



STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF MOROCCO, DELIVERED BY MRS. SOUAD EL ALAOU, FIRST SECRETARY, ON BEHALF OF THE G-77 AND CHINA, ON AGENDA ITEM ENTITLED 86: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (FOURTH COMMITTEE) (New York, 27 October 2003)

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the G-77 and China, allow me at the outset to congratulate Mr. Shashi Tharoor, Under-Secretary General for Communication and Public Information for his comprehensive and enlightening introductory statement on the work carried out by the Department of Public Information during the last year.

We would like also to welcome the institution of a new DPI structure and operating methods and congratulate the Under-Secretary General and his Staff for the tremendous and invaluable efforts they have invested in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

The ongoing reform of the Department of Public Information is a crucial and necessary step towards the strengthening of the United Nations System. The DPI, as the public voice of the U.N., should ensure a wider communication of the UN activities, thus leading to the establishment of a real interactive dialogue with the different actors in the world society. The restructuring of the DPI and its new operating model should aim at making of the information a real stimulus of reactions on the part of the world populations to the UN decisions in order to ensure an active participation and involvement of every single actor in the world society in carrying out these decisions. In other terms, the effectiveness of the new DPI should be evaluated on the basis of how much response to the UN decisions the information stimulus will generate.

Therefore, the challenge ahead of the new DPI is not only to ensure a wider outreach of the communication strategies but also their contribution in the concretization of the UN goals and objectives.

The Secretary General underlined in his report that "at the core of the renewed Department of Public Information is the new mission statement: "The Department of Public Information's mission is to help fulfill the substantive purposes of the United Nations by strategically communicating the activities and concerns of the Organization to achieve the greatest public impact".

The DPI's new mission statement should therefore be viewed as a new reinforced and action-oriented strategy of communication, which should be guided by the priorities already fixed by the intergovernmental processes, in particular the United Nations Millennium Declaration. It should be recalled in this context that the latter has recognized that poverty eradication remains the greatest challenge facing the world community today.

In this respect, the contribution of the DPI in building an effective global strategy of partnership for a real and effective sustainable development is of paramount importance.

Allow me in this context to highlight an important follow-up event to the World Summit on

Sustainable Development and the foreseeable role of the DPI in this respect. Next year, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) will hold a review session to evaluate the progress made in the implementation of the activities related to Water, Sanitation and Human settlement. These issues will be further examined in 2005 in order to decide on the additional measures to enhance their implementation. We believe that the DPI can play a crucial role through the thematic communications campaigns with regard to these vital issues.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Continent remains the mostly affected by the scourge of poverty, famine, deadly diseases and armed conflicts. While welcoming the range of activities undertaken by the DPI to enhance the UN activities in support of the sustainable development of Africa, the DPI new strategy of communication should contribute to ensure a significant and concrete response on the part of all actors to the special needs of the African populations. A long-term action-oriented strategy of communication is critically needed to ensure the DPI's involvement on a regular basis in the international community's joint efforts to alleviate the suffering of millions of people in this Continent.

Mr. Chairman,

The tragic evolution of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories calls for a reinforced and permanent outreach strategy of communication with the aim to stimulate strong action on the part of the international community to put on track the peace process and to end the long lasting suffering of the Palestinian people.

Dialogue among civilizations is more than ever a theme, which necessitates special attention within the frame of the DPI's strategy of communication.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the restructuring of the United Nations information centers, the Group would like to reiterate the importance of these centers for developing countries, especially the least developing countries, as valuable sources of information and means of communication and interaction with the host countries which suffer from an acute shortage of the necessary infrastructure and human resources to benefit from the new information and communication technologies. We therefore believe that the foreseeable restructuring of the UN information centers should be undertaken on a case by case basis and in due consultation with the concerned countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Pending the bridging of the digital divide and the dissemination of the new information technologies which will be the focus of deliberations at the World Summit on information in its two phases to be held in Geneva and Tunis, the G-77 and China would like to emphasize the importance of preserving and consolidating the traditional means of communication such as radio broadcasting, which continue to have an undeniable impact in remote areas particularly in developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The fulfillment of the DPI's new mission statement depends to a great extent on ensuring the use of multilingualism in DPI's communication activities. Given the linguistic diversity of the world's community, a wider outreach of DPI's new communication strategies can only be realized through a balanced and equitable use of the UN six official languages. We welcome the Secretariat endeavors in this respect and hope that the financial constraints will not continue to hinder the use of multilingualism as an indispensable step for the DPI to carry out its new mission statement.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that UN reform including the revision of the organizational structure and the operating model of the DPI is a process, which should be continuously enhanced and reinforced on the basis of performance measures in order to make the work of the DPI a real contribution to the fulfillment of the UN goals and objectives while ensuring the largest possible outreach of the communication strategies.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.