



Statement by H. E. Ambassador Piragibe Tarragô
Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

31st Session of the Committee on Information

5th May 2009

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to congratulate you on your election to preside over the 31st Session of the Committee on Information (CoI). It is very timely that a skilled representative from Portuguese speaking Africa is chairing this session. The special needs of Portuguese speaking African countries in the field of UN public information have been underlined in several reports and resolutions emanating from our work. I wish also to congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

We thank the Secretary-General for his reports to the Committee and Undersecretary-General Akasaka for his comprehensive briefing, as well as for his and his team's daily committed work.

Brazil aligns itself with the statements made by the G-77 and China and the Rio Group, and wishes to add the following comments in its national capacity.

In order to ensure that peoples in all parts of the world receive as full information as possible about the United Nations, it is necessary to have the UN message spread out in as many languages as possible. The activities of DPI and the United Nations as whole must take into account the linguistic diversity of these peoples. This would also serve to improve accountability of the UN programmes and activities. The global seminar on linguistic diversity, globalization and development, held by DPI and UNESCO last year in the context of the International Year of Languages, was a valuable opportunity to further this debate.

Brazil would like to commend once again the efforts undertaken in this regard by the Portuguese Unit of UN Radio, despite the limited human and financial resources available to it. The fact that the Portuguese unit of UN Radio added the highest number of new partners last year - more than 80 in Brazil and Africa - is a clear evidence of the important demand for UN public information content in Portuguese speaking countries.

My delegation also reiterates Brazil's continued support to the work of the United Nations Information Center in Rio de Janeiro, which has been disseminating information on the activities of United Nations family for more than six decades. The activities of UNIC Rio- carried out through intense collaboration with the media, NGOs, universities and government bodies - help educate and raise awareness of the Brazilian public about the fundamental role of the United Nations to promote multilateral solutions to

including developed countries, do not do so. We strongly encourage all States that host UNICs, and are in a position to do so, to consider offering rent-free and maintenance-free premises for their operations. Without prejudice to the need for enhanced budgetary support to the activities of DPI, this initiative on the part of Member States would enable the Department to concentrate its limited funds on outreach and public information activities, as well as on strengthening the UNICs network, where necessary, notably in Portuguese speaking Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil appreciates the work undertaken by DPI under the Special Information Programme on the question of Palestine. We consider that the sensitization of public opinion and the promotion of dialogue among journalists, civil society, academic community and policymakers may play an important role to foster innovative and grassroots initiatives for peace in the Middle East. We are pleased to host the next annual international media seminar on peace in the Middle East, to be held in July of this year in Rio de Janeiro.

Finally, I wish to stress once again the important role of DPI in spreading UN's message to world today and in preserving the historical memory of the United Nations. We commend DPI's efforts, inter alia, to