

Statement by H.E. Mr. Raymond Wolfe, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations (25 April 2012)

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to commend you and the members of the Bureau for your excellent stewardship of the Committee over the past year. My delegation looks forward to continuing to work with you throughout this session, towards the timely conclusion of our work.

Jamaica extends its gratitude to the staff of the Department of Public Information, for their unfailing efforts in continuing to promote the activities and accomplishments of the organization across its entire range of activities. We take this opportunity through you Mr. Chairman and the Acting Head of DPI, to commend former USG for Public Information, Mr. Kiyo Akasaka, for the hard work and dedication displayed throughout his tenure.

We thank Mr. Maher Nasser, Acting Head of DPI for his presentation before the Committee at yesterday's opening session. We also extend our gratitude to the DPI staff for the engaging and useful interactive dialogue.

We also thank the Secretary-General for the reports contained in documents A/AC.198/2012/2; 3 and 4; covering the Department's activities from July 2011 — February 2012; informing of the DPI's activities in the areas of strategic communication services; news services and outreach services respectively.

Jamaica associates itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished delegations of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and Chile on behalf of CELAC.

Mr. Chairman,

In our statement before the Fourth Committee last October, we drew attention to the fact that 2012 has the potential to be a watershed year in our collective efforts to stem the illicit flow of conventional weapons including small arms and light weapons and ammunition, including through the conclusion of a legally-binding Arms Trade Treaty, as well as the Second Review Conference of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects.

We thank the DPI for acceding to our request to bring greater focus to the issue of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and their deleterious impact on individuals, communities, and the social and economic development prospects of countries across the globe, and in particular, for allowing for a Small State perspective through an article contributed by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica.

We look forward to the DPI's continued focus on this important area of the UN's activity, by inter alia highlighting the outcomes of these key meetings. From Jamaica's perspective, the UN Chronicle, as one of the organization's key publications continues to serve a vital role in

disseminating the UN's message. We stand ready to work with the DPI to ensure its continued relevance.

Mr. Chairman,

Jamaica commends the Department for its continued strategic focus on priority issues such as the attainment of the MDG's; climate change, the Question of Palestine, peacekeeping, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio + 20; human rights, the campaign to end violence against women, issues related to the African continent, among others. With respect to Rio +20, we are heartened at the continued engagement at all levels within DPI, most notably by the UN Information Centres. UNICs will have a vital role to play in disseminating the outcomes of this important conference to local populations and to ensure continued global support and action towards a sustainable future for all.

Jamaica continues to maintain that the UNICs are a vital component of the UN's public information activities. We commend in particular, the network of UNICs for their increasing efforts to engage audiences in their local languages.

Jamaica supports the important work being undertaken by the UNIC that serves the Caribbean which is located in Trinidad and Tobago. The report on strategic communication services reflects an increasing use of Information Officers within the Offices of the UN Resident Coordinator. Jamaica therefore urges that consideration be given to the assignment of an Information Officer to be based in Kingston; who will service the information needs of the northern-most areas of the Caribbean, and complement the efforts of UNIC Port-of-Spain.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite the increasing use of modern information and communication technologies, for many in the developing world, traditional means of communication remain paramount. While we welcome the increase in the number of persons accessing the UN website, as well as the UN's Facebook page; and the growing number of followers on Twitter; we are even more encouraged by the addition of a further 150 stations to the number of radio stations using the programmes produced by UN Radio. Similarly, we welcome the growing numbers of broadcasters utilizing the UN's Unifed system, particularly those in developing countries.

Jamaica is of the view that the maintenance and accessibility of the UN's news, film and photographic archives should be a matter of the utmost priority. While we note the progress being made to digitize existing archives, including through voluntary donations, we remain concerned that continued delays could lead to the loss of vital history. We encourage Member States and entities in a position to do so, to assist the UN in this respect.

Mr. Chairman,

Outreach activities are an integral aspect of the Department's work. Within this context, of critical importance to my delegation is the Department's initiative to promote the erection on a

monument at the United Nations in honour of the victims of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The DPI remains an integral partner, along with the African Union, CARICOM, and Member States from all geographical regions, in our commitment to educate future generations of the transatlantic slave trade; the erection of a permanent memorial at the UN in honour of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, and the annual commemorative events surrounding the International Day of Remembrance.

As an update on the initiative to erect the Monument, following the launch of the international design competition in September of last year, over 300 design proposals, from artistes in over eighty-three countries.

In closing Mr. Chairman, allow me to express my gratitude to the DPI for spearheading the commemorative events held earlier in March for the International Day of Remembrance. The various events were indeed a fitting and solemn tribute to the memory of the victims of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

I wish to use this opportunity to inform Member States that on May 15 the annual concert, coordinated between DPI and Member States in remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade will be held in the General Assembly Hall. My delegation looks forward to the successful event in keeping with the objectives of the remembrance. We look forward to seeing you all on May 15.

Jamaica looks forward to continuing the close and collaborative relationship we have come to rely on as the foundation of our continued success in this important endeavour.

Thank you.