Statement by Shinsuke Shimizu  
Minister, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations  
On the 36th Committee on Information  
28 April 2014

Madame Chair,

First, I would like to join the other speakers in thanking Ambassador Lyutha S. Al-Mughairy of Oman for chairing this meeting. I am confident that, through your strong and able leadership, the 36th Session of the Committee will be a productive and efficient one and as always, Japan will extend its full support to you and the bureau of the Committee.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to Mr. Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Public Information (DPI) for delivering the comprehensive statement on the department’s activities, as well as the reports of the Secretary-General. I hope that DPI will continue its important work in enhancing its effectiveness, efficiency and accountability, while actively engaging in public relations activities.

Madame Chair,

DPI is instrumental to the United Nations as the principal department which communicates the work of Organization to the world’s diverse audience. Without such important work, the United Nations would not gain the essential support from the international community on the vast activities and efforts of the Organization. I would like to express Japan’s gratitude to DPI for continuously identifying priorities and strategically communicating them to the world in a prompt and timely manner. I would also like to commend the Strategic Communication Division’s management of field offices and the network of United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) around the world, including UNIC Tokyo, which has been actively pursuing communications support to a number of UN initiatives including the thematic debates at the local level, under the strong leadership of its new director, Ms. Kaoru Nemoto. In this regard, Japan places a particular importance on the work of UNIC Tokyo and will continue its support for its activities, most recently making a voluntary financial contribution of Yen 30,487,000 (USD $300,000.00) to UNIC Tokyo.

Madame Chair,

Japan commends the continued progress of the Capital Master Plan (CMP) to renovate and revitalize the UN Headquarters Complex. As the project nears completion, Japan asks for the support of the Secretariat in replacing the Peace Bell to its original location accordingly. Japan expects that the Secretariat support replacing the permanent exhibition of the remnants of the nuclear explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the General Assembly Hall once renovations are complete. While the artifacts of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki are powerful reminders of the tragic consequences of nuclear weapons, the Peace Bell is an important symbol of peace. These symbols should be replaced near the
General Assembly Hall to serve as a visible daily reminder of the overarching mission of the Organization.

Madame Chair,

The Outreach Division has taken a number of initiatives to increase civil society involvement in the Organization’s activities. The UN Academic Impact (UNAI) Initiative, launched by the Secretary-General in 2010, has experienced growth in many of its member institutions. Japan is currently home to nineteen universities that partake in the UNAI Initiative, and plans to expand this number to 25 academic institutions by the end of this year. Japan looks forward to supporting the UNAI Initiative through informative student briefings that not only introduce the initiative’s projects and activities to university students, but also encourage new Japanese universities and academic institutions to join the UN Academic Impact Initiative.

Japan commends and encourages the United Nations partnerships with private sector. One example is All Nippon Airways (ANA) and Lufthansa, which have provided in-flight programs of UN activities, priorities and stories to their customers. Japan calls on DPI to continue expanding the partnership to include more airlines and effectively increase UN exposure worldwide.

Furthermore, Japan looks forward to cohosting with DPI the 2014 International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East in Tokyo this upcoming June 9th and 10th. This seminar will bring together distinguished panelists from throughout the world to discuss the important role of the media in the Middle East Peace Process. It also highlights the significant role that DPI and the greater UN play in addressing the world’s most pressing issues, fostering a greater understanding of the work of the Organization among the general public, and encouraging peaceful solutions to today’s challenges, with the presence of Mr. Launsky-Tieffenthal, USG of DPI.

Madame Chair,

Looking ahead, the year 2015 will mark the 70th Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, and 2016 will mark the 60th Anniversary of Japan’s involvement in this organization as a member state. Japan looks forward to collaborating with, and supporting the activities of, DPI in marking these important historical milestones.

To conclude, Japan reiterates its commitment to supporting DPI’s activities as it works to provide the world with accurate and timely information on the Organization, and we look forward to participating actively in the discussions held in this session of the Committee on Information.

Thank you.