

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ILEANA NUÑEZ MORDOCHE, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES a.i. OF CUBA, AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION. New York, 29 April 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you and the rest of the Bureau, on behalf of the Cuban delegation, for your election as Chairman of the Committee on Information.

We would like to thank Mr. Kiyotaka Akasaka, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information and the entire staff of the Department of Public Information for the detailed and comprehensive report presented on the work carried out by the department and for participating in the useful Q and A session of yesterday afternoon.

Cuba associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished delegation of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the G-77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

Technological development and the new information and communication technologies are realities that we cannot ignore. But access to such breakthroughs is very unequal among countries and their use continues to follow a consumerist model dictated by the technology hubs. The technology gap between the North and the South will not close; on the contrary, it continues to grow.

According to UNESCO's latest estimates, by 2010 the illiterate adult population in the world will reach 830 million people, that is, 1 out of 6 adults will remain illiterate; more than 2 billion people have never used a telephone and do not know the word Internet. It would be worth therefore, reconsidering the way in which we face the technology revolution.

We must begin to devise new practical ways to bring about a rational use and a more social appropriation of information technologies, which should aim at closing not only the technological gap, but the social gap as well. In this regard, the UN can play a decisive role.

The information being disseminated from the developed world most of the times distort, fabricate or ignore the news and events happening in developed countries, or even make up news to divert the international community's attention. Therefore, it is increasingly necessary to create a New World Order of Information.

With the governments' political will, international cooperation and a minimum of resources that the so-called developed world wastes today in publicity, consumerism or the arms race, the Internet and the dissemination of information could become a vehicle for the realization of a cultural and

educational revolution that promote knowledge and promulgate education, culture, cooperation, development and solidarity.

Our country, despite its scarce resources, has contributed to this objective. All Cuban children and adolescents receive, since pre-school, computing classes and have access to television channels devoted exclusively to Education.

Through the Cuban award-winning literacy method called "*Yes, I Can*", recognized by UNESCO as an effective program, which is based in the use of television, radio and video, more than 2 million people in Latin America have been rescued from ignorance. Another 10 countries from other regions are successfully implementing this revolutionary learning method at different levels.

The underdeveloped world must be treated in a special manner in the UN Information System. We consider that the UN Information Centers that are spread the world over, particularly in developing countries, must play a more active role in disseminating balanced information, taking into account the needs of the public which the message is aimed at.

The use of broadcasting mechanisms, such as the radio, must continue to be promoted as a means to contribute to the information of the vast illiterate populations that exist in the countries of the South.

Mr. Chairman,

It is broadly known that the United States government continues to wage a radio and television war against Cuba, which our country is forced to denounce once again.

This radio aggression overtly infringes the principles of International Law governing the relations between the States and the rules and regulations of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).

The illegal radio and television broadcasts against Cuba do not convey information; on the contrary, they fabricate and distort it to encourage the Cuban people's disillusionment and questioning of their Revolution. They are not meant to respect values such as objectivity and adherence to the truth, but rather fabricate lies with premeditation and incite to destructive hatred.

Since the beginning of this aggression, the Cuban people has denounced its unlawfulness whenever deemed appropriate, particularly at the ITU, taking into account that such radio-electronic war breaches the Constitution, the Convention and the Radio regulations of the Union.

On last November, the World Radio Conference, held in Geneva, concluded that the broadcasts from US aircraft to Cuba contravene the Radio Regulations.

Mr. Chairman,

Every week, radio and television stations based in US territory broadcast to Cuba more than 1 889 hours through 30 different frequencies of medium and short wave, FM and TV. They generate some 228 to 253 hours a day of programs that have nothing to do with balanced and factual information.

Just for the fiscal year of 2007, the US Congress passed a budget of 36 100 000 dollars of federal funds for actions against Cuba, 10 million more than in 2004.

These increasingly astronomical amounts and the new methods used for radio and TV aggressions by the US Government against Cuba, prove a complete disregard for the rules governing international relations.

Of the 19 stations broadcasting subversive programs against Cuba, 14 aim their signals directly towards our country. Three of these latter, the Voice of the Americas and the so-called Radio and Television Martí, are owned by the United States Government.

Several of these stations belong or provide services to organizations linked to well-known terrorists living in and acting against Cuba from US territory, with full consent of the US Federal Administration authorities.

Cuba reiterates its condemnation of this aggression and fully rejects the US government's intention to keep and increase radio and television broadcasts against Cuba, in open violation of the international laws in force on radio spectrum regulation matters.

The choice of the kind of information that the people of Cuba wish to receive is a sovereign decision of our country and not of those who squander the taxpayers' dollars from the US administration and conspire with terrorist elements in their plans against the Cuban Revolution.

While these new radio and television aggressions have been and will continue to be neutralized, our country has the obligation and the right to denounce these illegal acts and to demand that they be brought to a halt.

Cuba will continue to exercise its sovereignty and independence and will continue to adopt all possible measures to repel these aggressive actions.

Thank you Mr. Chariman

