

Statement by the Representative of the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations, in the General Debate of the 29th Session of the Committee on Information (2 May 2007)

Mr. Chairman,

I would like, at the outset, to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the twenty-ninth session of the Committee on Information and I congratulate as well members of the committee bureau.

I also congratulate Under-Secretary-General Kiyo Akasaka on assuming his new post as head of the Department of Communications and Public Information. In reference to Mr. Akasaka's statement at the inauguration of the works of the Committee, I would like to stress our interest in following up the efforts exerted by the Department of Public Information (DPI) in cooperation with the chairman and members of the committee to materialize the UN media message.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China that expressed the general framework of the priorities and concerns of the Group Member States in regard to the UN policies, activities and priorities in the field of information and communications.

Mr. Chairman,

In the light of a world dominated by information and communication technology, and the various challenges the world peoples are facing, it has become necessary that the UN sustain its plans to enhance international cooperation in the media field, with a view to narrowing the gaps among countries in terms of the flow of information and in support of the developing countries' capabilities and media structures. That should go parallel to the efforts of developing a media message for the UN, that is in line with the spirit of the age and that fulfills the peoples' needs of authentic information and objective media. The UN media message should serve as a tool to publicize its activities and disseminate its positive image to the outside world.

Undoubtedly, the UN ineffectiveness in finding radical solutions for the long-standing conflicts and challenges has cast its negative shadows on the peoples' view of the role of the organization at this critical stage of its work.

Given this context, the UN should strive to encounter this situation through organized media campaigns that deal with other aspects of criticism directed against it in the financial and managerial fields that should be efficiently dealt with through reform and development plans.

Accordingly, Egypt's delegation stresses the importance of multilingualism and parity among the UN official languages in all its activities and the media used so as to achieve the widest possible circulation of the UN message and to assert its global aspect. This is with purpose of achieving the required rapprochement among peoples and enhancing the important role of

DPI in pushing forward the efforts to sustain dialogue and understanding among various civilizations and cultures, alongside with enhancing the efforts to achieve peace and development.

Alongside with the role of the media in helping to achieve peace and friendly relations among states, its role is no less important in helping to implement the priorities of the Millennium Declaration to achieve sustainable development, overcome poverty and spread the culture of human rights as well as improving the status of women and child rights and development in Africa. We firmly believe that the role of the UN is fundamental in raising international awareness on these issues and integrating them in the core of its media message.

In the light of the issues dealt with in this session of the Committee of Information, Egypt's delegation would like to raise some points of interest and make some remarks on the reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the committee as follows:

- First: With regard to the report on the network of UN Information Centers (UNICs): activities and strategic directions, we welcome its stress on enhancing the leading role of the UNICs in Cairo, Mexico City and Pretoria, taking into consideration the support of the joint work among these centers and other centers in neighboring countries to accomplish the efficiency and impact of the UN media policy in the three regions. This is alongside with stressing the importance of the continuous expanding of the UN media structure in various regions without downsizing and observing the circumstances and idiosyncrasies of each and every region. That could be carried out with the help of the tremendous technological advancement and the improvement of the usage of fixed and additional sources to maintain the existing UNICs network and continuation of its activities.
- Second: With regard to the report on the activities of DPI, we would like to record our appreciation for the diversity of these activities that have developmental, cultural and socio-economic impacts and encourage the department to continue its interest in development-related programs and activities, particularly in Africa through outreach services on the efforts to raise development rates together with publicizing the achievements accomplished and defining the challenges and priorities of the of the urgent materialistic and technical assistance.
- Third: As for the report on UN website and the progress towards parity among official languages, accessibility to the disabled and content management, we have been always calling for this parity in a genuine way. In appreciation of the effort exerted in this respect, we still note insufficiency in terms of posting information in a timely manner in the six official languages on the UN website. We further note some insufficiency in terms of publishing the UN documents in all official languages on the Official Document System (ODS).

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt's delegation is looking forward to a UN media message that is more capable of pushing forward the efforts to enhance dialogue and understanding among civilizations and narrowing the gap between the North and South. We are highly confident that the continuous efforts of

DPI will help attain this message and publicize the role and activities of the UN in promoting rapprochement among peoples and assisting developing countries to face up the challenges of development and catch up with progress.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.