

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION - STATEMENT BY MR. SRINIVAS PRASAD,
MINISTER AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON APRIL 28, 2015

Mr Chairman,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your election as Chairperson (Ambassador Kaha Imnadze of Georgia) for the 37th Session of the Committee of Information. I would also like to complement the Under Secretary General Ms Christina Gallach of Spain for her appointment to the committee of Communications and Public Information. I wish both of you all the success and assure you of my country's continued cooperation and support in the conduct of the business of the committee.

We welcome the report of the Secretary General on the activities of DPI, which provides a summary of the key achievements of the Department in projecting the work of the United Nations all over the world through its three sub programs namely strategic communication services, news services and outreach and knowledge services.

Chairman Sir,

We appreciate UN DPI for its continuous efforts to highlight the achievements of UN in all its aspects. India fully supports the initiatives and awareness programs that are being undertaken by United Nations Information Department to address the issues of post 2015 development framework, decolonization, peacekeeping, disarmament, human rights, sustainable development, poverty eradication & climate change.

The Department's emphasis on using social media to disseminate important UN related news and to counter misinformation about the work of United Nations is a welcome step to broaden the reach of United Nation and will contribute significantly to the overall transparency and accountability of the organization.

Chairman Sir,

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations digital campaigns on the theme "A global contribution for global peace" to acknowledge the contribution of 110 countries to United Nation's Peace Keeping is a step in the right direction. We whole heartedly support the effort and would like to stress that the countries that contribute manpower to UN should have more say in Peacekeeping decision making. The Department's counter terrorism website and efforts need to be more proactive in highlighting and supporting the cause of victims of terror to bring forward to the world the fact that terrorism is the most urgent issue that needs to be addressed.

Chairman Sir,

It is commendable that the UN organized recently a high level thematic debate on building peaceful and inclusive societies and opposing violent extremism. In this context the International Day of Non-Violence adopted by the UN in 2007 which marks, October 2 the birth day of Mahatma Gandhi, is of continuing relevance. We hope that DPI will use this occasion appropriately to highlight the world's commitment to building peaceful, inclusive and non violent societies.

The Department's promotion of the International Day for the eradication of poverty is of special interest to the developing world, especially India which has been implementing a number of special schemes for the upliftment of the poor. Our Prime Minister has launched "Swachhta Abhiyan" in India and the govt is taking special interest in building toilets in all the schools in India. This is in line with a support to the First 'World Toilet Day' endorsed by United Nations and Departments participation and promotion of 'toilets for all' campaign on social media.

Chairman Sir,

The UN information centers located all over the world are the voices of the United Nations to the world. The UNIC at New Delhi has been celebrating "Panchtattva", a series of Indian classical music concerts conceived by renowned classical vocalist Durga Jasraj along with Neeraj Jaitley to highlight the five elements of nature, namely air, water, fire, sky and earth, in order to promote the understanding of climate change and its impact of humans. The conferences for dialogues on sustainable future and spirituality are a unique effort to bring in the concept of sustainable development. Such dialogues advance the Secretary General's vision of choosing the kind of future we want our children and great grandchildren to inherit.

In the light of continuing emphasis on health as a key element of post 2015 development agenda, it is in the fitness of things that UN adopted to celebrate June 21 each year as the International Day of Yoga. As an ancient tradition including both mind and body it represents holistic approach to health and well being. We hope that the International Day of Yoga finds a permanent place in the DPI's annual campaign themes.

India appreciates the consistent efforts of the DPI to strengthen and expand partnerships with institutions of learning under its Academic Impact (UNAI) initiative, in creating a global network of universities and academic institutions.

We would like to conclude by assuring India's full support to the DPI and its endeavor to project the work of the UN and to you as you guide the work of this committee.

Thank you,