



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. ABDALMAHMOOD ABDALHALEEM MOHAMAD, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION (New York, 4 May 2009)

Mr. Chairman,

It is a privilege for me to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at the commencement of the thirty first session of the Committee on Information.

Allow me to begin by extending warmest congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Antonio Lima, Permanent Representative of Cape Verde to the United Nations on his election as Chair of the Committee. With your known diplomatic skills, wisdom and known professionalism, we have every confidence that under your stewardship you will guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion. Our congratulations also go to the members of the Bureau upon their election.

The Group extends deep appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Kiyotaka Akasaka for his comprehensive, informative and enlightening presentation on the activities and strategies of the Department of Public Information (DPI). The Group of 77 and China would like to further express its appreciation to the officers and staff of the Department of Public Information both at Headquarters and field, who have worked strenuously to carry out the mandate of the Department.

The foundation of DPI's policies on Public Information is built on close cooperation and partnership between the Department and the Committee on Information. The continued improvement of this partnership is essential as the DPI continues to play its vital role as public voice to promote the purposes, image and the Charter ideals of the United Nations.

The Group of 77 and China has taken note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI).

Mr. Chairman,

The most daunting task before DPI is to reach out to the widest possible audiences. Many countries, especially developing countries lack adequate resources and technical means to access information regarding United Nation's activities and achievements. The United Nations is a universal forum where the issues and concerns faced by the world community are debated. A comprehensive, accurate, impartial, and balanced coverage of the deliberations, decisions and actions of the United Nations can help promote better understanding and goodwill. It is therefore critical for DPI to continuously and actively project the United Nations ideals and accomplishments, intensify outreach and transmit the United Nations message to all peoples around the world.

The Group of 77 and China fully supports the work of the DPI and its activities in promoting the work of the United Nations and issues of importance to the international community, such as the Millennium Development Goals, Climate Change, Human Rights, Sustainable Development, the Dialogue among Civilizations, Training of the Journalists and the New Partnership of Africa's Development. The Group also appreciates DPI's new initiatives such as "UN4U", the first United Nations book day, txt 4 peace website, United Nations member states Wiki and the new website:

The Group of 77 and China commends the DPI for its implementation of the Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine aimed at raising the awareness of the international community with regard to the Question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East as well as support for the peace process.

The Programme is also useful in offering an annual training programme for Palestinian media professionals from the Occupied Palestinian Territory to assist them in developing their media capacity and skills. These and other activities undertaken by the DPI in this regard should be enhanced and reinforced.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the Network of United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) activities and strategic direction. We urge that all possible measures be taken to strengthen the UNICs. These Centres are a vital source for the flow of information as they help to bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries in terms of access to information and communication technologies. The Group of 77 and China wishes to underline that any decision pertaining to reorganizing the UNICs must be made in close consultation with the host countries, and it must take into account the geographical, linguistic and technological characters and needs of different regions.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 of China would like to stress the need that the United Nations Website is available in all official languages. The Group is of the view that more resources and efforts should be allocated to achieve full parity of languages and to bridge the gap among websites in the Organization's six official languages.

The Group attaches great importance to the continuation of the use of traditional media, including both radio and print, in disseminating the main messages of the United Nations, since traditional media remains the primary means of communication in developing countries. The Group also continues to underscore the importance of closer co-operation between the DPI and other substantive Departments in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS).

The Group of 77 and China looks forward and requests DPI to play an active role in raising public awareness on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its impact on development including the achievement of Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China has taken note of the proposal put forward by the Secretariat to replace "UN Chronicle" with "UN Affairs" and took note of the Secretary-General report on "UN Affairs". The Group is of the view that the Department of Public Information should continue the publication of UN Chronicle, and in this regard requests DPI to consider the improvement of UN Chronicle taking into account educational outreach, core audiences and parity of Languages.

In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its support to DPI in its endeavors to carry out its mandate and also reassures you, Mr. Chairman, to work closely and constructively with you and other delegations in this session of the Committee in order to achieve a positive outcome.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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