

Closing Remarks by Mr. Maher Nasser, Acting Head, Department of Public Information (25 April 2012)

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

I would like to start by thanking you for affording me the opportunity to address the Committee as you conclude your general debate for this 34th session. I thank all the delegations for their kind words addressed to me and for commending the work of the Department of Public Information and its staff. I have great appreciation for the support that you have provided to me as the Acting Head of the Department.

I also take this opportunity to thank all those delegates who have expressed their gratitude for the work of Mr. Kiyo Akasaka, the outgoing Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information. In the preceding five years, Mr. Akasaka oversaw DPI's transformation into a modern communications outfit, capable of confronting new and evolving communications challenges. Please be assured that your kind words and best wishes addressed to Mr. Akasaka will be conveyed to him as soon as possible.

I would now like to respond to some of the specific questions and comments that have been raised over the course of the Committee's general debate.

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the United Nations Department of Public Information and all my colleagues, I would like to thank the many delegates — including the distinguished representative of Algeria — for their kind words and support for the Department's communications activities that they continue to carry out on behalf of the United Nations. We

are grateful for this positive feedback, and we will share it with our colleagues in the field, who I am sure will greatly appreciate it. Having served twice in the field, I know how important it is to get feedback.

I would especially like to thank those Member States who continue to provide support to the Information Centres, either through rent-free premises or voluntary contributions and hope that others will be inclined to follow suit.

I thank the distinguished representative of Pakistan for his interest in restoring full services at UNIC Islamabad, and we are looking forward to a new full-time director taking up the post

We also welcome the interest in the Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists Fellowship Programme and are pleased to acknowledge the appreciation expressed by delegates about the programme and the desire to see it expanded. Any expansion of the programme — either in terms of its duration or increase in the number of participants — will obviously have budgetary implications. Since 1981, DPI has sponsored this annual fellowship programme for junior and mid-level broadcasters and journalists from developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

