

Statement by Ms. SONG Miyoung
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Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by expressing my deep appreciation to you and other members of the Bureau. I am confident that your ability and vast experience will revitalize our deliberations on public information. I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to the new Vice-Chairman, Mr. Shalva Tsiskarashvili of the Permanent Mission of Georgia, on his election during the first day of this session. My delegation also thanks the Under-Secretary-General Mr. Kiyo Akasaka, for his informative statement and leadership on the commendable work of the Department of Public Information (DPI).

Mr. Chairman,

The Republic of Korea attaches great importance to the work of the DPI, which has served as voice of the United Nations, informing the world about the goals and work of the various organs within the United Nations system. We believe that continued improvement of the partnership between the DPI and the Committee on Information (COI) is essential in promoting the work of the United Nations and issues of importance to the international community.

The DPI has made significant progress on its activities for the communications campaigns on priority issues of the UN and also expanded its partnership with civil society and the private sector, using new information and communication technologies. We believe that strategic communication has greatly contributed to this progress. We also note that the Department continues to support the United Nations by developing effective communications strategies on priority issues such as development, peace and security, human rights, and climate change. My delegation hopes that the DPI will continue to develop communications strategies to engage and educate the global community on the ideals and activities of the UN.

Mr. Chairman,

The work of the DPI is particularly important to the field of development. The economic crisis has hit developing countries hardest, creating difficulties for them in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Department should highlight their setbacks by engaging the international media. It should also call on the international community to fulfill its aid commitment.

With the increasing role of the UN Peacekeeping Operation in conflict and post-conflict areas, the DPI should focus its efforts on the public information activities of the Department of Peacekeeping Organization (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS). It is imperative for Member States and the public to receive up-to-date information on the peacekeeping and peace-building activities of the UN. The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), for example, played a key role in the recovery of the devastated nation after the recent tragic earthquake. DPI's support to MINUSTAH through setting up video-conferencing capabilities and other new media platforms was crucial in both assisting communications with Headquarters and informing the general public. The increased communications capability helped inform Member states of Haiti's needs and guided the Republic of Korea's participation in the UN PKO mission, which included dispatching an additional 240 peacekeepers, consisting mainly of military engineers, to key areas of Haiti in February 2010.

Mr. Chairman,

We take note of the rapid emergence of new social networking tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. It is important to meet the demands of users of social media by providing them with timely, impartial, comprehensive, and coherent information. However, we express our concern that the gap in information and communications technology between the developed and the developing countries has continued to widen and the world's most marginalized peoples are not benefiting from the present information and communications technologies. The digital divide includes the imbalance in physical access to technology as well as the inequality in resources and skills needed to effectively participate as a digital citizen.

In this regard, the United Nations Information Centers (UNICs) play an important role in disseminating the messages of the UN and in reducing the unequal acquisition of related skills. We recommend that the DPI enhance UNIC's network to maximize the impact of public information and to bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries in terms of access to technology and resources. We also welcome the resolution A/RES/64/243 adopted by the General Assembly to establish the UNIC in Luanda, Angola.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by expressing Republic of Korea's deep appreciation for the DPI's vigorous efforts and significant progress in promoting the work of the United Nations. The Republic of Korea pledges its full support for the DPI in its efforts to communicate the