

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to, first of all, congratulate you upon your election to the Chairmanship of the Committee. The same also goes to the new Vice-Chairperson.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Kiyotaka Akasaka for his comprehensive statement on the ongoing and future work of the Department of Public Information (DPI), and to the Secretariat staff for their efforts towards achieving the objective of reaching out to the public and raising their awareness of the work of DPI and UN as a whole.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement of G-77 and China delivered yesterday by the representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group.

Mr. Chairman,

Thailand is pleased with the two-part Report of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2008/2 and /3) which outlines the activities of DPI for the period between July 2007 and February 2008, as requested by GA resolution 62/111. We commend the work of the Department in support of the three pillars of the UN, namely peace and security, development, especially on the MDGs, and human rights, as well as climate change. We would like the Department to continue its work in all of these priority themes. We are also pleased to learn that DPI has not neglected in featuring activities carried out in other areas in the Report, such as dialogue among civilizations, question of Palestine, the Holocaust, anti-slavery commemoration and the development of Africa.

My delegation would like to emphasise the importance of close cooperation on information within the UN system so as to achieve the greatest public impact in a collective and the most effective manner.

It is re-assuring to learn that the weekly meetings of the UN Communications Group have been deemed effective, and further enhance coordination and sharpen the focus of communications activities across the UN system in order to deliver better concrete results.

It is also re-assuring that DPI has been working closely with DPKO and DFS. Peacekeeping operations is one of the most prominent parts of the UN activities widely known in the global public. It is therefore very important that member countries and the public should be able to receive accurate and up-to-date information about the UN peacekeeping activities. At the same time, while UN reports on the progress in ending sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel, all of us have to remember that the progress report is not an end in itself. Those who are found guilty must be held accountable without impunity. My delegation would like to stress that all sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel must be prevented and stopped. If there is no sexual exploitation and abuse, there would not be anything to report by the media in the first place and progress report by the UN as a consequence.

Mr. Chairman,

Thailand attaches the greatest importance to the issue of sustainable development. The world's future lies not only in our hands but also in the hands of future generations who are, in fact, the major stakeholders in every issue that we are dealing with here at the UN. In this era of information which is a tool of power and a power in itself, it is therefore important that we must build and enhance capacities of the future generations with the best of our abilities by engaging and furnishing them with information that is timely, accurate, balanced, comprehensive and coherent.

With vast areas of work of the UN, it is important that the present and future generations are aware of and understand the work of

the UN and how that work is relevant to their lives. The UN also stands to provide great opportunities to the public to receive information on global issues and make the full use of it. However, the UN must, more importantly, be careful not to overwhelm the people with information. It must ensure the steady flow and availability of quality information, and help enable the public to turn that information into knowledge so that they can make the best decisions.

Last year when Thailand joined the Committee on Information as a full member for the first time, my delegation was delighted to learn in more details about the ongoing DPI educational outreach activities involving schools and youth, such as the Cyberschoolbus, the UN Works programme and the Model UN programme. These activities would allow younger generations to connect with the UN and raise their awareness about issues of global importance, for instance peace and tolerance, poverty, sustainable development, water, climate change, HIV/AIDS and human rights. Let me affirm that DPI has Thailand's full support in this regard, including a global Model UN to begin in 2009.

Furthermore, it is commendable that DPI has widened the reach of information in different UN-official and non-official languages, through different media, in both developed and developing countries by building and strengthening a network of information centres and collaborating with communications partners like local media, private sector, the civil society and academic institutions. With the advancement of new technology, the UN can now directly reach out or, in other words, the worldwide public can instantaneously gain access to the UN through various channels. The new media, such as the Internet, have increasingly become convenient means of communications that people can read, listen and watch the progress of UN activities. Concurrently, the UN must maintain the utilization of traditional forms of media for many more who do not possess resources for and access to the electronic media. Even for those who can access the Internet, there remains a digital gap that the UN must take into account. Modern

technology does not always render efficiency or effectiveness. It could, however, present an obstacle for those at the different levels of technological advancement.

Mr. Chairman,

To this end, Thailand pledges our support and readiness to work cooperatively and constructively with the Bureau, fellow members of the Committee and also DPI. We are certain that, under your able leadership, you will guide the Committee towards a successful conclusion for this year's session.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me floor.

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