

## **Statement by H.E. Mr. Jiro Kodera, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations (1 May 2007)**

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chairmanship. I am confident that this session will be highly productive under your able stewardship.

I would also like to express my sincere congratulations to Mr. Kiyotaka Akasaka, the new Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information. I am quite certain that, with his rich experience in multilateral diplomacy, Mr. Akasaka is well prepared to successfully steer the work of the Department of Communications and Public Information. I would also like to express our full support for the strategic approach to attain the goals of the Department presented by Mr. Akasaka in his briefing on Monday.

Mr. Chairman,

The Secretary-General's reports have provided extensive information on DPI's work over the past year. We particularly support the strategic use of UN Information Centres in the world at large, along with the utilization of new information technology to enhance the efficiency of DPI's work and development of the UN website. These undertakings have surely contributed to the effective and efficient use of the limited resources of the Department. We appreciate that DPI is making even greater efforts to advance reform under the leadership of the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, and sincerely hope that DPI will continue these efforts in such a manner as to further integrate its strategies with other bodies of the UN families.

Mr. Chairman,

If we consider DPI as the centre of operations, the UN Information Centres around the world play an important role as stations that relay the messages from headquarters. UN Information Centres can raise worldwide awareness of the work of the United Nations by sending DPI's messages to every corner of the world in a most timely and accurate manner. UN Information Centres can tailor DPI's messages as appropriate, in accordance with the characteristics of the respective country and region that they serve. We hope that DPI will continue to integrate UN Information Centres in its communication strategies and that the necessary coordination will be achieved in order for UN Information Centres to be able to fulfill a leading role in the communication groups at a local level.

Mr. Chairman,

UNIC Tokyo has been playing an invaluable role as DPI's relay station in Japan. Last year, to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of Japan's membership in the UN, UNIC Tokyo, in partnership with other UN families and communication groups, held a UN Children's Painting Contest and a Photo Exhibition of Japanese UN Staff. We would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for mentioning these programs in his recent report on

The Network of United Nations information Centres (A/AC.198/2007/2). UNIC Tokyo also created a special page commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary on its Web site and posting many video messages by individuals who have served in the UN or who are very active in diverse spheres from politics to art, in Japan and throughout the world. We view these efforts as most effective for deepening understanding of the UN among Japanese nationals and enhancing their interest in the work of the UN. We hope that UNIC Tokyo will continue to develop in the future, as it is the only UN organization that provides information in the Japanese language. It was based on this conviction that the Japanese Government extended a voluntary contribution of 45.7 million yen to UNIC Tokyo for the year 2007, despite the continuing need and ongoing efforts to rein in budget costs in Japan. This contribution represents a 20 percent increase over last year's Japanese contribution.

Mr. Chairman,

As I mentioned earlier, Japan celebrated the Fiftieth Anniversary of its membership in the United Nations last year. In December 2006, a commemoration ceremony was held in Tokyo with the presence of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress and with the attendance of numerous dignitaries from Japan and other countries. The Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations also hosted several commemorative cultural events in New York, including a classical music concert by the Asian Artists & Concerts, a non-profit organization whose goal is to help young musicians from Asian countries transition to the professional musical arena, held at the General Assembly Hall in May 2006, and "The Faces of Angkor", a UN Exhibition, presented in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Cambodia to the United Nations in June 2006 in the UN Visitor's Lobby. I would like to take this occasion to express our heartfelt appreciation to DPI for extending professional guidance and generous assistance in order to make these events possible.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan reiterates its determination to maintain a high level of cooperation in the work of the Department of Communications and Public Information, so that DPI may continue its proactive efforts as the centre of UN public relations activities and in the further development of effective strategies for its work.

Thank you.