



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MINISTER MARCELO SUAREZ SALVIA, PERMANENT MISSION OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE THIRTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION (New York, 27 April 2011)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at the commencement of the thirty-third session of the Committee on Information.
2. Allow me at the outset to extend our warmest congratulations to Ambassador Eduardo Ulibarri, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica, on his election as Chair of the Committee, as well as to the rest of the members of the Bureau. We wish you all the best of success and assure you the full cooperation of our Group in the work of this important body of the Organization. Allow me also to pay tribute to your predecessor Ambassador Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima, Permanent Representative of Cape Verde, for his dedication and contribution to the work of the Committee and wish him all the success in his future endeavors.
3. The Group of 77 and China expresses its appreciation to Mr. Kiyotaka Akasaka, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, for his comprehensive and informative presentation on the activities and strategies of the Department of Public Information (DPI). The Group further expresses its appreciation to the officers and staff of the DPI both at Headquarters and field.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The close cooperation and partnership between the Department and the Committee on Information has always been the cornerstone of DPI's policies on Public Information. Therefore, the Group of 77 and China stresses the importance of strengthening this partnership and calls for its continued improvement as the DPI continues to play its vital role as a public voice to promote the purposes and image of the United Nations.
5. The Group of 77 and China has taken note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI).

Mr. Chairman,

6. The United Nations is a universal forum where many issues and concerns faced by the international community are debated. Many countries especially in the developing world, however, lack the resources and technical means to access information regarding the United Nations activities and achievements. The DPI, therefore, has before it a challenging task to reach out to the widest possible audiences and project these important accomplishments to all peoples of the world in order to promote greater understanding and goodwill.

7. The G77 and China thus fully supports the work of the Department of Public Information in promoting and advancing the work of the organization through its continued campaigns on issues of importance to the international community. These issues are, among others, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the progress made in implementing the internationally agreed development goals; United Nations reform; the eradication of poverty; conflict prevention;

peacekeeping; peacebuilding; sustainable development; disarmament; decolonization; human rights, including the rights of women and children, persons with disabilities and migrant workers; strategic coordination in humanitarian relief, especially in natural disasters and other crises; HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, non-communicable diseases and other diseases; the needs of the African continent, the nature of the critical economic and social situation in Africa and the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development; the special needs of Least Developed Countries: the establishment of the permanent memorial to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade: combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; dialogue among civilizations, the culture of peace and tolerance, and the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, as well as prevention of genocide.

8. The Group also emphasizes the importance of the DPI's Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine in raising the international community's awareness of the Question of Palestine and in supporting the efforts to achieve a just lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, in accordance with international law and United Nations resolutions.

9. In this connection, the Group of 77 and China commends the DPI for its implementation of this important Programme and underscores many of its necessary and useful elements such as the annual training for Palestinian media professionals from the Occupied Palestinian Territory that aims at assisting them in the development of their media skills and capacity. We reiterate the need for these and other activities undertaken by the DPI and call for their further enhancement and reinforcement.

Mr. Chairman,

10. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the role and work of the Network of United Nations Information Centers (UNICs). We, therefore, urge that all possible measures be taken to strengthen the UNICs. These Centers are a vital source for the flow of information as they help to bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries in terms of access to information and communication technologies.

11. Our Group welcomes the support by some developing Member States to offer rent-free premises to host the UNICs due to lack of funding while bearing in mind that such support should not be a substitute for the full allocation of financial resources for the information centres in the context of the programme budget of the United Nations. The Group of 77 and China wishes to underline that any decision pertaining to reorganizing the UNICs must be made in close consultation with the host countries, and take into account the geographical, linguistic and technological characters and needs of different regions.

12. The Group of 77 and China welcomes the resolution A/RES/64/243 adopted by the General Assembly which decided to establish the United Nations Information Center in Luanda, as a contribution to addressing the need of Portuguese-speaking African countries. The Group requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures for its prompt establishment and to report to the Committee at its thirty-fourth session on the progress made in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The Internet in recent years has undergone explosive growth; there are more than 1.8 billion Internet users in the world today. Therefore, the Group of 77 of China stresses the need for the United Nations websites to be available in all official languages on a priority basis. The Group shares the same concern expressed in the Secretary-General's report on news services as, despite

the efforts made by the DPI to improve the multilingual contents of the UN website, the disparity among the use of the official languages has continued to deepen. The Group reiterates its request that all content-providing offices in the Secretariat translate all English-language materials and databases into all official language and make them available on the respective language websites. The Group is of the view that more resources and efforts should be allocated to achieve full parity of languages in the UN websites in order to fully take advantage of this very important resource.

14. At the same time, the Group emphasizes the importance of continuing the use of traditional media, including both radio and prints, in disseminating the main messages of the United Nations. Traditional media has been and still is the primary means of communication in many developing countries. The Group also continues to underscore the importance of the closer co-operation between the DPI and other substantive Departments in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS).

15. In conclusion, allow me, Mr. Chairman, to assure you of our full support and of our constructive and active engagement during this session. We are confident that under your able stewardship the COI will once again reach a successful outcome

I thank you.

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