



SRI LANKA

Statement

By

Delegation of Sri Lanka

Committee on Information  
Thirty-first Session

New York, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2009

*( Please check against delivery )*

We congratulate you and Bureau on your appointments. Sri Lanka delegation extends fullest support to you, and your Bureau in all your future endeavors.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by G-77 and China. We appreciate Under-Secretary-General, Kiyotaka Akasaka for his comprehensive statement and the leadership he provides to the DPI. Also the staff of DPI deserve credit for their dedicated efforts to help fulfill UN's awareness mission.

Mr Chairman

One cannot overemphasize the important role of DPI as the voice of the organization in disseminating information about its work for achieving the greatest impact. In this regard, we take note of the reports of the Secretary-General. There is no doubt that continuous development of mass media and progress of information and communication technology has become central to meeting the challenges in terms of the knowledge gap between the developing and developed countries. These challenges also bring forth an international media ethic that is more inclusive based on the principles of equality and mutual respect for different cultures and values. Consequently the UN has to continue carrying out its responsibility with a view to enhancing and deepening international cooperation in the media domain to bridge the knowledge gap and enable the developing countries to get access to knowledge easily. In so doing the developing countries need to build capacity and upgrade their media structures. This should go parallel with the efforts exerted to develop the media message of the UN; to enlighten the world public opinion about that message; UN's role in addressing many of today's issues, to project a culture of peace and values of tolerance and to enhance a dialogue among civilizations and religions.

The media message of the UN still has gaps. It is important that it be filled in quickly through promoting access to all peoples; achieving multilingualism and parity among the UN official languages and developing the content of the media message and working towards its diversity, in line with the cultural, civilizational and religious diversity in today's world. We look forward to improved media coverage of the thematic issues of priority to the work of the UN, raised awareness on the goals of the UN, initiatives and push forward efforts of implementation. As the NAM has repeatedly emphasized, the DPI work and UN media policy should not be based on selectivity but larger interest of all member

States. This indeed, in addition to improving the understanding of local societies for the work of the UN, through a media message that is more focused on an accessible to all categories of societies and improving integration and coordination between the works carried out at the UN Headquarters, New York, and the activities of the UN information centers.

As a troop contributing country Sri Lanka recognizes the importance of disseminating information on the United Nations peacekeeping operations. We are pleased at the current cooperation between DPI and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in this regard. We believe that this continued cooperation will not only enhance the image of the United Nations and but also improve the quality of peacekeeping missions.

It is important that we together with the UN continue to advocate dialogue at all levels of society to help bridge the gap between various cultures and beliefs including with mass media. In this regard, we hope that more efforts will be exerted by DPI to narrow the knowledge gap between the North and South and support the capabilities through transfer of technology and knowledge.

Furthermore, it is commendable that DPI has widened the reach of information in different UN official and non official languages through different media, in both developed and developing countries by building and strengthening a network of information centres and collaborating with communication partners like local media, private sector, and the civil society and academic institutions. With the advancement of new technology the UN can now directly reach out or in other words the world wide public can gain access to the UN through various channels. At the same time, it is important the UN maintains the utilization of traditional forms of media for many more who do not possess resources for an access to the electronic media. Even for those who can access the internet, there remains a digital gap that the UN could take into account.

To this end, we need to support and work cooperatively and constructively with the bureau and DPI. We are confident that the continuous efforts by DPI will help attain these goals and define the role of the UN in enhancing values of tolerance and assisting developing countries in confronting the challenges of development.