

Statement by Minister Mari Miyoshi
On the 30th Committee on Information
29 April 2008

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Committee on Information, and I am confident that the 30th Session of the Committee will be successfully conducted under your able leadership. Japan will extend its full support to you and the bureau of the Committee and actively participate in the discussion. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Kiyo Akasaka for his comprehensive briefing on the activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI) as well as yesterday's interactive dialogue. I hope that DPI will continue to work to enhance its effectiveness, fulfill accountability, and actively engage in public relations activities.

As the Secretary-General's Report touched upon, DPI set the four priority themes in January 2008 to be development, peace and security, human rights, and climate change. We highly commend DPI's efforts to prioritize themes, as it is inevitable for DPI to identify priorities and strategically tell the world, promptly and accurately, about the roles and missions of the United Nations. In 2007, with particular thanks to the leadership and commitment of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the high level event on Climate Change in September and the Conference of the Parties of Climate Change in Bali in December brought about world-wide media coverage and fostered greater awareness by the global community. Japan hopes that DPI will continue to enhance its efficiency by coordinating within its organization, networking with other UN organizations, and creating partnerships with civil societies among others within its existing resources in light of the importance of financial discipline.

Japan supported the DPI's Strategic Communications Workshop for Asia and the Pacific which was held in Bangkok in January 2008, and attended by officials of DPI as well as Directors of the United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) in the Asia and Pacific region. We sincerely hope that the workshop helped DPI to strengthen its efforts in capacity building and networking for the UNICs in the region.

This year marks the midpoint of our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. It is important to take stock of the progress we have made and identify the areas on which we should focus our attention in the years ahead. Japan will host the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) in May, which attaches one of the priorities to ensuring human security, including achieving the MDGs, with the UN, UNDP, and the World Bank. Japan will also host the G8 Hokkaido-Toyako Summit in July. Through these initiatives, Japan will take up relevant issues of the highest priorities of the international community, including development. We will spare no effort to ensure that the outcomes of the two meetings will provide important input to the high-level UN meeting on MDGs to be held in September.

In this respect, we hope that DPI, too, will continue to set development as one of the key issues and to keep actively engaged in its works.

In other areas such as counter-terrorism efforts, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as the areas of peacebuilding and reconstruction of post-conflict countries, Japan will continue to engage actively. We hope the UNIC Tokyo will further strengthen activities to publicize these key issues to deepen understanding on the works of the UN.

Mr. Chairman,

Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda of Japan stated in his Policy Speech in January this year, "Japan will actively address these global challenges, and play a responsible role as a Peace Fostering Nation." This year marks the 60th year of the establishment of UN peacekeeping operations (PKO). Japan will take this occasion to host a seminar in Tokyo in June, in cooperation with DPI. We are looking forward to having high-level UN officials' participation and prominent speakers to be selected through DPI's networks to produce a fruitful dialogue. Japan reiterates its determination to continue its support of DPI's activities as it works to provide the world with accurate and timely information on the Organization.

Thank you.