



Permanent Mission of
Malaysia
to the United Nations

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**STATEMENT BY
THE HONOURABLE DR. MOHD PUAD ZARKASHI
REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 78:
QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION**

**AT THE FOURTH COMMITTEE OF THE
60TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2005**

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me at the outset to thank Mr. Shashi Tharoor, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information for his enlightening introductory statement on the work carried out by the Department of Public Information (DPI). I would also like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the "Questions Relating to Information".

2. My delegation associates itself with the statement will be made by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China as well as the statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Thailand on behalf of the Association of the South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Mr. Chairman,

3. My delegation shares the view that the United Nations has an important role to play with regards to the Questions Relating to Information. We have been following with keen interest the ongoing reform of the Department of Public Information (DPI) launched by the Secretary-General in 2002 to enhance the performance and effectiveness of the Department. We are pleased to note the reorientation of the DPI has now been completed, the results of which have been reported to the Committee of Information as contained in document A/AC.198/2005/2. We are convinced with the adoption of a new operating model, a new organizational structure as well as a revised mission statement, the Department would increase its effectiveness in its ability to informing the world at large of the diverse functions and activities of the United Nations.

4. Malaysia is pleased to note that DPI has focused its campaign on issues that are current and relevant to the public and of priority to the Organization, such as poverty eradication, education and capacity building, protracted conflicts, the threat of HIV/AIDS and other major diseases, and sustainable development. The public in particular should continuously be kept informed of the activities being carried out and the successes achieved in these areas. At a time when the effectiveness of the United Nations is being questioned, it is important that the Organization's activities and achievements be widely publicized not only to educate but to also restore public confidence and support for the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman,

5. My delegation commends the Department for its efforts to inform the world on the process of revitalization and reform of the United Nations. The central role played by the DPI in disseminating information and close collaboration with the major media had effectively educate the world on the rationale and the need for change and reform of the United Nations. My delegation is particularly pleased by the effort of the United Nations information centers in translating the executive summary of the book version of the Secretary-General's report as in document A/59/2005, into numerous national languages including Bahasa, the national language of Malaysia. Malaysia believes that the United Nations information centers play a crucial role in reaching out to the international community and projecting the programmes and policies of the United Nations system as well as in promoting the Secretary-General's reform agenda and the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Chairman,

6. We fully appreciate that DPI continues to concentrate its news gathering and reporting activities on the situation in Africa given the many problems faced by the African countries and the need to support African efforts, in particular the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We welcome the range of activities undertaken by the DPI to enhance the UN activities in support of the sustainable development of Africa. However, we believe that an action-oriented strategy is required to ensure the UN's involvement on a continuous basis together with the rest of the international community in a joint effort to assist Africa resolve many of the problems faced government and people in that continent.

7. My delegation support the DPI's approach in conveying clear, simple and consistent messages which would help the ordinary African people to clearly understand their role and responsibility in their respective country's national development. In this regard, we support the proposal to develop an advocacy and communications strategy by NEPAD's secretariat, and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. This would form the general framework for a single common United Nations system communications strategy for the Partnership.

Mr. Chairman,

8. My delegation is pleased that the question of Palestine continues to remain an important focus for the United Nations and DPI. We congratulate DPI for the success in organizing the thirteenth annual International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East in Cairo on 13 and 14 June 2005, in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry of Egypt. The tragic situation in the Occupied

Palestinian Territories needs to be told to the public to enable the international community to play their role to end the prolonged suffering of the Palestinian people and contribute to the realisation of the peace process. We urge the DPI to continue to play the crucial role in highlighting issues relating to the Question of Palestine until the peaceful settlement of the conflict is achieved. Malaysia commends the success of the seminar in highlighting the role of international and regional actors in facilitating a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

9. It is encouraging to note that the Department has taken a series of steps to improve the United Nation's image among the people in the Middle East. We welcome the effort to find ways to communicate effectively with the people in the Middle East and the Arab region by developing a strategic communications framework in collaboration with other departments and United Nations agencies. The strategies adopted will provide the basis for sustained efforts to improve the image and understanding of the Organization in the Arab region. In this regard, Malaysia would continue to support the activities of the DPI.

Mr. Chairman,

10. My delegation commends DPI continued cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to further develop and adjust its global communications strategy in support of the United Nations peace operation. We encourage the DPI and the DPKO to continue their cooperation in raising awareness of the new realities, successes and challenges faced by peacekeeping operations. My delegation further encourages the DPI to continue to provide the necessary support for the dissemination of information pertaining to dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace.

11. My delegation supports the use of multilingualism in all communication activities, especially in the website and encourage the Department to continue its endeavours in that regard. 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. Malaysia would emphasize the importance of ensuring the full, equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all activities of the Department of Public Information.

Mr. Chairman,

12. In conclusion, we are confident the DPI will continue to play a major role in bringing the United Nations closer to the public. Malaysia fully supports the new direction the Department has taken in order to become a more effective vehicle of communication between the Organization and the peoples of the World.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.