

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN
OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION,
AMBASSADOR MONTEIRO LIMA
AT THE OPENING OF THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION,

4 May 2009

Under-Secretary-General Akasaka,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to express my sincere gratitude to the members of the Committee on Information for electing me as your Chairman for the next two years. On behalf of the newly-elected Bureau, I wish to assure the Committee that I will make every effort to ensure that this thirty-first session is productive, and that its results are fully consistent with the goals and objectives of the Department. I will count on you for complete support and cooperation.

I should also like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to my predecessor, Andreas Baum of Switzerland, for the exemplary manner in which he conducted the Committee's business during the last session.

In recent years, the relationship between the Committee and the Department of Public Information has been characterized by a high level of cooperation and a close partnership. This has been possible thanks in large part due to the initiative and strong leadership of Under-Secretary-General Kiyo

Akasaka. I look forward to working with you, Mr. Akasaka, and with your staff, to further the work of your Department.

As a former Political and Diplomatic Adviser to the President of my country, while serving concurrently as the Head of State's Permanent Representative to the International Organization of La Francophonie and Chairman of the National Francophonie Committee, and also as a former Secretary-General of ECOWAS, I have always attached great importance to public information and communications. I am not only familiar with the work of this Committee, but also know the important role it plays in giving DPI guidance on public information-related matters. Let me assure you that I, together with my fellow Bureau members, will do our best to continue to do this.

Distinguished delegates,

We are meeting at a time when the world community faces multiple challenges. At no time in our recent history have we felt more the need for consolidated and concerted efforts as a global community. In the past sixty years or so that the United Nations has existed as a global platform, multilateralism has never been tested in so many fronts all at once. We are pleased to see in Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon a seasoned diplomat and a persuasive advocate for multilateral action. He has outlined organizational changes that he envisions will make this Organization stronger and more effective and has outlined his programmatic priorities. DPI, as the public voice of the Organization, is tasked with communicating its messages in the clearest and most comprehensive manner. The three reports that have been

submitted for the consideration of this Committee clearly outline the concrete measures implemented by DPI to expand its operation, sharpen its focus and build new partnerships in countries around the world. Indeed, as the reports indicate, DPI now is better equipped, more focussed and technologically better prepared.

Obviously, there are areas where DPI could do better. I understand that one of the reasons why progress in some areas has been slow is lack of adequate resources. Last week the Under-Secretary-General met with the members of the in-coming bureau in an informal briefing. He appealed for more help from Member States, and I fully sympathize with him. Admittedly, budget is not an area we concern ourselves with in this Committee, but many of us serve on the Fifth Committee and could convey to it the need for adequate funding for DPI.

Distinguished delegates,

Our objective at this year's session, as usual, will be to adopt a consensus document at the end of our deliberations. This resolution should provide DPI with the best possible policy guidance so that our Organization continues to benefit from the strong voice given to it by DPI. As your Chairman, I promise to do my part. I am sure you will do yours.

Thank you.