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S T A T E M E N T

by Maria V. ZAKHAROVA,
Representative of the Russian Federation
at the 35th session of the UN Committee on Information
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Madam Chairperson,

First of all, let me welcome you and new members of the Bureau of the Committee on Information and wish you every success in your work.

We congratulate Mr. Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal on his appointment as the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information and hope for continuity in his work and wish a successful fulfillment of all tasks. We also thank him for the informative and detailed statement, which has become an important addition to the submitted reports.

The Russian delegation notes with satisfaction the efforts made by the Department of Public Information to promote the strategic approach to the issues of information and communication. We consider as very effective the course for the early identification of priorities in the area of communication activities that reflect the essence of the current UN agenda, the further development of strategic communication and news services, to enhance the role and importance of new

media in addition to the traditional, as well as active outreach work among the target audiences. We hope that these measures will facilitate to the effective and consistent implementation of goals on the improvement of the UN information

balance of both traditional and innovative communication technologies will allow to cover a wide variety of audiences.

Multilingualism in compliance with the parity of all the official languages of the Organization remains one of the main principles of the UN work in the area of information. This is our immutable priority, implementation of which is the key task of the Department. We note the excellent work of the UN official website, which is functioning in six languages and promptly reacts to events that occur in the context of the United Nations agenda. The website continues to be a central element in the information activities of the United Nations.

Speaking about the UN web portal, it should be noted that it has become more informative and comprehensive, the navigation and stylistic uniformity have improved. The measures to ensure the availability to the UN web resource by the people with disabilities, as envisaged by the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, are reasonable and timely. However, it is not enough to achieve the goal of high accessibility user-friendliness of the website, it is also important to upkeep such a high level of service on a regular basis.

The revision of graphical interfaces and content of all language versions of the UN News Centre website were completed. In the world of today's glutted market of information the role of reliable news sources, including the UN, is

the daily informational feed for many in Russia. And main credit in the dissemination of this information belongs to the UN Information Centre in Moscow.

We note with satisfaction the efforts of the Department to improve the UN live and on demand broadcasting by means of internet. We hope that the work in this important area will be continued with a focus on the enhancing the online broadcast and watching the video not only in English and the original languages, but in the other official languages of the Organization as well. We believe it necessary to reflect this idea in the final documents of the Committee.

We salute the creation of the Twitter and Facebook accounts in Russian, which will undoubtedly increase the volume of the Russian-speaking audience, especially among young people. We are sure that it is necessary to listen attentively to the demands of the young audience, to explore and use the potential of social networks. However, we are aware that shifting the focus to the on-line services should not be the ultimate goal, as in the conditions of the limited budget such "reorientation" would inevitably lead to weakening the attention to traditional communication products and the means of information distribution.

Most probably, the role and importance of the "new media", including social networks will continue to grow. While relying in a reasonable way on such technology, the management of the DPI s

and an important mean for communicating and promoting UN activities in the world.

We welcome the efforts of the Russian service of the UN Radio to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the daily 15-minute radio programs. We note its growing presence and popularity in social networks and the emergence of new multimedia products.

At the same time, we would like to be sure that the transition to multi-media tools will not be harmful to the traditional broadcasting format of the 15-minute program. It is also necessary to guarantee uninterrupted and quality UN Radio broadcasting during the transition to new hardware and software. We believe that this approach will be reflected in the final editions of the Committee's documents as well.

Madam Chair,

We are convinced that the priorities in the work of the DPI should be built adequately according to the main objectives and priorities of the United Nations, enshrined in the UN Charter and the Millennium Development Goals, the most important of which are the maintenance of international peace and security, conflicts prevention, non-proliferation of the WMD, the fight against international terrorism, peacekeeping, environment, sustainable development, and the fight against xenophobia and racism. We believe that in 2012 the Department coped with the task of appropriate coverage of the above-named topics.

The Russian Federation is traditionally an active participant and is one of the organizers of DPI's events on World War II. We would like to thank DPI representatives for their participation in the thematic discussion held last November in the United Nations dedicated to the research of little-known pages of the World War II in the territory of the former Soviet Union, occupied by Nazi troops.

Symbolically, the event was held on the day when the world's largest Russian Jewish Museum of Tolerance was unveiled in Moscow.

However, again with deep regret we observe continuing attempts to rewrite and falsify the history of the World War II, to present the Nazi butchers and criminals as some "ideological fighters" and "members of national liberation movements." We hope that the information policy of the UN implemented by the Department in this direction will be proactive. We are trust that heinous cases of glorification of Nazism and neo-Nazism may not be left without reaction.

It is also alarming that the ideas of intolerance and xenophobia, despite the national legislation of many countries, spread fast and infect the minds and souls of the young generation. In this regard, we welcome the Department's efforts to combat this negative trend and to promote the ideals and principles of the United Nations among the youth.

We take note of the continuing productive work of the Department aimed at developing cooperation with educational institutions and the academic community within the Academic Impact global initiative which brings together institutions of higher education with the United Nations for a better support of universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, education, sustainable development and conflict settlement. Such work is worth encouragement. We note with satisfaction that a number of major Russian universities support this initiative.

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Madam Chair,

The Russian Federation whole heartedly welcomes the current practice of the celebration of International Mother Language Day for each of the six official languages of the Organization. Last June Russian Language Day dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the famous film director Andrei Tarkovsky, raised a lot of interest among members of diplomatic missions, Secretariat staff and the creative community. We intend to continue the tradition of promoting Russian language this year too.

coordinator of the Russian translation of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines - WCAG (version 2.0), which won the official status of the World web consortium W3C last December. Currently the Information Center is involved in the preparation of Russia's first comprehensive research on the Russian web sites availability for disabled.

However, in the Secretary General's reports of the 35th session of the Committee, work of the UN Information Center in Moscow is mentioned only twice. We understand that the frequency of citation does not necessarily imply management's assessment of the work of the Centre, however, we think it is justified, that the most meaningful initiatives of the UN Information Center in Moscow - and those are plenty, should be better reflected in the DPI reports. Thus, neither this year, nor in the past, the UN Information Centre in Moscow, even though it has a Facebook account for a long time and is actively using it, was not mentioned among those Centers that use accounts in this particular social network to promote communication messages of the UN.

We would like to make a few comments on the provided reports - constructive criticism never harms. In our opinion, this year, much less attention is paid to the analysis, innovative approaches, and the topical issues. The matter of professional training of the UN staff working on communication overlooked. In other words, it appears that the Organization tied-up in useful, but routine activities may be distracted from looking and thinking about new opportunities that are tangibly manifested in the work of its communication services in recent years. We need a greater emphasis on supporting country-level activities of the Communications Group. After all, without a well-established inter-agency cooperation in the field it is impossible to effectively organize any significant communication project, say nothing about providing the main priority - to have various UN agencies speaking in one voice.

In conclusion, I would like to underscore that the Russian delegation looks forward to further constructive cooperating with the Bureau, the Member States of the Committee and DPI staff to improve the activities of the UN in the information area.

I thank you.