

PHILIPPINES

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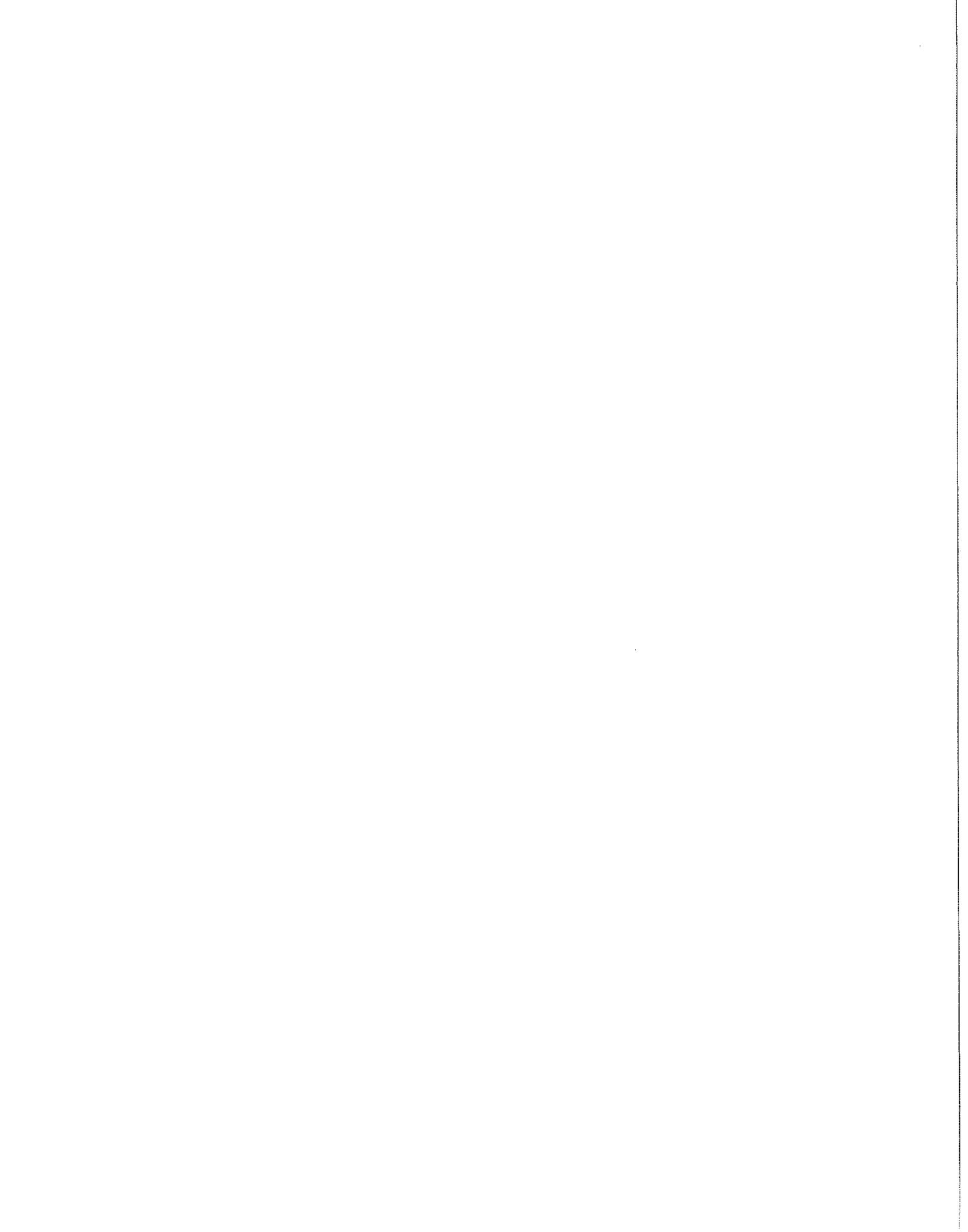
PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. CARLOS D. SORRETA
Deputy Permanent Representative

at the
General Debate
of the
32nd Session of the
Committee on Information (COI)

New York, 27 April 2010



Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to start by congratulating you and the members of your bureau on your election. The Philippine Delegation is confident that under your able guidance, the Committee on Information would be able to accomplish its work during the 32nd Session.

The Philippines takes this opportunity to thank your predecessor and the members of his bureau for ensuring the success of the Committee's 31st Session. We also thank the Undersecretary General for Communications and Public Information, Mr. Kiyo Akasaka, and the men and women of the Department of Public Information for helping bring across the message of the United Nations to the peoples of the world.

The Philippines aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

As the public voice of the United Nations, it is the role of the Department of Public Information (DPI) to effectively deliver and provide timely, accurate, impartial, comprehensive and coherent information not only about our organization but also on the many different issues that are brought before it. There is no doubt that the DPI has made it easier for us to appreciate and understand the work of the United Nations and how this impacts on the lives of people across the globe.

Under the leadership of Undersecretary General Akasaka, the DPI has once again risen to the challenge. During the past year, the DPI, through its network of UN Information Centers (UNICs) worldwide, was able to expand its reach—bringing the good news about the UN to as many people across the globe as possible through the use of traditional and modern media.

The Philippine Delegation once again takes note of the report of the Secretary General and commends the DPI for its successful efforts to support the substantive goals of the United Nations by devising effective communications strategies and carrying out communications campaigns on priority issues such as disarmament, climate change, financing for development and human rights, among others.

Mr Chairman,

The Philippines welcomes the steps being taken by the DPI to raise public awareness on the issue of nuclear disarmament. We laud the launching of the multimedia platform that involves the use of both traditional and new media,

including social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, in popularizing disarmament issues and reaching out to a wider audience.

The WMD or We Must Disarm Campaign plays a crucial role in inviting public attention to the danger posed by nuclear weapons and is especially appreciated by the Philippines as it assumes the presidency of the 2010 Review Conference of State Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Philippines will be counting on the DPI for media support in next week's Review Conference.

Another campaign that the Philippine Delegation would like to cite is the Stand Up and Take Action for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) organized by the UN Millennium Campaign. The Philippines is proud to have mobilized the largest number of people in the global effort that seeks an end to poverty, with 36.1 million Filipinos taking part in the three-day event. In 2008, the Philippines also mobilized the largest number of participants with 35.2 million Filipinos responding to the campaign.

We commend the UN Country Team in Manila led by Jacqueline Badcock for the success of the project which was undertaken in partnership with agencies of the Philippine Government such as the Department of Education, the National Anti-Poverty Commission and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and civil society groups such as World Vision, Social Watch, Campaigns and Grey, and the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines continues to note the important role the DPI plays in propagating the culture of dialogue among civilizations and in promoting religious and cultural understanding through the mass media. Since the launching of the interfaith initiative in the United Nations in 2005, the Philippines has repeatedly been requesting the DPI for support in disseminating activities of the Tripartite Forum on Interfaith Cooperation for Peace made up of Member-States, the UN System and civil society.

Today, we reiterate this request by seeking a closer interaction between the DPI and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)—the focal point in the UN Secretariat on inter-religious and intercultural matters. The Philippines is counting on the assistance of the DPI during the Second Informal Summit of Leaders on Interfaith Cooperation and Dialogue for Peace and Development that will take place on the sides of the 65th Session of the General Assembly in September.

Mr. Chairman,

In previous sessions of the Committee, the Philippine Delegation had called on the DPI to provide more publicity support to the activities of military and police personnel serving under the blue and white flag of the United Nations in order to project their contribution to the overall peacekeeping effort. This must be sustained and improved in order to more effectively project to the public, especially in the sending countries, the important role played by UN Blue Helmets in keeping the peace in conflict areas abroad.

As a troop-contributing country, the Philippines is heartened to know that during the past year, the DPI, working hand in hand with the various peacekeeping missions, came out with a steady stream of media releases targeting audiences in more than 30 troop- and police-contributing countries. The Philippines has developed a close working relationship with the DPI and has relied on it for support in its efforts to disseminate information on the activities of Filipino military and police personnel serving in various peacekeeping missions abroad.

My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to thank the DPI for the role it played in the aftermath of the Magnitude 7 earthquake that struck Haiti on 12 January. The DPI's timely response allowed us to keep abreast of the situation there as it was evolving. This was particularly crucial in the first few hours where communications lines were completely cut off. For countries like the Philippines, which lost four peacekeepers in the tragedy, DPI's feeds allowed them to inform their publics of developments taking place in the ground.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to conclude by assuring you of the full support and cooperation of the Philippine Delegation to ensure the success of the 32nd Session.

Thank you

