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# General Assembly

## PI/2050

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

Committee on Information  
Thirty-fifth Session  
1<sup>st</sup> Meeting (AM)

**PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT, WORKING HAND IN HAND WITH MEMBER STATES,  
DRAWING**

**STRENGTH FROM STAFF, CAN MEET CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES OF SPREADING UN  
MESSAGE**

**Communications Chief Notes Significant Expansion of News Coverage in Official UN  
Languages; Delegates Voice Support for Enhanced Partnerships, Multilingual Content**

Through new media, multilingual information platforms, and stronger partnerships with Member States, the Department of Public Information was conveying the United Nations' message to global audiences in a more cost-effective and coordinated way, its senior communications official told the Committee on Information as it opened its annual session this morning.

At a time of economic difficulty, the United Nations story must be told in a way that did not break the budget, and legislative processes at Headquarters in New York must be connected to the work of staff in the field, said Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, as he introduced the Department's reports.

"We are optimistic about meeting these challenges, and we draw strength from our greatest asset: multinational, multilingual staff who bring exceptional talent and dedication," he said.

Employees worldwide were working on the front lines, behind the scenes and frequently in dangerous conditions to make a positive difference in people's lives every day, he said. It was incumbent upon the Department to make clear to the public the value of their respective Governments' human and financial investment in the Organization.

To get that message out to as many people as possible, the Department had significantly expanded its news coverage in all six official languages in the past year, signing an agreement with China Business Network to co-produce a Chinese version of *21<sup>st</sup> Century*, the United Nations Television feature programme, and posting the Russian-language versions of United Nations Radio and the United Nations News Centre on Facebook and Twitter.

This week, a pilot project with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management would make press releases of the Commission on Population and Development's session available in Spanish for the first time — one in a series of cost-effective steps to expand the Organization's multilingual reach.

The Department also had bolstered partnerships in the past year with Member States to raise awareness about the horror of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, and with Hollywood directors and producers to

integrate United Nations issues into film and television. With Member States' financial support, the United Nations Secretary-General had appointed an Envoy on Youth and set in motion the first ever system-wide action plan on youth development.

The Department's commitment to support the Organization's peacekeeping operations and political missions worldwide was steadfast, Mr. Launsky-Tieffenthal said, noting its recent communications advice and guidance to the missions in Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Steps to "deliver as one" had made the Department's three divisions more focused and effective, while the introduction of new information and communications technology was enabling it to achieve greater budgetary discipline. For example, the launch this month of the new media asset management system, known as MAMS, would bring the Department's television and audio materials onto a shared digital platform, allowing for quicker distribution and dissemination of information materials by Member States and the public. Switching to WebEx, an affordable online video-conference tool, had facilitated communications with the Organization's 63 information centres worldwide.

A full assessment of the Department's media monitoring and analysis services was under way to improve, streamline and strengthen services in accordance with client needs, he said. Through the Integrated Sustainable PaperSmart Services, delegates could download documents on their mobile devices or tablets, improving efficiency and reducing the Organization's environmental footprint.

On behalf of Eduardo Ulibarri (Costa Rica), the previous session's Chair, Chibaula Silwamba (Zambia), outgoing Vice-Chair, said "day after day, reality reminds us that information, communication and data management are key and fast drivers of the political, economic and cultural and social dynamics of contemporary life". Faced with that rapidly evolving situation, the Committee and the Department had to constantly consider its relevance. And, in a time of very limited resources, those bodies, more than ever, needed to join efforts for turning their overloading responsibilities into inspiring and effective actions.

Lyutha al-Mughairy (Oman) incoming Committee Chair, acknowledged that the Department must tackle numerous challenges and cater to new audiences in "a worsening budgetary climate", doing more with dwindling resources. She stressed the importance of working closely with civil society, and of addressing scepticism and misinformation. "Dialogue can triumph over discord," she said.

Following those presentations, Member States began outlining their own priorities and weighing in on the Secretariat's moves, as the Committee began its general debate. Speaking were the representatives of Fiji (on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries and China), Cuba (on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)), Japan, Guatemala, Zambia, Senegal, Pakistan and Brazil. A representative of the European Union Delegation also spoke.

Speakers expressed support for the Department's efforts to make its work more efficient and reach broader audiences through partnerships, the use of new media, digital applications and more multilingual content. Several lauded the pilot project to make press releases available in Spanish. Some called for greater resources to maintain and expand the network of information centres in Africa.

At the outset of the meeting, Mr. Launsky-Tieffenthal expressed condolences to the people and Government of China for the deaths and suffering caused by the earthquake in the south-western part of the country on Saturday.

Additionally, the Committee adopted its agenda and programme of work, and it elected by acclamation Ms. Al-Mughairy to serve as Chairperson; Yegor Pyvovarov (Ukraine), Juan Manuel Gonzalez de Linares (Spain) and Gabriel Orellana Zabalza (Guatemala) as Vice Chairs; and Mr. Silwamba as Rapporteur for 2013 and 2014.

The Committee will meet again at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 23 April, to continue its general debate.

## Background

The Committee on Information, the intergovernmental body charged with reviewing progress in the field of United Nations public information, began its thirty-fifth annual session today, during which delegations were expected to undertake a wide-ranging review of the Department of Public Information and its three subprogrammes: strategic communications; news services; and outreach services. (For more information, please see Press Release [PI/2049](#) of 19 April.)

## Opening Statements

At the outset, CHIBAULA SILWAMBA ( [Zambia](#)), Committee Vice-Chair, read a statement of outgoing Chair, Eduardo Ulibarri ( [Costa Rica](#)), who was not able to attend the meeting.

Thanking the Department of Public Information for “spreading the universal voice of the United Nations”, Mr. Ulibarri acknowledged the effort of Under-Secretary-General Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal and congratulated incoming Chair Lyutha al-Mughairy ( [Oman](#)). “Day after day, reality reminds us that information, communication and data management are key and fast drivers of the political, economic and cultural and social dynamics of contemporary life,” he said. Faced with that rapidly evolving situation, the Committee and the Department had to constantly consider its relevance. And, in a time of very limited resources, those bodies, more than ever, needed to join efforts for turning their overloading responsibilities into inspiring and effective actions.

After two years as Committee Chair, he said he had “good news” to share. Political negotiations in the Committee had followed a spirit of constructive engagement and increasing openness, within and among negotiating partners. The Department, for its part, had updated processes, clarified responsibilities, better coordinated with other United Nations bodies, and more actively engaged with Member States. It had also expanded its reach through innovative partnerships with different actors, including academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, media, professional communicators and citizen journalists. It had paid particular attention to young people as a key audience for interaction. He expected that in the coming years the Committee and the Department would generate “more good news” to report to Member States and key constituents, who are “the people of the United Nations”.

Incoming Chair Ms. AL-MUGHAIROY of [Oman](#) said that she would do her best to ensure that the current session was productive and reflected the collective endeavours of Committee members. She thanked her predecessor, Mr. Ulibarri, for his exemplary leadership, pledging that she would follow his path.

Stressing the crucial role of the Department of Public Information, she said “dialogue can triumph over discord”. When Governments had acted together, humankind progressed. There had been countless stories in United Nations history, but it was Member States who created them and it was up to the Department to make them compelling. The Department must also address scepticism and misinformation.

She acknowledged the Secretary-General’s reports on the Department’s activities, commended steady progress made. She stressed the importance of working closely with civil society and the need for multilingualism. She looked forward to exchanges of views among Member States and hoped that the Committee would be able to adopt resolutions that would provide clear guidance to the Department. She understood that the Department must tackle numerous challenges and cater to new audiences in “a worsening budgetary climate”, doing more with dwindling resources.

PETER LAUNSKY-TIEFFENTHAL, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, who joined the United Nations last August, said United Nations staff members were working on the front lines, behind the scenes and in frequently dangerous conditions to make a positive difference in people’s lives every day. It was incumbent upon the Department, whose job it was to tell the United Nations story, to prove equal to the trust the public put in the Organization. “Through action and message, we can together make clear its worth to your people. We will work with you to help win the support of the people

you represent and demonstrate the value of their human, ethical and financial investment in the United Nations.”

The Organization would like to tell its story in as many languages as possible, keep pace with technology, and with new media, he said. At a time of economic difficulty, the story must be told in a way that did not break the budget. Legislative processes in New York must be connected to the work of staff in the field. “We are optimistic about meeting these challenges, and we draw strength from our greatest asset: multinational, multilingual staff who bring exceptional talent and dedication to telling the UN story,” he said.

In the past year, the Department stepped up its partnership with Member States, he said. For example, it worked closely once again with the Rwandan Mission to commemorate the 1994 genocide through films, photos, discussions, visits to schools and other awareness-raising activities to ensure such events never recurred. Earlier this month, the Department, supported by UN-Women, organized the screening of a film produced by a genocide survivor featuring an association of widows and orphans called *Duhozanye* — or “to console one another”. A few weeks ago, it organized events worldwide on the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Late last year, the Department’s annual training programme for Palestinian journalists focused for the first time on social media and digital journalism, attracting its largest ever number of applicants, he said. The United Nations Academic Impact arranged an interactive dialogue on 20 March on the relationship between happiness and sustainable well-being, to commemorate the International Day of Happiness, a United Nations initiative. The 63 United Nations Information Centres provided an important local context to the Organization’s global efforts in more than 53 languages. In June, the annual International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East would take place in Istanbul. Next week, the Department and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) would celebrate World Press Freedom Day with events around the world.

The Department was making notable progress with creative community and celebrity advocates to amplify United Nations issues to new audiences, he said. Last week, he had met with directors, producers and scriptwriters in Los Angeles to discuss integrating United Nations issues into film and television projects. The Secretary-General, with financial contributions from Member States, had appointed Ahmad Alhendawi as an Envoy on Youth, to serve as a voice for young people within the United Nations system and as an external advocate for the estimated 1.2 billion young people worldwide. The work of the Envoy — whose appointment coincided with the adoption of the first-ever System Wide Action Plan on Youth Development by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) — would be carried out in line with the 1995 World Programme of Action on Youth.

The Department had significantly expanded its news coverage in the past year, due to Member States’ support, he said. For example, United Nations Radio’s Chinese-language programmes and live link-ups were aired on China National Radio. As a result, the United Nations Weibo account, the Chinese version of Facebook, now commanded some 3.5 million followers. On Friday, the Department had signed an agreement with China Business Network to co-produce a Chinese version of *21<sup>st</sup> Century*, the UNTV feature programme; its first show would air next week. The Russian-language versions of United Nations Radio and the United Nations News Centre had added accounts on Facebook and Twitter.

The Department also aimed to “deliver as one”, he said, making its three divisions more focused and effective. All three would contribute to the third international conference on small island developing States, to be held in Samoa next year; 12 of those States were Committee members. The Department’s staff gave communications advice and guidance to peacekeeping operations and special political missions worldwide, among them, the mission in Mali and the recent addition to the existing operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A recent photo exhibit at Headquarters showcased the political mission in Libya.

A good example of how the Department was harnessing staff ingenuity was the recently launched children’s tour of Headquarters featuring six custom-designed cartoon characters known as “UN Kids”, he

said. The Department worked to implement Member States' priorities such as the Millennium Development Goals. This month, it supported "MDG Momentum — 1,000 Days of Action", which spotlighted the 1,000-day milestone in efforts to achieve the Goals by 2015. The focus on greater budgetary discipline through efficiency, modernization and a results-driven approach included the optimal use of new information and communications technology.

"We are firm that print publications should not be consigned to the recycling bins of history but must be parent to newer forms of communication — including 'apps' — while refining and improving their original formats and content," he said. This month, the Department's new media asset management system (MAMS) and the new permanent broadcast facility, or PBF, would become operational, bringing together all the Department's television and audio materials on a shared digital platform and allowing for production on that same platform. Further, it would enable direct posting for quicker distribution and dissemination by Member States and the public across the Department's news and media online outlets.

The use of digital technology was benefitting the Department in multiple ways, he said. Thanks to the Network Interactive Content Access (NICA) project to process, distribute, archive and make photographs available online, the Department was able to offer a more diverse collection of photos on the United Nations Photo website and in the Photo Library. Through cost sharing with partners, it had recouped some of the costs of running and maintaining the system. Switching to WebEx, an affordable online video-conference tool, had enabled communications with the United Nations Information Centres and made the Department more cost-effective.

The Dag Hammarskjöld Library was a "hidden treasure" safeguarding the Organization's history through the preservation of parliamentary documents and providing a source of valuable knowledge and reference services, he said. "The Library must be an information hub," he added, pointing to efforts to address long-standing issues of strategy, structure, processes and services. Feedback from clients, including delegations, was being sought and would feed into a review of services to ensure the best possible fit for Member States' needs. The Department was developing new online services and tools for Library users, including a digital repository that could preserve and make available United Nations documents, online information and multimedia resources.

Recently, the Department had begun a complete assessment of its media monitoring and analysis services aimed at improving, streamlining and strengthening services in accordance with client needs, he said. It had embraced the Secretary-General's PaperSmart initiative. The current session of the Committee was the first to use the Integrated Sustainable PaperSmart Services of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, enabling delegates to download documents on their mobile devices or tablets. Documents would be available via flash drives; print-on-demand copies would be made available upon request. "We are confident that this initiative will improve our efficiency and, in the process, reduce our environmental footprint," he said.

In response to Member States' request to come up with a strategy to produce press releases in all six official languages, he said the Department was running a pilot project with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to make available in Spanish the press releases for the Commission on Population and Development's session this week. That was a first step, and the Department would continue to explore cost-effective ways to expand its multilingual reach. Having been a diplomat himself, he was aware of the need to access information readily and swiftly. The Department would share the results of that project and the additional resources required with delegates.

He said he was looking forward to hear delegation's comments, criticisms and observations on how the Department could do better. He invited all, especially those attending the Committee for the first time, to join him and his colleagues in that dialogue, for he counted on the Committee's guidance to protect and enhance the responsibility assigned to the Department to remain the focal point for coordination and implementation of United Nations activities. "It is a responsibility that we have sought to address and nurture from the very foundation of this Organization," he said, adding that he and his colleagues looked forward to continuing to work hand in hand with Member States to achieve those goals.

## Statements

PETER THOMSON ([Fiji](#)), speaking on behalf of the “Group of 77” developing countries and China, said he supported the Department in promoting and advancing the work of the Organization through its campaigns on issues of importance to the international community, including the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, decolonization, peacekeeping, disarmament, human rights, sustainable development, poverty eradication, climate change, and the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development. Dissemination of information on the formulation of a post-2015 development framework was particularly important. The first ever high-level upcoming meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament and related efforts should be reported to the public.

He said the Group attached importance to the Department’s special information programme on the question of Palestine, as well as to the role and work of the network of United Nations Information Centres. Any decision pertaining to reorganizing the Centres must be made in close consultation with the host countries and take into account the geographical, linguistic and technological characters and needs of different regions. The Group welcomed the offer by some developing countries to host Information Centres at rent-free premises, but such support was no substitute for the full allocation of financial resources. It looked forward to necessary measures to be taken for the establishment of an Information Centre to serve the needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries.

Also welcome was the Department’s initiative to translate press releases into Spanish for the Commission on Population and Development currently under way, he said. However, the Group reiterated that a strategy should be designed and implemented to provide press releases in all official languages in order to achieve full parity, at least for website content. It encouraged the Department to continue digitizing the audiovisual archives. It looked forward to coverage of events commemorating the United Nations’ fiftieth anniversary next year.

JACQUELINE FRANCESCA RIDDY-O’DOWD, a representative of the [European Union](#) Delegation, lauded the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General towards greater multilingualism and development of strategic information campaigns. Multilingualism was at the core of global communications, and a fact of life in the European Union, which had 23 official languages. She lauded the redesign of all six official language versions of the News Centre portal to harmonize their appearance and functionalities, and the expansion of the websites of the General Assembly and the Security Council. She encouraged the Department to make information available on those sites in the official languages.

She also commended the redesign of UNTV and the Department’s efforts to webcast meetings of the Assembly’s six Main Committees, and similarly encouraged it to make the webcast available in the six official languages and to continue cooperating with United Nations Volunteers to augment multilingual content. Efforts to expand social media services in the official languages were welcome, and she encouraged their use within existing resources. She also supported efforts to make documents available through tablets and smart phones.

She noted with interest statistical data revealing that the 63 United Nations Information Centres received 10 million online visitors in 2012, thanks to the availability of information in local languages, particularly of the Rio+20 Conference, as well as the six official languages. Those statistics underscored the very real impact the Department’s message could have on longer-term campaigns, such as human rights and climate change, as well as hotspot issues such as the crisis in Mali and Syria.

The United Nations must speak with one voice, she urged, adding her hope that the new youth envoy would strengthen the Organization’s outreach to young people. She called for greater coordination on outreach strategies similar to the joint efforts under way between the Information Department and those of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Services. The Information Department should continue to make the most strategic, cost-effective use of available resources. In that regard, she lauded the use of web-

conferencing services such as WebEx for cost-effective communications between Headquarters and the Information Centres.

Stressing the need to deliver better and to save funds, she was encouraged by the Department's creative partnerships with broadcasters and news outlets, as well as by the increasing extent to which Member States were linking the United Nations core outreach mission with their own through briefings, seminars and commemorative activities on United Nations priority issues. At the same time, exclusion of civil society from United Nations activities was troubling and counterproductive. Freedom of expression promoted peace, spurred sustainable development, alleviated poverty and made Governments more responsive. Too many journalists worldwide continued to be censored, jailed, kidnapped or killed. Citing data from the Committee to Protect Journalists, she said 979 journalists had been killed since 1992, including 14 this year. The international community must continue working together to end such tragic human rights violations.

GUILLERMO SUAREZ BORGES (Cuba), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that new information technologies had opened a range of possibilities to human communication. Agreeing on the need to capitalize on such opportunities, he said that expanding the use of mobile and Internet platforms promoted the messages and activities of the United Nations "in real time". He recognized the usefulness of developing websites, but was concerned about the increasing digital gap between developed and developing countries. In most of the latter countries, traditional media, such as radio, television, and written press remained a major source of information.

United Nations Radio continued to enhance its thematic scope and services in the six official languages, as well as in Kiswahili and Portuguese, he said, welcoming also its coverage of the Organization's priority issues. The Community also recognized the Department's close cooperation with other United Nations organs, particularly the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support. The Community reaffirmed that the media should respect the international legal framework and cautioned against violations of radio-electronic frequencies.

He called for continued support for the Information Centres through the effective use of resources, as he valued their work of communicating to local audiences in their mother tongues. Despite the Department's quest to achieve multilingualism and language parity, however, much remained to be done. The Secretariat should issue press releases in all official languages. The current unfair situation could be overcome by sharing the limited financial resources through a rotating scheme of languages. Such a scheme should be determined on the basis of the statistics held by the Department and those contained in the Secretary-General's reports. Press releases were sometimes excessively long and contained extensive background information. Modifying their structure would enable their issuance in other languages.

TAKAHIRO NAKAMAE (Japan) lauded the Department's continuous identification of priorities and their strategic and timely communication around the world. Particularly noteworthy were the thematic campaigns on disarmament, peacekeeping operations, counter-terrorism, the Millennium Development Goals, climate change, the UNite to End Violence against Women, human rights and sustainable development. Japan would contribute \$284.87 million to the Information Centre in Tokyo to expand public information activities. He commended the Rio+20 Conference for showcasing leading technological and social innovations for a green economy, and for using the United Nations PaperSmart system in partnership with QuickMobile to reduce the Conference's paper waste. That set an example of environmental friendliness and fiscal soundness for future conferences.

He said that the damage caused by Hurricane Sandy to the printing equipment at Headquarters must be looked in the context of the Organization's long-term goals. He expected the Department to continue exercising fiscal discipline while utilizing effective mechanisms for enhancing communications technology, and to further promote internal communication in collaboration with United Nations agencies and the private sector. That would prevent duplication of work and enable the Department to function better within existing resources.

It was important to promote multilingualism, he said, voicing support for innovative technology, social media tools and partnerships with society, business, and other relevant groups to produce and distribute information in an environmentally friendly, cost-neutral way. He also favoured expansion of the United Nations Academic Impact. During a visit to Japan in February, Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson gave a lecture to students, thanks to coordination between members of the Impact and the Information Centre in Tokyo. He lauded the United Nations partnerships with All Nippon Airways and Lufthansa to provide in-flight programming of United Nations activities, priorities and stories, and encouraged partnerships with more airlines and commercial transit businesses.

The Department's partnership with the entertainment industry was a successful outreach tool, he said, noting that Japan coordinated with the Department to support production of the Japanese film *Human Trust*, which included scenes of debate inside the Assembly hall. The film would premier in the coming months. Concerned that the process of digitalizing United Nations official records was lagging, he called on the Public Information Department to develop an appropriate timeline for completing that work.

GABRIEL ORELLANA ZABALZA ( Guatemala), endorsing the statements of the Group of 77 and China and CELAC, agreed that the Department played a vital role for the United Nations. He acknowledged the value of developing new technologies, and welcomed their use in the United Nations, but said that the digital divide between developed and developing countries was too wide. The lack of access by many countries to new technologies meant traditional media, such as United Nations Television and United Nations Radio, must be maintained. Access to information through traditional media must be encouraged in as many languages as possible as should the introduction of new technologies in developing countries. He encouraged the Department to extend the use of social networks in all official languages.

He said that multilingualism was inherent to the United Nations, which must obtain language parity. The Organization's information architecture must be adapted to appropriately reflect the world's linguistic diversity. He hoped the Department would submit viable alternatives to narrow the linguistic divide. He applauded its decision to implement Assembly resolution 67/124 B, which called for enacting a pilot programme to issue press releases in all the official languages. That was a positive first step that should be expanded. He acknowledged the close collaboration between the Information Department and those of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Services, and encouraged it to continue. He also called for better dissemination of information about peacekeeping activities, particularly in troop-contributing countries. He stressed the importance of freedom of the press and expression, which empowered people and held their Governments to account.

GERTRUDE K. MWAPE ( Zambia) said her Government remained steadfast in its quest to enhance media freedom and timely access to information to ensure that many people could make informed decisions to benefit their lives, their communities and the country at large. The Government supported State-run media to operate independently, without political interference or any hindrance, and encouraged the establishment of private media as well. As a result, the number of privately owned electronic, print and online media had recently increased.

She said that Zambia, like other African countries, would be changing the terrestrial television broadcasting platform from analogue to digital by 2015. To support that move, a multi-sector national task force on digital migration had been established to develop and oversee that process. Lastly, she commended the Committee for remaining a strong and reliable advocate of fundamental freedoms of expression, speech and media and appreciated the pertinent role of the Department in providing up-to-date and accurate information about the work of the United Nations to Member States and the public.

ABDOU SALAM DIALLO ( Senegal) said that the United Nations intrinsically needed an "effective and dynamic" communications system. Mindful of that requirement, his delegation supported the different services provided by the Department, which maintained traditional media outlets through radio, television and print, while being open also to use new communication technologies. However, due to global disparity in technology, traditional media — radio, television and print — still played a key role in many parts of the world.



He said the United Nations benefitted from new and existing technologies, such as broadly targeting audiences through social media, such as Facebook and Twitter to reach young people. The Organization seemed to understand the importance of those developments, he said, highlighting the ability of social media to bring hundreds of thousands of friends together in the United Nations official languages. The primary responsibility to address the digital divide rested with nations but international assistance was also necessary. He also stressed the importance of the information centres worldwide, which facilitated better understanding of the Organization's work in local languages.

Still, he said, language disparity must be corrected. To transmit United Nations messages, language parity was vital, and to that end, necessary resources must be provided. He was concerned about insufficient personnel in interpretation and translation services. In that regard, he welcomed the Organization's cooperation with universities in China, Russia Federation and other countries in facilitating translations of content into United Nations official languages. Senegal also welcomed the Department's consistency in implementing a special programme on the question of Palestine.

MIAN JAHANGIR IQBAL (Pakistan), associating with the Group of 77 and China, said that for the first time in his country's history, one elected Government had completed a full five-year term and was set to hand over power to another. In a few days, Pakistanis would go to polls. The entire world was watching the intense campaigning, and the elections would be overseen by a large number of journalists and foreign observers. Pakistan had been greatly honoured when the Secretary-General had designated 10 November as Malala Day, in honour of Pakistani schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai and her fight for education. Pakistan had taken steps to keep alive her dream of spreading education for all girls. The first \$10 million donated to the Malala Fund set up by Pakistan's Government would be used to support the goal to grant all girls access to school by 2015.

He said that modern technologies and the Internet had opened new connectivity globally and had synergized traditional and new media. Without traditional communications, however, the United Nations message would not reach the world's poorest people. At the same time, new technologies were spreading to a vast array of actors. Touching on several other issues, he urged the Department's continued support for raising awareness of peacekeeping's successes and challenges. Information centres were a vital source of information and helped to bridge the gap between the developed and developing worlds. They should be adequately resourced and their host countries should provide rent-free premises. He welcomed the appointment of a new director for the Islamabad Centre and urged the restoration of full services there. Information should be made available in Urdu, he added.

Freedom of expression must be promoted and protected, but it must not be abused, he said. The Committee had a central role to ensure the United Nations public information policy was used to forge greater respect among people. He welcomed initiatives that helped to train people, and he asked the Department to increase the number of scholarships made available to participants of the Reham al-Farra memorial journalists' fellowship programme. Pakistan was among the countries that enjoyed complete media freedom. At present, it had 84 private independent television channels and 143 FM radio stations.

SERGIO RODRIGUES DOS SANTOS ( Brazil) commended the Portuguese Unit of United Nations Radio for its efforts, noting that, despite limited human and financial resources, partnerships allowed the section to disseminate the Organization's content in more than 16 countries. That covered a broadcast area where about 235 million Portuguese-speaking people lived. In Brazil, United Nations Radio in Portuguese had about 70 partners, helping to spread information about the principles, activities and goals of the United Nations across the country.

He said his Government also supported the information centres, particularly the one in Rio de Janeiro, which had recently undertaken remarkable initiatives, including raising public awareness of the Rio+20 Conference and its follow-up, and creating two Portuguese websites, which were providing news and analysis about the conflicts in Mali and Syria. The Centre had also produced Portuguese content about the "My World Survey" initiative to capture the aims, views and priorities of Brazilian people for the post-

2015 development framework.

He encouraged all States to host an information centre at a rent-free and maintenance-fee-free premise to enable the Department to concentrate its limited funds on outreach and public information activities, and strengthen its information centre network. Brazil welcomed the initial steps taken by the Department and the Angolan Government to create a centre in Luanda. The facility could make an invaluable contribution to disseminating the United Nations message in Africa, particularly in Portuguese-speaking countries. He hoped that the centre would be fully operational this year. Lastly, he encouraged the Department to spare no efforts to spread information about the post-2015 development framework in as many languages as possible, through new and traditional media.

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**For information media • not an official record**