PORTUGAL

Statement by Ms Cristina Pucarinho
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Committee on Information – 37th Session

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(check against delivery)
Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to convey to Ms. Cristina Gallach our best wishes during her term as Under-Secretary-General for Communication and Public Information and thank for her comprehensive briefing yesterday. Ms. Gallach and her team can count on Portugal’s cooperation in any valuable way. I would also like to congratulate you Mr. Chairman on your election yesterday and ensure you of Portugal’s readiness to cooperate closely and constructively with you, within this Committee.

This brief statement is fully aligned with the one made yesterday by the European Union and I would just like add the some additional remarks in my national capacity.

I would like first like to welcome and thank the Secretary General for the three comprehensive reports on the activities of the Department of Public Information. The activities of the DPI play a fundamental role in disseminating information about the UN to “the Peoples of the United Nations”, honoring the spirit of the Charter. Therefore, we welcome and encourage the efforts of the DPI, especially those involving the strengthening of multilingualism, a core principle in the activities of the DPI.

Mr. Chairman,

Portuguese is a common language of around 250 million people making it one of the world’s most spoken languages and the most spoken language in the Southern hemisphere. It is official language of nine countries, spread in 4 continents and in one Chinese Special Administrative Region. In this context, Portugal welcomes the efforts of the DPI in working with Portuguese and strongly encourages its further use by the DPI.

We recognize and support the important work of the UN Information Centers. In this regard, we are pleased to stress the far reaching role of the United Nations
Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, which provides services in 13 languages, including Portuguese, as well as the UN Information Centre based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Nonetheless, Portugal believes that the significant expression of the Portuguese language – especially in Africa – and the goals of the DPI, would justify that the long-awaited information centre operating in Portuguese, to be established in Africa, becomes a reality sooner than later.

We highly value the role of the Portuguese unit of the UN Radio, which broadcasts daily on UN activities of special interest to the Portuguese Speaking countries. Its growing dynamic is evident when we consider that in 2014 only, it engaged in more than 20 new partnership agreements, including with a Portuguese television news channel. We therefore encourage the DPI to continue to enhance synergies between the Portuguese-speaking world and UN Radio Unit in Portuguese and we definitely stand ready to cooperate with DPI also in this regard.

I would further like to welcome the work of the DPI’s NGO Resource Centre in making available some print and digital publications from the UN Secretariat, programmes and specialized agencies in Portuguese. This is an important step as the information should reach the widest possible universe of people and especially make sure that it reaches the main concerned audiences. The continuing work to grant the full version in Portuguese of the UNIOGBIS - United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guiné-Bissau – website provides a good example in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

Portuguese has one of the highest growth rates in the internet, accounting to be the second most used language in internet, notably within the social networks. It would be important the DPI reflects this reality and considers promoting more projects and activities in digital formats in Portuguese, alongside the use of the traditional means of information and communication that still remain the most used worldwide.
Mr. Chairman,

Just a final remark to reiterate Portugal’s continued support to DPI’s work and our willingness to fully and constructively cooperate during this 37th session of the Committee on Information.

I Thank you.