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STATEMENT BY

**MR. MUYAMBO SIPANGULE
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

DELIVERED AT

**THE THIRTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION**

New York
April 28, 2011

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation extends warmest congratulations on your election as Chairman of the Committee on Information, as well as to other Members of the Bureau. We would like to assure you of our unwavering support.

At the outset, my delegation aligns itself with the statement presented by Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We also pay tribute to Ambassador Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima, the Permanent Representative of Cape Verde, for the able manner he guided the deliberations of the Committee on Information over the past two years.

Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary-General for his very helpful reports on the activities of the Department of Public Information, namely; strategic communications services; the Department of Public Information: news services; and Department of Public Information: outreach services. Likewise, we express our appreciation to Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, Mr. Kiyoo Akasaka, for providing us with a comprehensive and informative presentation on the activities and strategies of the Department of Public Information; as well as the briefings by senior management team of the Department. All the reports, documents and briefings have enriched the capacity of Member States to participate in this important session.

Mr. Chairman,

The Zambian delegation wishes to underscore the important role of the Department of Public Information in providing Member States with up-to-date and accurate information on the work of the United Nations. In other words, the Department bridges the gulf between developed and developing countries in terms of information communication tools and technologies and thus help balanced coverage and ranking of issues between the two divides. Indeed, as the saying goes, information is power because it cuts across all sectors of national and international life.

Mr. Chairman,

You will recall at the 2005 World Summit, our Heads of State and Government recognized that science and technology, including information and communication technology, are vital for the achievement of the development goals, and that international support can help developing countries to benefit from technological advances. The Committee on Information has therefore undertaken to implement the United Nations' mandate to employ science and

technology to help Member States achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Mr. Chairman,

The mandate of the Department of Public Information to educate and inform is performed in the field by the United Nations Information Centres (UNICs). The Centres are therefore strategic. Despite the pressures on the United Nations budget and increasing demands on the Department of Public Information, as noted by Under-Secretary-General Kiyo Akasaka, my delegation wishes to assure that the United Nations Information Centre in Lusaka, will continue to occupy rent-free premises so as to enable it continue to provide the visibility to the work of the United Nations through its outreach programmes. The sub-regional Centre in Lusaka in operation since 1975 also serves Botswana, Malawi and Swaziland, and has been a beacon of the good work of the United Nations, and therefore should be strengthened.

In this connection, the work of the global network of United Nations Information Centres, has been highlighted by the Secretary-General's report A/AC.198/2011/2, which states that they continued to disseminate information on the work of the United Nations worldwide and to act as the "public face and voice" of the Organization in the locations they serve, in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

Primary among the achievements of Government, in which the United Nations Information Centres have played a role, is the positive move to liberalise the operations of the media industry which has seen the resurgence of private-owned print and electronic media, running side by side with the State-owned media. As a pace-setter, the United Nations Information Centres are therefore a medium of social change in Member States that needs to be further strengthened.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding the link between the United Nations and the Zambian media, we believe that the more the world becomes globalised the more closer the links between sectors and industries in different countries and regions. It is a fact that these links are more prominent in the media circle than others. Social media, therefore, is the form of media allowing the audience to access information and be able to interact with the sources at the same time. Social media provides both participation and interaction during the communication.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that the power of the Internet, a new form of communication in social media, should not supplant the unique and vital role being played by newspapers, radio and television, referred to as traditional media, in disseminating the main messages of the United Nations. Traditional media still remains the primary means of communication in many developing countries.

I thank you.