

**Statement of the delegation of Venezuela, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, at the opening session of the XXIV regular session of the Committee on Information**

**New York, April 22nd, 2002**

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Mr. President:

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like, first at all, to express our satisfaction for the ability displayed until now to the work of the Committee of Information under your adroit leadership. We are convinced that during this session, you will guide us towards a productive debate and an exchange of views that would favor a better understanding of the items related to the scope of public information of the United Nations. I would like also, to take this opportunity to extend our gratefulness to the other members of the Bureau of the Committee.

Likewise, we would like to thank the Interim Head of the Department of Public Information, Mr. Shashi Tharoor, for his very complete presentation and, at the same time, to express to his team our satisfaction for their efficiency and cooperative spirit in dealing with the different and complex topics that are under their responsibility, as well as the efforts made towards the incorporation of new innovations in the development of their activities.

Mr. President,

The current international political agenda is intensely being involved - more and more – and in a more complete manner, with matters related to technology, information and communication, among others. There is no doubt that this scope has become one of the recurrent aspects within the main fora of discussion at the international level. Recently, during the Summit on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, under the auspices of the United Nations, it became obvious, once more, the urgency to watch over the benefits of new technologies and, in particular, those related to information and communications, as it was also clearly set forth during the Millennium Summit.

Therefore, besides the discussions that in several occasions will take place from now on, when dealing with such an important item, the United Nations has started to organize in a way so this could be undertaken in an appropriate manner. Recently, a Resolution was approved by which it convenes a “Meeting of the General Assembly to examine the role of information technologies and communications in development.” The countries members of the Group of 77 and China give a great significance to the celebration of this meeting because during the same, the means to close the digital divide will be examined and the opportunities that offer the digital technology in the process of globalization of the incipient society of information could be promoted. Besides, we consider it as the opportunity to examine the matter in order to make a contribution to the World Summit on the Society of Information in its two phases in 2003 and 2005.

Mr. President,

At the same time that we recognize the unyielding reality that we confront through unbalances within different scopes, there also exists a conscience that the accelerated progress on matters of technology of information and the communications have not even been able to be introduced in vast areas of developing countries, thus restricting the progress of important sectors of human development. The so called technological gap between the rich and the poor countries that prevents the balanced development of an

irreversible process, such as the one experimented in this field, follows – unchangeable - an ascendant road. At the same time that in the problems of distances and communications are reduced in the world, the digital divide grows. The personal computers are a good example. After initially suffering a radical change to transform themselves in portable computers, once more they are at a point where they will experiment important innovations, such as the one to be converted into digital screens or the incorporation of remote controls, among many changes, which will facilitate the every day tasks that occupy men in the complex and modern society of today.

However, it is well known that such levels of development are unapproachable for the people that do not have enough means, even for their daily subsistence. It is in this instant where we phase the biggest of challenges, trying to reduce as much as possible these differences and, at the same time, revert the tendency that threatens to make them deeper. Of course, this is not an easy task, and neither is only for a few countries. This objective truly demands the joined effort of everyone. It requires the cooperation of several sectors and of a series of investments in education, health, infrastructure, etc., which will contribute to reach a better equilibrium and a greater social justice in the world.

The Group of 77 and China are fully conscious, Mr. President, that this endeavor highly exceeds the purposes, not only of this Committee, but also of those, who separately dedicate themselves to the study of several of these problems; but, at the same time, we believe that the afore-mentioned constitutes the general context within which a constructive dialogue, in the scope of our discussions, should take place. We should endeavor to accomplish that our countries could suitably adapt themselves to the reality of our times and, especially, so that they could obtain the benefits derived from the appropriate access and handling of public information, and in this case, of the public information of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

As we initiate this session we wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary General for the presentation of the reports that the Committee will analyze and discuss. This year, during the present session, the re-orientation of the United Nations activities in the field of public information and communications will surely monopolize the whole attention of the Committee. The countries members of the G-77 and China, welcome the fact that a discussion, such as this has been outlined, since we understand that the dynamics that characterize contemporary international relations require of the permanent evaluation and actualization of the structures created to attend the several demands that are generated by themselves. In this context, we can assure you that we will participate very actively and discuss carefully and with the utmost interest the contents of all the reports and, very especially, the one related to the above mentioned re-orientation.

In another context, we wish to ratify that for our countries it is crucial that the Organization utilize and maintain properly the traditional means of diffusion of information. In this sense, we applaud the efforts of the DPI in its endeavor to actualize and improve the equipments of radio and television of the United Nations so as to progressively reach a greater number of users and other means of communication around the world, in order to make the people familiar with the activities and achievements of the Organization.

Finally, Mr. President,

The countries of the G-77 and China wish to express again its absolute disposition to promote those actions that may stimulate a fructiferous dialogue and a close cooperation among all, within the context of our work, to reach the achievement of our proposed objectives.

Thank you, Mr. President.

