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**INDIA**  
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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**at the 35<sup>TH</sup> Session of the**

**COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION**

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**Madam Chair,**

At the outset, on behalf of India, I would like to congratulate **Ambassador Lyutha Sultan Al-Mughairy** on her election as Chair of the Committee, as also the other members of the Bureau on their election. I wish you all the best of success and assure you of my country's full co-operation during the ongoing session of the Committee.

India also welcomes the appointment of Mr. **Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal** of Austria as the new Under Secretary General for Communication and Public Information. We are happy that he has served in India, and are confident that his creativity and experience would add to the DPI's ability to effectively communicate the ideas and activities of the United Nations. We wish him success in his new assignment, and also assure him of India's full co-operation.

We also welcome the reports of the Secretary-General on activities of the UNDPPI in the areas of strategic communications, news service and outreach services, which enable us to have a better perspective of DPI's efforts to fulfill its mandate, despite challenges emanating from limited availability of resources.

**Madam Chair,**

India associates itself with the statement made by the Chair of the G-77 and China. We would also like to make the following observations on the activities of the DPI, in our national capacity.

We commend the DPI's Outreach Services Division for its consistent effort to expand partnership with the global academic community, through its Academic Impact initiative. This excellent initiative, aimed at strengthening collaboration between the United Nations and institutions of higher education, has grown 850-member strong in a short period of less than three years. We are pleased to mention that a number of Indian Universities are members of this initiative.

Under this initiative, member institutions have organized a range of activities on diverse global issues, ranging from the changing nature of conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to human rights, faith, dialogue and integration. We are happy to mention that on November 26 last year, our Mission associated itself with the Initiative in organizing an event under the "Unlearning Intolerance" seminar series. This event, coinciding with India's Presidency of the UN Security Council, the fourth anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, and the 800<sup>th</sup> *urs* of the great Indian Sufi Saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti, included a panel discussion on "Faith, Dialogue and Integration", and a musical concert on the theme of "Love Towards All, Malice Towards None". The musical event brought together three genres of music, including the soulful Sufi music presented by the Shahi Qawwals from the Holy Shrine of Ajmer Sharif.

**Madam Chair,**

We welcome the appointment by the Secretary General of the Youth Envoy, under the Outreach Division of DPI. We hope that this will help enhance DPI's engagement with one of the key constituencies of the United Nations.

While highlighting the role of the Committee in examining its activities and giving policy directions to the DPI, we would like to emphasize the close partnership between member states and the DPI, with each supplementing the role of the other. There is a need for both to work closely together, to continually improve upon the content of the information being disseminated, and to ensure its effective delivery to potential users across the world.

**Madam Chair,**

We also reiterate the need for DPI to keep both the inter-state and intra-state digital divide in mind, and use the widest possible spectrum of media channels, ranging from digital social media channels to the traditional means of communication, like radio and print. We would also like to emphasize that dissemination of the information should be done in a democratic manner, giving equal importance to all the available channels of communication, including radio and print.

**Madam Chair,**

The network of UN Information Centers are the real interface between the United Nations and the people at the grassroots, given their ability to interact with local communities and communicate with them in their own language. We commend the work of UNIC New Delhi for producing its newsletter in the Indian languages, and collaborating with local NGOs, educational institutions and cultural centers in organizing its "Peace to Non-violence" campaign. We also emphasize the need for DPI to work closely with host countries to further strengthen these information outposts. We would also support adequate budgetary resources being made available to Information Centers, particularly in developing countries.

**Madam Chair,**

We support the DPI in its efforts to highlight the question of Palestine. We appreciate the annual training program for Palestinian journalists hosted by the Department, and its undertaking of a variety of activities in commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, through UNICs around the world, including in New Delhi. We hope that such efforts would help create world

opinion in favor of a peaceful settlement of this issue, and restore peace in the Middle-East.

The DPI should continue to work closely with the DPKO, DFS and DPA in its efforts to highlight the work performed by UN peacekeepers, often under extremely demanding circumstances. However rather than responding to particular situations or incidents, these efforts should continue throughout the year.

Disseminating accurate, impartial and timely information on the UN work is one of the important tasks of the DPI. The summaries of various important meetings at the UN released by DPI are critical sources of information for the world at large and even for member-states. It is therefore necessary that the information be factual, not judgmental. Let us remember that DPI officers are not journalists, but information officers. For example, the fact of the Security Council not adopting a decision cannot be called a failure as is often mentioned by the DPI in its summary of Council meetings.

**Madam Chair,**

We would like to conclude by assuring India's full support to the DPI as it endeavors to project the work of the UN, and to you as you guide the work of this Committee.

**Thank you, Madam Chair.**