

Statement by H.E. Dr. Mwaba Kasese-Bota, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations (24 April 2012)

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor. From the outset, I wish to congratulate you and the entire bureau for presiding over the Committee's meetings in an efficient and effective manner. I wish to assure you of Zambia's continued support as a member of the Bureau of the Committee on Information.

Zambia aligns itself with the statement by Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

As in the past, Zambia wishes to underscore the pertinent role of the Department of Public Information in providing up-to-date and accurate information on the work of the United Nations to Member States and the public at large.

Zambia remains grateful and is privileged to host the United Nations Information Centre in Lusaka. The Zambian people and those in the region have acquired a lot of valuable knowledge through this centre. Understanding of the United Nations has been made easier through the translation of some major UN publications into Zambia's seven major local languages. To crown it all, Zambia was privileged to receive His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon in February this year. His visit made more Zambians research in-depth on the role of the United Nations and the UN Information centre was and remains a hive of activity, both physically and electronically.

Mr. Chairman

Zambia has recognised the important role that science and technology, including information and communication technology plays in the attainment of internationally agreed development goals. In this regard, Government is committed to ensuring the free flow of information and is in the process of enacting the Freedom of Information law, which will enable the citizens provide checks and balances on Government and Public Office bearers. This will no doubt result in enhanced accountability and transparency in the governance system. In the same vain, the media is also being encouraged to be more proactive, and more responsive to informational needs of the Zambians.

Further, the Zambian Government is in the process of restructuring state media to enable it operate independently without political interference.

Mr. Chairman

The power that television and radio have in disseminating information to all parts of the country is immense and the Government is setting up TV stations in all its 10 provinces to cover all the districts in the country.

Mr. Chairman

Zambia believes that the link between the United Nations media and the Zambian media should be further strengthened. The development of social media and other such instruments are indeed helping in this regard. We look forward to closer and continued collaboration and cooperation with the Department of Public Information.

I thank you.