

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to welcome you as a Chairman and also thank the Secretary General for his report on the activities carried out by the Department of Public Information during the past year.

We would also like to join others in congratulating Under-Secretary General for Communications and Public Information, Mr. Shashi Tharoor for his detailed and excellent statement before this Committee yesterday. Our appreciation goes also to the entire staff of the Department for the way they have carried out their tasks.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by His Excellency Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo of South Africa, on behalf of G-77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The challenge of creating and disseminating accurate and meaningful information that will be heard by every corner in our interconnected world is, indeed, daunting.

My government welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on Questions Relating to Information A/61/216, which is a thorough account of the range of information issues the Department of Public Information must address, and a careful consideration of ways for it to meet its goals. We note with satisfaction the Department's impressive strides in developing a communications strategy and creating a structure to effectively achieve the objectives that have been set.

Mr. Chairman,

The Department of Public Information, together with all departments within the United Nations, faces the challenge of completing its tasks in an environment of tightly constrained resources. My delegation fully understands that this dilemma has no easy solution, but we reiterate our position that the Department of Public Information must accomplish its tasks within the existing resources or push for the allocation of additional resources.

In this connection we are pleased and take the opportunity to thank the Secretary General for his reports and in particular that contained in document A/AC.198/2006/1, concerning the need for Luanda to host a United Nations Information Centre. We therefore, urge the Department of Public Information, as we move towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, to continue its efforts for the opening of the Luanda Centre, to serve the special needs of five developing countries, some with war torn economies trying to recover just now. For these countries effective presence of a UN Information Centre has a key development promotional role to play. In this connection I am authorized to reiterate the rent-free offer for the premises by the Government of Angola. This is also a means of renewing our commitment for a better dissemination of information of the work of our organisation in the world and particularly in Africa.

We recognize that the United Nations must reach many levels of audience, from those with state of the art communications techniques to those which have yet to achieve literacy. This spectrum of conditions is represented not only by individual nations, but also by audiences within the same nation. The need to develop different media for different audiences is clear.

In this connection, while we commend the fruitful work undertaken by the Desk for Portugal in the UN regional centre in Brussels, as outlined in the Secretary General's Report, the Portuguese Speaking African Countries cannot just rely on such services. The special needs of developing countries can more effectively be addressed through a centre in Luanda. The local communities do not have the same new technologies such as print media, radio and internet, as compared with developed countries. This is a question of access to the means of information which many countries like ours still have a tremendous deficit.

Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of Angola would like to commend to those, whom under difficult circumstances, cover to the fullest extent the work of the UN Radio, and here our special thanks and appreciation goes to the Portuguese Radio Unit, for the services they provide around the world and particularly in Africa.

Angola also commends the Department for redesigning the UN Website and welcomes the New Press Release Webpage and daily Media Alert published by it. Furthermore, we join other delegations in congratulating the DPI for the improvement in the delivery of services offered by UN libraries.

Angola once more reiterates its call for the DPI together with other departments of the United Nations to look carefully at the question of allocating Special Passes for the Permanent Mission's Press Counsellors or Attaches to enable them to conduct effectively and professionally their tasks during the general debates of the General Assembly.

We also commend the DPI for the tremendous work carried out in Peacekeeping Operations Missions.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, Angola underlines its support for the work of the Department of Public Information, and the guidance and direction of Under Secretary-General, Shashi Tharoor. We thank the staff of DPI for its hard work and continuing efforts to make this Department increasingly more effective.

Thank you