

**PHILIPPINE STATEMENT**  
by  
**H.E. HILARIO G. DAVIDE, JR.**  
Permanent Representative  
General Debate of the 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Information  
New York, 28 April 2008

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippine delegation congratulates you and the members of your bureau for your well-deserved election. It is confident that under your able leadership and guidance, the Committee on Information will be able to accomplish the tasks programmed for its 30<sup>th</sup> Session.

The Philippines also salutes your predecessors--Mr. Rudolf Christen of Switzerland and Mr. Marcelo Suarez Salvia of Argentina--for their successful stewardship of the Committee's 29<sup>th</sup> Session.

The Philippines also takes this opportunity to commend Mr. Kiyoo Akasaka, the Undersecretary-General for Communications and Public Information, for his outstanding performance as head of the Department of Public Information since his assumption last year. The Philippines wishes him further success in his efforts to reach out and share with the peoples of the world the good news about the United Nations.

The Philippines also associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The primary mission of the DPI is to deliver the message of the United Nations to the rest of the world. It pursues this mission by providing timely, accurate, impartial, comprehensive and coherent information about the work of the United Nations and the issues it deals with. There is no doubt that the DPI, as the public voice of the organization, has achieved this during the past year, thanks largely to the efforts of Undersecretary General Akasaka and the men and women of the DPI both here at UN Headquarters and around the world.

The advances made by the DPI in promoting the work of the UN to an ever-expanding global audience has been underscored by no less than the Secretary

General in his report to the General Assembly on the activities of the DPI since July 2007. In said report, the Secretary General cited such accomplishments as the synergy between headquarters and the field, which, he said, resulted in a more focused delivery of the UN message to the target audience.

The Philippines hopes that the DPI would be able to accomplish the tasks it has set out to do and effectively deliver the UN message under the priority themes of peace and security, development and human rights. It also supports and looks forward to the successful implementation of the activities outlined in the DPI's proposed strategic framework for the period 2010-2011.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines is pleased with the efforts of the DPI to promote a better understanding of various issues that are of importance to the international community. It cites in particular the thematic communications campaigns the DPI undertook last year in support of, among other things, the Millennium Development Goals, human rights and climate change. Also, its effective use of print, radio and television in bringing UN issues to a much larger global audience, especially in Asia and Africa, as well as its efforts to further expand its audience by utilizing traditional media in as many languages as possible.

The Philippines welcomes the efforts of the DPI to address the needs of journalists here at UN headquarters and in other parts of the world; and the steps it has been taking to improve access to online versions of press releases through stylistic changes and modifications in the existing database.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines also commends the DPI for propagating the culture of dialogue among civilizations and for promoting religious and cultural understanding through the mass media. It takes note, in particular, of the assistance it extended to the Office of the Alliance of Civilizations in publicizing the first Alliance of Civilizations Forum held in Madrid early this year.

As the leading proponent of the interfaith initiative in the United Nations, the Philippines would like, at this point, to invite the attention of the DPI to the unanimous adoption of General Assembly Resolution 62/90, designating a unit in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs as the focal point in the UN Secretariat on inter-religious and intercultural matters. With this positive development, the Philippines hopes the DPI would be in a better position to support the ongoing efforts of Member States, the UN system and civil society to promote and enhance inter-religious dialogue--an initiative which no less than

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI called on the UN to pursue during his recent message before the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines need not underscore the important role information plays in the success of a peacekeeping mission. In this regard, it commends the DPI for serving as the media backbone of UN peacekeeping operations, as best exemplified by the role played by the DPI information specialists in overseeing the information components of the UN missions in Timor-Leste, Liberia, Chad, Central African Republic and Darfur. It hopes that the DPI would continue to undertake efforts to ensure that the populations of host countries in peacekeeping operations are made fully aware of why the United Nations is there and that UN staff are also reminded of what is expected of them while serving there. In this connection, the Philippines pays tribute to the DPI for the crucial role it played and continues to play in addressing the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse in UN field missions. Through its efforts, allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in Liberia fell by half and sensational reporting by media has declined significantly.

The DPI should also not limit its mission to host countries and members of the UN staff. It should also exert efforts to project to the populations of UN Member-States the important contribution of their troops and police officers in helping keep the peace in various conflict areas worldwide. Popular support would most likely be generated from sending states if their people could hear from time to time the good news about their participation in peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Chairman,

Bridging the digital divide remains a key area that the DPI needs to address. The Philippines notes the efforts of the DPI in utilizing available new technology to publicize the work of the United Nations and would like to cite in particular the webcast of all General Assembly meetings and the reorganization and redesign of the websites of the General Assembly and the UN News Center that now make them more user-friendly.

The Philippines would like to see the DPI continue to make full use of new technology to allow the public better and faster access to information about the United Nations, especially on pressing global issues that affect them.

Mr. Chairman,

The DPI should continue to exert efforts to strengthen its partnership with civil society. In this regard, the Philippines welcomes the holding of the 60<sup>th</sup> annual

conference for NGOs that tackled the issue of climate change. The turnout of the event was encouraging and the Philippines hopes that the DPI would be able to replicate this by, among others, reaching out to NGOs outside its immediate sphere.

The Messenger of Peace program is definitely a laudable innovative endeavor that allows the UN to effectively bring the message of peace to a much larger global audience. The DPI may perhaps consider tapping the services of regional celebrity advocates to help spread the UN message in various parts of the world.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippine Delegation concludes this statement with a reiteration of its full support and cooperation in ensuring the success of the 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Information.

Thank you.