

SPEECH TO BE DELIVERED BY HER EXCELLENCY DR. CAROLINA CERQUEIRA, MINISTER OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA, AT THE 32nd SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION

NEW YORK, APRIL 26th, 2010

Mr President,

Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the Government of Angola, let me express our congratulations to Mr. Shalva Tsiskarashvili, from the Permanent Mission of Georgia, on his election to the vice presidency of the Committee. Our appreciation also goes to his predecessor, Mr. Irakli Chikovani, also from the Mission of Georgia, for his work during his tenure in the Committee. I wish him success in his new task.

We would also like to express our thanks to His Excellency Ambassador Monteiro Lima for the excellent work he has done in leading this committee. We are convinced that under his leadership, we will achieve positive results during the 32nd Session of the Committee.

Angola associates itself to the speech made by Yemen on behalf of the Group 77 and China.

Mr. President,

I would like to highlight the positive work that the DPI has developed in the field of dissemination of timely information on relevant topics, particularly on activities relating to Peacekeeping Operations, Disarmament, combating terrorism, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Climate Change, Human Rights, and Combating Violence against Women, allowing millions of people worldwide to have access to credible and timely information on important issues facing the humankind today.

The work of the DPI has been crucial to mobilize a growing wave of solidarity and to build the awareness of the international community in order to help the needy, as well as those who have been affected by natural disasters or have been victims of armed conflicts.

To ensure that the peoples in all parts of the world receive information about the activities of the United Nations, it is important that in addition to its six official languages, the UN broadcasts information in more languages so that through the use of new information technologies, its message is understood by all. In this context, we express our appreciation to the Portuguese language unit of the UN Radio, which has done a remarkable job in favor of Portuguese-speaking Peoples.

Mr. President,

The report of the Secretary General, contained in document A/AC.198/2010/2, states that the budget for 2010-2011, approved by the General Assembly on December 23rd, 2009, includes funding for the posts and the establishment of a United Nations Regional Information Centre in Luanda, in order to meet the specific needs of African Countries of Portuguese Official Language (PALOP).

Angola welcomes the decision of the General Assembly decides to open this center and expresses its appreciation to all Member States, particularly the Group 77 and China, as well Deputy Secretary Akasaka, for having contributed significantly to the materialization of this important project.

It is with great honor that Angola will house the PALOP Regional Information Centre. Besides it being a privilege for our country, we believe that the establishment of this Information Centre in Angola is also an important stimulus for us to continue firmly on the path we have been trailing, under the guidance of His Excellency the President and Chief Executive of Staff of the Republic of Angola, Engineer José Eduardo dos Santos, towards the consolidation of peace, the strengthening of democracy and the fight against poverty and all forms of exclusion in society.

The Angolan Government agrees to honor its own commitments regarding providing facilities to the United Nations at no cost and will

work closely with the Department of Public Information to ensure the establishment of the center and its full operation as soon as possible.

In this perspective, our government has identified facilities for the operation of the center.

Mr. President,

The report of the Secretary General also attaches great importance to promoting disarmament and domestic violence. These are issues on which the Angolan Government has been working with great dedication.

It is against this background that Angola has been implementing the National Programme for the Disarmament of the Civilian Population since 2009, having, in this connection, organized the Second Workshop on the Disarmament of the Civilian Population in Luanda on April 16th, 2010. In terms of combating violence against women, my country is about to enact new legislation to prevent such violence.

In recent times, the Angolan media and society have awakened to the theme of domestic violence, particularly violence against women.

Earlier this year, Angola approved the first Constitution of the Republic, inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in accordance with the universal rules of representative democracy. The text of the Angolan Constitution expressly states that Angola is a democratic state, where the Constitution and the law prevail, where there is separation of powers, pluralism of expression and political organization.

This Constitution ensures that the Republic of Angola promotes and defends the basic human rights, ensuring the effectiveness thereof by the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches. Subsequently, the Constitution of the Republic of Angola contains specific articles that guarantee freedom of expression and information, freedom of press, freedom of association at all levels of assembly and expression, freedom of conscience, religion and worship, freedom of association and more. In Angola, there are no prisoners whose only crime was to have an opinion.

In this Constitutional framework, Angola has a considerable amount of privately owned newspapers, of general and thematic inclinations, and with a varied political orientation.

Likewise, private television stations operate in Angola, whether by open signal or through cable and satellite transmission.

It is because of this new constitutional context that we will receive the United Nations Information Centre for the PALOP. This institution is therefore a particularly important moment for our young democracy. The dissemination of the objectives and activities of the United Nations by the people that the Centre will serve is crucial for consolidating peace and democracy in Angola and other African Countries of Portuguese Official Language.

The institutions with which the information centers favor contact, such as the media and educational institutions are key to ensure that the ideals of the United Nations are disseminated and internalized by the youth and the general population, thus supporting efforts to achieve peace and consolidate democracy in all countries the center will cover.

Making available libraries, electronic information resources, including internet websites, newsletters, as well as other informational products in local languages will be a valuable contribution to the dissemination of the United Nations universal ideals that concern all of us and is a valuable aid in the promotion of citizenship duties in each country.

Mr. President,

I would like to conclude my speech by reaffirming the interest with which Angola will receive the United Nations Information Centre for the PALOP, and by offering at the outset our availability and commitment to this project.

Thank you, Mr President