

Statement by H.E. Fátima Veiga, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Cape Verde to the United Nations (20 April 2005)

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the delegation of Cape Verde, I congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau, on your election for the chairmanship of this twenty-seventh session of the Committee on Information. We wish you success and assure you of our full cooperation for a productive session.

Our congratulations are extended to H.E. Ambassador Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh for the able manner in which he conducted the work of this Committee during its previous two sessions.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the members of the Committee for having accepted Cape Verde as a new full member, together with Iceland, Luxemburg, Qatar and Madagascar.

Mr. Chairman,

The Secretary General's reports and the informative presentation made by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, Mr. Shashi Tharoor, are important basis for our discussions and, as such, deserve our special attention.

In this context, our delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by Jamaica, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the statement to be made by the Representative of Sao Tome and Principe, on behalf of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP).

We are fully conscious of the important work carried out by the Department of Public Information in ensuring the whole United Nations membership high quality information services and in disseminating information, in real time, conveying and building a positive public image of the United Nations. DPI's work is all the more important following criticism on transparency, effectiveness and relevance of the organization, but also to mobilize the all-important and much-needed international public support for the aims and reforms proposed by the Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, which are presently being discussed by our Member States.

We coincide with the reports on the numerous positive advances achieved by DPI under the leadership of Mr. Sashi Tharoor and his team.

In this context, we take good note of the new proposals on the way forward, particularly with regard to the role of information and communication technologies, as well as the new strategic directions for the library services.

We are pleased with the reorientation process and its innovative improvements, such as the "Top 10 stories" and broad access to the Official Documentation System. And we would not

like to let this opportunity pass without stressing the importance of highlighting the Organization's activities in commemoration of its 60th Anniversary.

We also commend the good working relationship between DPI and the Committee on Information, and lay emphasis on the importance of an enhanced cooperation and coordination between DPI and all other departments and entities within the United Nations, providing public material that is clear, direct and consistent.

We hope that these changes will contribute to an improved dissemination of information on the wide spectrum of endeavors that the organization takes upon itself to accomplish, namely in the fields of development, promotion of Human Rights and collective security.

While efforts should continue to be concerted to lessen the digital divide among the membership, traditional communication means, specifically television and radio, should continue to deserve special attention, as should cooperation with local broadcast agencies, if the goal is to reach the widest audience.

In this respect, we would like to express our deep appreciation for the work carried out by the Portuguese Radio Unit and its cooperation with the Capeverdean media.

Mr. Chairman,

The Secretary General rightly pointed out the importance and cost effectiveness of the United Nations Centers in developing countries. We consider, however, that the pursuit of cost effectiveness should not be made at the expense of an effective outreach to the public in specific regions. We believe that it is possible to achieve an optimal balance between addressing the information needs of specific regions and cost effectiveness.

In this respect, the Capeverdean delegation would like to reiterate that the operation of the Luanda Center is imperative to attend to the needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries, which are still not sufficiently addressed. More importantly, its operation should not be made dependent on extra budgetary contributions of concerned member states; all of them least developed countries, where access to modern information and communication technology for all is still a challenge to be met.

To conclude, my delegation assures you of its readiness to work in a constructive manner with other representations, for a positive outcome of our session and to ensure that DPI continues to perform its work with increased efficiency and quality, disseminating the goals and actions of the United Nations, the relevance of which is central for a world of understanding, peace and cooperation that we aspire to.

Thank you.