

**Statement by H.E. Mohammad Hassan Fadaifard, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations (22 April 2002)**

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to extend my delegation's sincere congratulations to you and other members of the bureau on presiding over the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Information. I am confident that under your able leadership our deliberations will lead to successful conclusions. I would like to take this opportunity to assure you of my delegation's full support in your important task and responsibilities that lie ahead.

I commend the leadership of Mr. Shashi Tharoor the Interim Head of the Department of Public Information and I wish to thank him for his lucid and important statement on comprehensive review of the management and operations of DPI. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General and DPI for the important reports placed before us. We find these documents incisive and enlightening.

I would also like to associate my delegation with the statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77&China.

Mr. Chairman,

Today Although the world is amazed by the rapid progress of information and communications technologies but overcoming the gap in the information and communication between the developed and developing countries still remains as one of the challenging issues of the new millennium. The majority of the world population is still untouched by ICT revolution and many developing countries do not have the infrastructure and resources to benefit from modern information technology. This situation requires much more genuine international and regional cooperation. At the same time, we should intensify our struggle for a more just and effective global information and communications order, based on a free and balanced flow of information to all people.

We firmly believe that the Committee on Information as mandated by the General Assembly could play a very significant role in bringing about a new, just and effective global information and communication order.

Mr. Chairman,

Comprehensive review of the management and operations of DPI is a very important issue and we agree with the Interim Head of DPI that members of the Committee on Information should use this opportunity to offer their views on direction and operations of DPI. Certainly, when the report is presented to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly we will react on it in a more comprehensive manner. Today, by referring to the report A/AC.198/2002/2, I will raise some of the issues which are more important to my delegation.

1. We see DPI as the voice of the Organization to the world and therefore its main goal should remain providing timely information to the public on the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations and its great role and achievements in today's world in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the United Nations and to promote international cooperation.
2. We have always been supportive of the process of the reorientation of the United Nations activities in the field of public information and communication but it is important to underline that any review of the activities of DPI should aim at strengthening the role and activities of the department and not gradual diminishing of it.
3. DPI, as mandated, should maintain and improve its activities in the areas of the special interest to developing countries and should continue to contribute to bridging the existing gap between developing and developed countries.
4. Some functions currently undertaken by DPI may not be consistent with its core mission. We think in the course of review it should be considered as an opportunity to focus more on relevant mandated activities.
5. United Nations Information centers and information components should continue to play a significant role in disseminating information about the work of the Organization to the peoples of the world, in particular in the areas of economic and social development. We believe their role should be strengthened in developing countries and they should continue to develop their own web pages in local languages. We also agree that in high-cost developed countries whose public have greater access to a wide range of sources of information there is no need to maintain UNICs. Commemoration of various International Days, weeks, years, and decades proclaimed by General Assembly are among the issues that we think UNICs could play more active role on them.
6. We support the continuation of and training program for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries. We think the program provides an opportunity to them to get more involve in disseminating the peace message of the United Nations. We also support the Department for developing and maintaining the United Nations web site which provides information to hundreds of millions of people around the world. At the same time, it is important that we try to balance between electronic publishing and traditional means of communication to the possible extent.
7. We agree with the Secretary-General that reform is a process and not an event. We are also of the view that review and reform in one section of the Organization should be consistent with the reform of the United Nations as a whole and should be treated with the same standards.
8. In the process of comprehensive review we expect DPI to arrange more consultation with the representative of member states in particular developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I wish to join the others in underlining the importance of commemoration of the World Press Freedom Day on 3 May. In recent months a considerable number of journalists

lost their lives. We condemn violation against journalists and pay tribute to those who lost their lives or were injured in the line of duty in particular those who were killed or injured during the Israeli brutal aggression against Palestinian people. We expect that in present circumstances DPI increases dissemination of information on the question of Palestine and the facts related to suffering of the Palestinian people and acts of aggression perpetrated against them by the Israeli regime.

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.