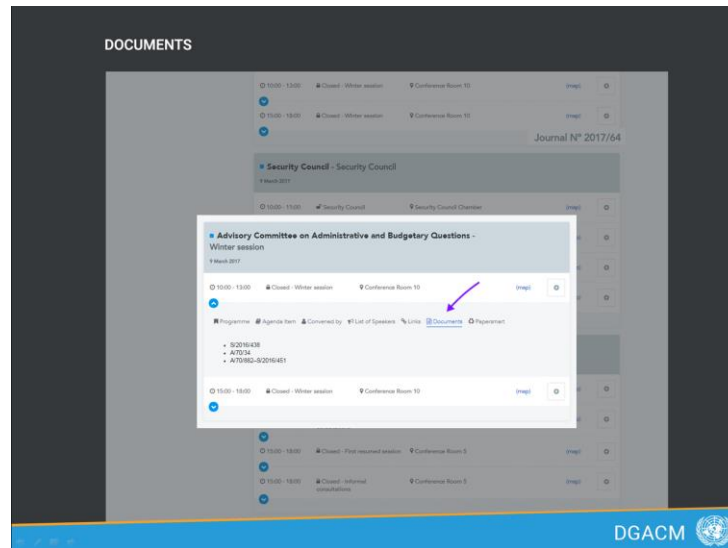
23. This would be an overview of an official meeting. The user could see all relevant information, including the body concerned, the meeting’s date, time and venue, and whether the meeting would be open or closed. Keeping a consistent design makes it easier to find the information; thus, we would easily know where to look for the time and conference room number, for instance. By clicking the arrow, the user could access more details. Depending on the type of information needed, the tabs could change.

Slide 14b: Programme



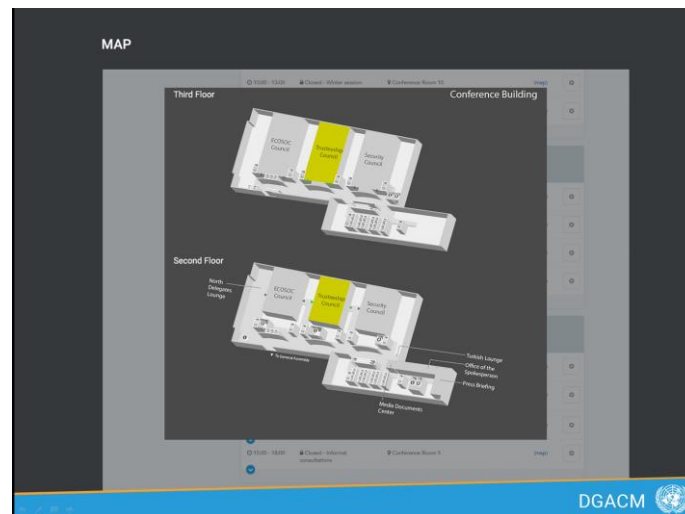
24. The Programme tab shows the details of the meeting.

Slide 14c: Documents



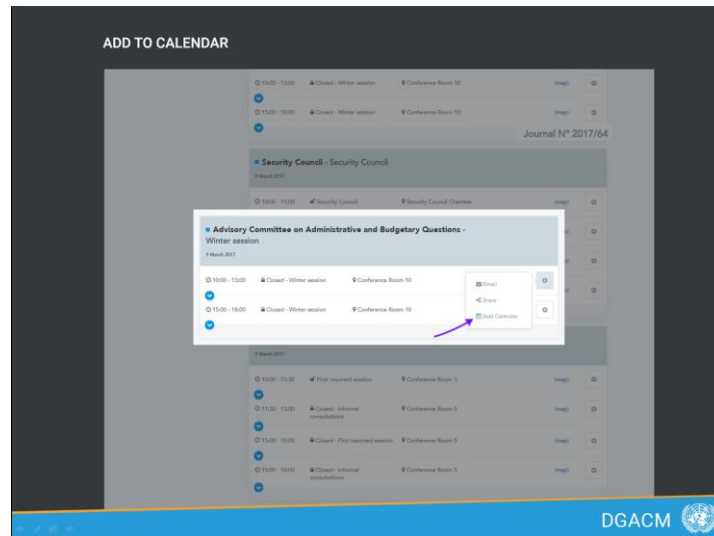
25. The same applies to: agenda item; the intergovernmental body; webcast; list of speakers; links; and documents. In this example, the documents for the meeting are listed in the documents tab. This is an easy way for users to find the information, since all official documents are linked to the ODS. For the Secretariat, it is an efficiency measure, because previous translation of this information would be recycled through a computer-assisted translation tool rather than translated manually.

Slide 14d: Map



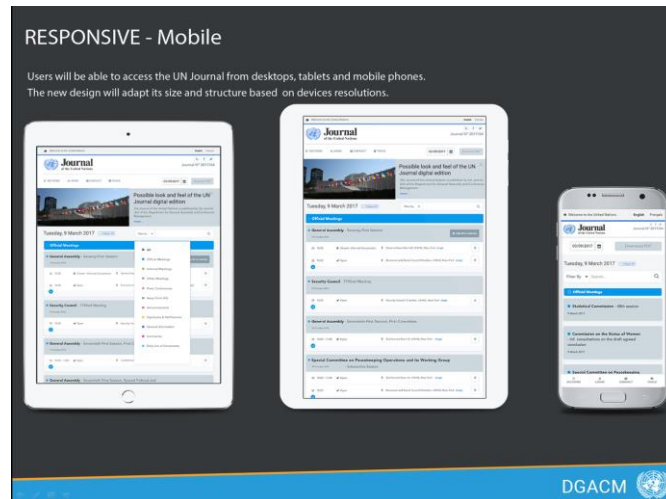
26. Integrated in the Journal website are interactive maps of the Secretariat building, making it easy for delegates to find the way to a meeting room.

Slide 14e: Add to Calendar



27. The application is interactive. The user would be able to send information to their e-mail inbox; share it on social media; and add it to their calendar.

Slide 15: Responsive - Mobile



28. The Journal would be delivered with a responsive web design, and would be fully compatible across platforms such as IOS and Android.

29. I welcome this opportunity to listen to your views on the two options for the Journal, and also the look and feel of the digital format. Thank you for your attention.

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