

Statement by H.E. Mr. V.K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations (27 April 2004)

Mr. Chairman,

We congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau on your re-election.

We also express our appreciation to Under Secretary General Shashi Tharoor for the detailed presentation he made yesterday, giving us a clear idea of the changes in DPI's operations over the past year. His tireless efforts have contributed to a reformed or transformed DPI, today. While targeted goals still remain to be met, we have no doubt that under his leadership, the process will reach its logical culmination. We wish to extend our wholehearted support to him and to his team in these endeavours.

I wish to align my delegation's statement with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Qatar in his capacity as the Chairman of the G-77.

Mr. Chairman,

We have before us the various reports of the Secretary General contained in documents A/AC.198/2004/2 - 7. We commend the Secretariat for these documents that build upon ideas put forward over the past year regarding reform, restructuring and repositioning of the DPI. We broadly support the proposals contained in these documents. For the sake of brevity, however, I will not comment on the details of the proposals but highlight only those areas that are of particular concern to my delegation.

United Nations Information Centres (UNICs)

Given the key role played by UNICs, their proposed reconfiguration to make the most cost-effective use of scarce resources, assumes paramount importance. Last year, we welcomed the proposal to restructure UNICs by collapsing these centres into regional hubs. We were

that the resources freed from the shutting down of the UNICs in Western Europe have not been fully released, somewhat crippling the entire proposal. We wish to register our serious concern in this regard and, hope that wiser counsel prevails when the matter is taken up by the General Assembly later in the year.

The question of extension of the regional hub initiative to the developing countries is a delicate one. While we are in broad agreement with the guidelines and criteria prescribed in the Secretary General's report A/AC.198/2004/3, we would continue to urge that the process be implemented on a case-by-

management; there must simultaneously be emphasis on

cost of a programme and its measurable impact, there are some activities worth promoting for valid programmatic benefits, all of which are not tangible and therefore, cannot be quantified, outside of cost considerations. As the voice of the United Nations, indeed its torch bearer whose activities and benefits touch the four corners of the globe, the DPI plays a fundamental role. It should be able to communicate the UN's work effectively to the world's peoples, in whose name the Organisation was established. We should hope that we do not lose sight of this vital aspect.