

## **Statement by H.E. Mr. Rodrigo Malmierca Díaz, Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations (1 May 2007)**

Mr. Chairman,

First and foremost, allow me to commend you and the Bureau officers, on behalf of the Cuban delegation, for your election as Chairman of the Committee on Information.

We would like to thank Mr. Kiyoo Akasaka, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, for his detailed and comprehensive report on the work carried out by the Department of Public Information.

Cuba endorses the statement of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The technology gap between the North and the South continues to grow. For most of our peoples, the Information Society is but a pipe dream. It is difficult to talk about Information Technology in a world of 852 million people suffering from hunger, 2 billion people without access to electricity, and more than 2 billion who have never used a telephone and for whom the word Internet bears absolutely no meaning.

Information being disseminated from the developed world is often misleading, false, distorting and ignorant of the news and events taking place in developing countries; and they even fabricate news to divert the attention of the international community. Thus, it is increasingly important to create a New World Order of Information.

In a globalized world where a handful of transnational companies have the monopoly over information flow, along with dependence on increasingly powerful advertisers, "freedom of information" has become an empty phrase.

With the political will of governments, international cooperation and a minimum amount of the resources that the developed world squanders in publicity, overconsumption and the arms race, Internet and the dissemination of information that could serve as a means to the realization of a cultural and educational revolution, which promotes knowledge and fosters education, culture, cooperation, development and solidarity.

The developing world should have a special treatment in the United Nations Information System. We consider that the United Nations Information Systems spread through the world, particularly in developed countries, should play a more effective role in the dissemination of balanced information, taking into account the needs of the audience which the message is aimed at. The use of broadcast mechanisms, such as the radio, should continue to be promoted as a means to contribute to informing the vast illiterate populations that exist in the countries of the South.

Despite its modest resources, our country has contributed to this objective. Cuba has successfully implemented the Literacy Program "Yo sí puedo" (Yes, I can) in 15 countries,

which has been honored and acknowledged by UNESCO as an effective program. This program uses audio-visual aids and the new information and communication technologies to broaden the scope and effectiveness of teaching materials, especially through widespread use of the radio.

Mr. Chairman,

In our current capacity as Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, I must stress that the issues related to information and communication technologies have an important place in the Movement's agenda. That was vastly proven in the agreement adopted by the Heads of State or Government of the 119 members of the Non-Aligned Movement at its Summit Conference held last September in Havana.

I have the honor to inform to the Committee that last April the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement formally established in New York a new Working Group in charge of the issue of Information. This group, which shall be chaired by Malaysia, has the objective to, *inter alia*, complement the excellent work being carried out by the Group of 77 and China in the deliberations and negotiations held in within the Information Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

Cuba is again obliged to denounce before this forum the radio and television aggression that the US Government continues to wage against our country.

This radio-electric aggression openly infringes the principles of International Law that regulate the relations between States and the rules and procedures of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), which clearly establish the member countries' conduct in this regard.

These illegal radio and television broadcasts seek to promote the Cuban people's unease with and questioning of its Revolution, contempt of the country's constitutional order, confrontation of its authorities and illegal emigration putting their lives at risk, through false statements, distorted information and misleading propaganda. They also purport to foment an artificial crisis to be used as a pretext for a potential military intervention against Cuba.

Mr. Fabio Leite, Deputy Director of the Radio-communications office of the ITU and Special Envoy of the General Secretary of the ITU visited Cuba Last February. During his stay, he could confirm the veracity of the arguments put forward by Cuba on the flagrant violation of the national radio electric spectrum and he reiterated the condemnation by specialized ITU bodies on this matter.

In the next World Conference of Radio Communications, to be held later this year, this issue will be addressed by recommendation of the Conference of ITU Plenipotentiaries, held in November 2006 in Turkey.

Mr. Chairman,

On last 5 August 2006, the US Government's Office of Cuba Broadcasts (OCB) announced the use of a new G-1 aircraft, with license plate N820CB, leased to the company Phoenix Air, in order to considerably increase television broadcasts against Cuba, from one to six afternoons a week. To broadcast from this aircraft, the US Congress increased the budget by \$10 million dollars.

Last December, the OCB leased airspace for 6 months in two Miami-based stations, at a cost of \$377,500 dollars to broadcast Radio and TV "Martí" to Cuba; television station WPMF-38, property of TVC Broadcasting, which broadcasts Azteca America and Radio Mambí WAQI 710AM, from Univisión. This action violates US laws, which prohibit broadcasting within the US programs intended for overseas audiences.

Each week, US-based stations broadcast to Cuba more than 2,138 hours of radio and television through 32 different frequencies of medium and short waves, FM and TV. Between 283 and 314 hours a day of programs that have nothing to do with balanced and objective information are generated from them.

For fiscal year 2007, the US Congress approved a US\$ 36 100 000 budget of federal funds, 10 million more than in 2004.

These increasingly astronomical figures and the new methods used in radio and television aggressions by the US Government against Cuba, prove a total disdain for the rules regulating the international relations.

Of the 20 stations broadcasting subversive programs against Cuba, 14 aim their signals directly towards our country. Three of them, La Voz de las Americas and the so-called Radio and TV Martí, are property of the US Government.

Several such stations belong or provide services to organizations linked to well-known terrorists who live and act against Cuba in US territory, with the full consent of the Federal Administration authorities of the United States.

Cuba reiterates its condemnation to this aggression and fully rejects the United States intention to maintain and increase radio and television broadcasts to Cuba. The choice of the kind of information that the Cuban people wish to receive, is a sovereign decision of our country and not of those who in the US Government waste taxpayers' money and plot with terrorist elements in their plans against the Cuban Revolution.

While these new radio and television aggressions have been and will continue to be neutralized by Cuba, our country has the obligation and right to denounce these illegal acts and to demand that they are brought to a halt.

Cuba will continue to exercise its sovereignty and independence and will continue to adopt all measures necessary in order to repel these aggressions.

Thank you very much.

