STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY AMB.
SACHA LLORENTTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND
CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE THIRTY SIXTH SESSION OF
THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION (New York, 28 April 2014)

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and
China at the thirty sixth session of the Committee on Information.

2. Let me at the outset to congratulate you, Madam Chairperson, as well as the
other members of the Bureau of the Committee on Information of the United
Nations for leading this process. We also want to thank to the Department of
Public Information for providing us with the zero draft of the outcome document.

3. The Group of 77 and China welcomes Mr. Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, Under
Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information to his second
session of the Committee of Information and thanks him for his comprehensive
and informative presentation on the activities and strategies of the Department of
Public Information (DPI).

Madam Chair,

4. The Group of 77 and China has taken note of the three reports of the
Secretary-General on the activities of the DPI.

5. The work of DPI is to promote a better world and understanding of the work of
the Organization of the United Nations through the radio, television, print,
Internet, video and other media. This is particularly necessary as we work on
elaborating a development framework beyond 2015. To achieve these goals of
positive global awareness of the work of the United Nations, the cooperation and
partnership between the Department and the Committee on Information has
always been the cornerstone of DPI's policies on Public Information. Therefore,
the Group of 77 and China stresses the importance of strengthening this
partnership and calls for its continued improvement as the DPI continues to play
its vital role as a public voice to promote the purposes and image of the United
Nations, specially through social networks which is used to disseminate
important news to communicate the initiation of activities and disseminate
communication material.

Madam Chair,
6. The United Nations is the only universal forum for collective deliberation and decision on issues and concerns faced by the international community. The task of the DPI in reaching out to a global audience with different backgrounds, worldviews and languages is therefore a challenging one. The Group is therefore thankful for all the efforts made by DPI, and is fully supportive of all efforts necessary to reach the widest possible audience through relevant technology and in a timely fashion. It is incumbent on DPI to identify areas of strength and weakness, and to better align products and activities with targeted audiences needs.

Madam Chair,

7. The G77 and China fully supports the work of the DPI in promoting and advancing the work of the Organization through its continued campaigns on issues of importance to the international community. These issues include, among others, the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals which will include the elaboration of the post-2015 development framework, decolonization, peacekeeping, disarmament, human rights, sustainable development, poverty eradication, climate change, and the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

8. Given the importance of the work being undertaken as a follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) to formulate a post-2015 development framework, dissemination of information in this area is particularly important.

9. The Group also emphasizes the importance of the DPI's Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine in raising the international community's awareness of the Question of Palestine, particularly during this year, the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, and in supporting the efforts to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, in accordance with international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

10. In this connection, the Group of 77 and China commends the DPI for its implementation of this important Programme and underscores many of its necessary and useful elements, including the annual training for Palestinian media professionals from the Occupied Palestinian Territory that aims at assisting them in the development of their media skills and capacity. We reiterate the need for these and other activities undertaken by the DPI and call for their further enhancement and reinforcement.

Madam Chair,

11. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the role and work of the Network of United Nations Information Centers (UNICs). The Group supports efforts to strengthen the network of UNICs, and wishes to underline that any
decision pertaining to reorganizing the UNICs must be made in close consultation with the host countries, and take into account the geographical, linguistic and technological characters and needs of different regions.

12. The Group of 77 and China welcomes the support by some developing Member States to offer rent-free premises to host the UNICs while bearing in mind that such support should not be a substitute for the full allocation of financial resources for the Information Centres in the context of the programme budget of the United Nations.

13. The Group of 77 and China looks forward to necessary measures being taken for the establishment of the United Nations Information Centre mandated by resolution A/RES/64/243 of 2009, to serve the purpose of contributing to addressing the need of Portuguese-speaking African countries.

Madam Chair,

14. With the increased use of the internet, and improved connection speeds, particularly in countries where the United Nations official languages are used, the platforms for information dissemination have grown, expanding to include real time internet viewing and streaming options. However, concerns remain, as expressed by the Group in the past, as well as in successive reports of the Secretary-General, that the disparity among the use of the official languages on the UN website has continued to deepen. This is despite the efforts made by the DPI to improve the multilingual contents of the UN website. The Group reiterates its request that content-providing offices in the Secretariat translate all English-language materials and databases into all official languages and make them available on the respective language websites. We reiterate the call contained in previous resolutions for the Department of Public Information to design and implement a strategy, in close collaboration with other departments, to deliver daily press releases in all six official languages through creative schemes, in a cost-neutral manner and in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information. The use of the phrase “creative schemes” in the resolution presented as part of the report of the Committee of Information was deliberate, as we recognize that in times of zero-real increases in budgets, the Department must find ways of doing more with static resources.

15. The Group also emphasizes the importance of continuing the use of traditional media, including both radio and prints, in disseminating the main messages of the United Nations. Traditional media has been and still is the primary means of communication in many developing countries, where Internet coverage is sparse. The Group continues to underscore the importance of the closer co-operation between the DPI and other substantive Departments, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS). In this context, the Group welcomes the
availability of the United Nations peacekeeping website in all six official languages.

16. The Group of 77 and China recognizes that the work of the UN, both past and future, must be preserved properly for future generations. In this context, the Group encourages the DPI to continue to take collaborative action to digitize the audiovisual archives of the UN. It also notes the efforts to deploy the Media Assets Management system, which has been procured to provide for the digital archiving of new content.

Madame Chair,

17. The Group of 77 and China underlines the critical need to address violations of the relevant international rules and regulations that govern Information Technologies and Communications, in particular the social media networks, and the area of broadcasting, including television, radio and satellite broadcasting, in the most appropriate manner.

Madame Chair,

18. The Group of 77 and China welcomes the Resolution 67/292 on Multiculturalism adopted by the General Assembly on July 24, 2013 and emphasizes the importance of making use of all the official languages of the United Nations, ensuring their full and equitable treatment in all the activities of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the use of the five other official languages, and in this regard reaffirms its request that the Secretary-General ensure that the Department has the necessary staffing capacity in all the official languages to undertake all of its activities.

19. Madam Chair, the Group of 77 and China will celebrate this year in Santa Cruz - Bolivia the 50th anniversary of its existence in the United Nations. We look forward to commemorating this event in the spirit of partnership for peace and development with which the Group has worked over the years, with appropriate coverage by the DPI of this milestone for developing countries’ representation at the United Nations.

20. Also Madam Chair the Group requests the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to raise awareness of all General Assembly mandated high-level meetings, and widely disseminate information on the United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa, in September 2014, and continue to promote the follow-up processes from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, as well as the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities, held
on 23 September 2013, and the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, held on 26 September 2013

21. In conclusion, allow me, Madam Chairperson, to reiterate the commitment of the Group to work constructively with other member states in sharing the Committee’s work to a successful conclusion.

I thank you.