

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Oscar León González, Deputy Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations (24 April 2012)**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Cuban delegation, I wish to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Committee on Information. We also congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

Cuba supports the statements made by the delegations of Chile on behalf of the CELAC, and by Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary-General for the presentation of the thematic reports on the activities of the Department of Public Information, contained in documents A/AC.198/2012/2, 3, and 4, which provide an overview of and enable to assess the work done by the United Nations in the field of information and communications.

We take note of the work by the Department and its information centers, in collaboration with the Rio+20 secretariat, in promoting the intergovernmental process of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, as indicated by paragraph 27 of the Report of the Secretary-General on strategic communications services. We urge that such important meeting be followed up and its outcome disseminated.

Mr. Chairman,

The accelerated technological development in the field of communications and information has a great impact on all economic and social sectors. However, regrettably the unequal access to these technologies has ever more widened the digital divide between the countries of the North and the countries of the South, and increased the existing lack of equity and social justice.

In 2011, the number of Internet users accounted only for 37% of the world population. Citizens without access to this service remain the majority, especially in developing countries, where around 15% of the population is connected to the network of networks, while in developed countries over 70% of their inhabitants is connected. Multiple social networks are used to promote and disseminate several topics; but they cannot be used by the 793 million illiterate adults and the 139 million children and adolescents who still do not enjoy their right to education.

Developed countries monopolize information services and hold and manipulate a great deal of content. This way, too often lies are imposed, history is distorted, discrimination is legitimized, and freedom of expression and information is violated.

Therefore, we must think of and implement, without further delay, ways enabling a rational use and a more social ownership of information technologies, aimed at bridging not only technological but also social gaps. The United Nations have a key role to play in this regard,

by disseminating objective, true and impartial news, as well as by promoting the use of traditional mass media, especially the radio, among the thousands of poor and illiterate people lacking other ways to access information.

Mr. Chairman,

Once more, Cuba denounces in this Forum the daily radio and television aggression by the US Government against our country, in open violation of the rules of International Law, especially the norms and regulations of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), to which the United States is signatory.

Just a few weeks ago, the World Radiocommunication Conference entrusted the Director of the ITU's Radiocommunication Bureau with the mandate to follow up on and report to the next Conference, to be held in 2015, about the interferences caused by the US Government to the Cuban radio and television services, as part of their actions of radio aggression.

That same body of the ITU concluded in 2007 that, and I quote: a broadcasting station operating on board an aircraft and transmitting solely to the territory of another administration without its agreement cannot be considered in conformity with the Radio Regulations. End of quote.

In its recent meeting, the World Radiocommunication Conference also stated that despite numerous calls by the ITU's Radiocommunication Bureau, the US Administration has not stopped the harmful interference caused by its illegal transmissions to Cuban radio services.

Far from seeking to inform our people, those illegal radio and television transmissions against Cuba seek to distort the Cuban history and existing reality, encourage illegal emigration and violence, change the constitutional order of our country, and incite people to carry out terrorist actions.

Cuba reiterates that using the information with the strong interest in subverting the internal order of other States, violating their sovereignty, and interfering in their internal affairs is illegal and has aroused the rejection by the international community.

Mr. Chairman,

Each week, US-based radio stations broadcast to Cuba more than 2,000 hours of radio and television programs on over 30 different medium-wave, short-wave, FM, and TV frequencies.

On a daily basis, 231 to 258 hours of programs full of lies and offenses are broadcast. They are especially designed to incite people to overthrow the constitutional order established by the Cuban people.

In 2011, 26,320 hours of radio and television programs were broadcast, and two new short-wave radio stations began to broadcast subversive programs against Cuba.

Several of these stations belong or render services to organizations linked to known terrorist individuals who live in and take actions against Cuba from the US territory, with the full consent of the Federal Administration of the United States. Those transmissions also include innovative methods like the use of military Commando Solo and other aircrafts, with an annual cost of 5 million dollars.

Each year, the US Congress allocates more than 30 million dollars to fund these actions; so, in less than two decades the US Government has spent some 600 million dollars to that end. Those data and figures are alarming for a world currently facing the worst financial crisis.

The illegal radio and television transmissions aimed at the Cuban territory cause a severe harmful interference to the Cuban radio services, in violation of the exercise of the right to self-determination of its people.

Cuba condemns and rejects this aggression, by reiterating that our people should be the ones to fully decide, in a sovereign manner, the type of information they should and wish to receive; not those in the US Administration who squander the contributions of taxpayers and conspire with terrorists in their plans against the Cuban Revolution.

Each State has the right to manage with sovereignty its radio frequencies and space, and to decide, within its borders, how its radio and television transmissions should be broadcast and scheduled.

Cuba denounces again these illegal actions in this Forum, and demands their immediate end. We are prepared to face any kind of aggression, and will take whatever measure in our power to continue exercising our sovereignty and independence.

Thank you.