

Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Korea (23 April 2002)

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to join previous speakers in expressing my delegation's congratulations to you and the other members of the Bureau on your re-election to the 24th session of the Committee on Information. I am certain that your knowledge and guidance will guarantee the success of the Committee. I would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to Mr. Shashi Tharoor, the Interim Head of the DPI, for his strong leadership over the past year, as well as for the informative speech he delivered yesterday morning. We would further like to thank the Secretariat for their efforts in compiling such comprehensive reports for our timely consideration.

Mr. Chairman,

Please allow me to now comment on several issues to which my delegation attaches particular importance.

The twenty-first century has been marked by swift and dramatic advances in information and communication technologies. It is clear that the mission and activities of the DPI must evolve to incorporate not only these new technologies, but also the new priorities of this age. My delegation welcomes the ongoing reform process of the DPI and sees it as an opportunity to further enhance the efficiency of the Department as well as a chance to clarify and bolster its role within the organization.

Although we do not advocate a reprioritization of the DPI based purely on financial concerns, we would lend our support to a new system of programme evaluation and performance management. Indeed, there are certain programmes, such as the journalists' training programmes, guided tours and exhibition space of UN Headquarters, which will not fit into a cut and dry return on investment formula. In these cases, we hope that the intangible benefits of such programmes will be taken into account and that alternative sources of funding might be considered to maintain them.

With further consideration of budgetary constraints, we would like to underscore our support for the DPI working through intermediaries, such as the media, educational institutions and non-governmental organizations. These intermediaries already have the channels and audiences in place to disseminate information around the globe. By concentrating on conveying their message to intermediaries, rather than the whole of the general public, the DPI will be able to conserve resources while still reaching a significant worldwide audience.

Mr. Chairman,

The DPI has done a remarkable job of creating and maintaining a cost-effective, user-friendly, and high-quality web site that well represents the various undertakings of the United Nations. We have been impressed with the incorporation of new technology in the form of webcasting and the conversion to a database platform over the past year. The utility and navigability of

the site are evidenced in the more than 5 million hits received from over 165 countries each day. We would further like to commend the DPI on the impressive tools and resources of the Cyber School Bus, as well as the unique multilingual "UN Works" section of the web site.

In conclusion, we are confident that this 24th session of the Committee on Information will provide us the opportunity to make significant progress toward maximizing the efficiency of a refocused and reinvigorated DPI. The Republic of Korea remains committed to this goal and will continue to play an active role in its implementation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.