Statement by Minister Shinsuke Shimizu
Delegation of Japan
On the 37th Committee on Information
27 April 2015

Mr. Chairman,

First, I would like to join the other speakers in thanking you for chairing this meeting. I am confident that, through your strong and able leadership, the 37th Session of the Committee will be a productive and efficient session and as always, Japan will extend its full support to you and the bureau of the Committee.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to Ms. Cristina Gallach on her appointment as Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information. I hope that under her leadership, the Department of Public Information (DPI) will continue its significant work in enhancing its effectiveness, efficiency and accountability, while actively engaging in public relations activities. Furthermore, I thank Ms. Gallach for delivering the comprehensive statement on the department’s activities, as well as the reports of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Chairman,

The primary role of DPI is to increase awareness of the work and activities of the United Nations at the global level. To this end, Japan commends the outreach successfully conducted by DPI through the use of online and printed materials, programs like UN Academic Impact, which focuses on disseminating information about the UN to university students, special events and exhibitions, and the network UN Information Centres (UNICs) throughout the world. Japan understands the importance of multilingualism in all of the activities of DPI in order to improve the effectiveness of outreach in many countries through their own languages. However, my delegation also underscores the importance of ensuring that multilingualism is carried out in a cost neutral manner. Japan hopes to avoid a repeat of 2014, wherein the interpretation of operative paragraph 22 contained in draft resolution B of document A/69/21 by the Secretariat led to an unexpected and unapproved proposed budgetary increase of $13.8 million USD to expand multilingualism.

Mr. Chairman,

DPI is instrumental to the United Nations as the principle department which communicates the work of Organization to the world’s diverse audience. Without such important work being done effectively and efficiently, the United Nations would not gain the essential support necessary 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. In particular, Japan commends DPI in effectively delivering the successful outcome of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held 14-18 March 2015 in Sendai, Japan. 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 under the strong leadership of its Director, Ms. Kaoru Nemoto, continues to provide important communications support to a number of UN initiatives at the local level. As this year marks the 70th Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, and next year marks the 60th anniversary of Japan’s accession to the organization, Japan will expand its support for UNIC Tokyo’s public information activities in Japan. Most recently, the Government of Japan made a voluntary financial contribution of more than ¥40 million JPY (approximately $416,600 USD) to UNIC Tokyo, an increase of nearly ¥10 million JPY compared to last year.

Mr. Chairman,

In connection with the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, Japan will organize a number of events to adequately observe this momentous occasion. First, I would like to highlight that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the United Nations University co-organized the Symposium of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations in Tokyo on 16 March. In this symposium, Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon and Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe gave speeches reflecting on global challenges and Japan’s contributions to the United Nations. With their participation and the cooperation of the United Nations, the symposium was a great success. Also, in tandem with the NPT Conference, the Hiroshima Peace Concert for the Future will take place this coming Thursday, 30 April. Furthermore, a Peace Bell ceremony to celebrate the refurbishment and reopening of the Japanese Garden will be held with the participation of the Secretary-General and President of the General Assembly on 6 May. Japan appreciates the valuable support of DPI in ensuring the success of these events.

Looking ahead, the 60th anniversary of Japan’s accession to this organization will be next year. Japan looks forward to further strengthening its collaboration with, and supporting the activities of, DPI in marking these important historical milestones through a number of cultural events. In conclusion, Japan reiterates its commitment to supporting DPI’s activities, and looks forward to participating actively in the discussions held in this session of the Committee on Information.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.