

Statement by Mr. David A. Traystman, United States Advisor (30 April 2003)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States congratulates the new Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Chowdhury of Bangladesh, and the other members of the bureau on their election. The United States welcomes Mr. Tharoor's statement of April 28th and commends Mr. Tharoor, his managers, and all members of the Department for their hard work. We pledge our support for the Secretary

We strongly believe that ~~that~~ ^{Mr.} Chairman,

As we all know, it is our responsibility, as representatives of Member States, to engage DPI in a frank and constructive dialogue on its shortcomings, when necessary, while at the same

delegation calls on the Secretariat, during introduction of the report in question later this week, to expand on the reasons given in the Secretary-General's reform report underlying his recommendation that the Dag Hammarskjöld Library should assume responsibility for setting policy and coordinating the work of all UN libraries. The General Assembly, in resolution 57/130 B called on the Secretary-General to include in his comprehensive review the results of the overall review of library services of the United Nations system. Paragraph 35 of this year's reorientation report refers to the "in-depth review" of all UN libraries. My delegation calls on the Department to make the complete report of the in-depth review available to the members of this Committee prior to convening of the open-ended working group during this session.

Mr. Chairman,

The General Assembly, in its decision 57/579, called on the Secretary-General to implement the proposal in his report on "Strengthening the Department of Public Information within the existing capacity, in order to support and enhance the United Nations web site in all official languages of the Organization" (A/57/355) through the "redeployment of resources" within DPI. As my delegation has stated on several occasions, the performance of DPI's web site team is a textbook example of what can be accomplished using existing resources, when dedicated professionals apply the knowledge, commitment, flexibility and creativity necessary to get the job done. We especially commend the web site team for its live webcasting of UN meetings and its timely posting of items on its News Centre page. In this regard, I would like to stress the fact that it is incumbent upon program managers to identify activities that should be eliminated and to shift resources, both staff and funds, to high-priority areas. Working towards parity in the use of the six official languages on the UN web site is a priority activity. DPI managers, as mandated in the budget regulations, should identify and make the case for elimination of lower impact activities thereby freeing-up staff and financial resources for higher-priority activities, such as improving the web site and funding the international radio broadcasting capacity. Program managers and Member States must make the difficult decisions necessary to reprioritize the Department's activities and reprogram staff and financial resources. This is the threshold we must cross. With this in mind, we are pleased to note that the Department plans to redeploy posts to the Department's Website Section to enhance the Section's language capacity; although, as noted in the reorientation report, the redeployment is predicated on the creation of a regional hub in Western Europe.

My delegation would also like to commend the Department for the continued development of its international radio broadcasting capacity. Radio is indeed an important means of communication for the United Nations, particularly in developing countries. The General Assembly, in resolution 56/64B, continued the project for the 2002-2003 biennium subject to further review by this Committee. While this Committee does not deal directly with finances, it does not operate in a vacuum and must be aware of cost implications. It is my delegation's strong belief that with the thorough and sustained prioritization of activities required of program manag5 (86 ()0.6 (t)3.5 (he)0.C BT/P MCID 42 BDC 0.2 g10.02)1.4 (am)1.7 di

project. Barring the Department's success in shifting resources to support this priority activity,
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Committee's information. We must have a breakdown of the estimated costs as a prerequisite for the Committee to decide whether to recommend to the General Assembly that the radio project should be continued during the 2004-2005 biennium.

hijacking a boat: "There are questions about the fairness of such expedited proceedings, which have been closed to the public and observers, and I am calling for transparency." Cuba must ensure that the accused benefit from due process, including the right to an adequate defence."

The third from UNESCO Director-General Matsuura, delivered on April 7th: "I am very concerned about the situation of freedom of expression and press freedom in Cuba. Reports regarding the wave of recent arrests, in which at least 24 journalists and as many as 78 human rights activists have been jailed, were worrying. Promoting the free flow of ideas by word and image is part of UNESCO's constitution. The arrests and subsequent trials represent a serious infringement of the right to freedom of expression and other basic rights recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I urge the Cuban authorities to respect fundamental rights of journalists and other individuals arrested for speaking their mind."

In closing, I would again like to commend all members of the Department for their hard work and to pledge United States support for their continuing efforts to make the Department increasingly more efficient and effective.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman