



## BANGLADESH

Statement under Agenda Item 57: *Question relating to Information* at the Fourth Committee of the 72st Session of the UN General Assembly on Wednesday, 18 October 2017, Conference Room 4

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Mr. Chairman,

My delegation congratulates Ms. Alison Smale on her appointment as Under-Secretary General for Global Communications. We thank her for the informative briefing on the activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI).

We take note of the report of the Committee of Information and the report of the Secretary General submitted under this agenda item. We wish to highlight some areas of interest where our delegation attaches importance to DPI's role and functions:

### **Humanitarian issues:**

DPI continues to provide objective, evidence-based information on unfolding humanitarian crises around the world based on inputs from relevant UN entities.

We appreciate DPI's role in highlighting the recent unprecedented exodus of forcibly displaced people from Myanmar's Rakhine State towards Bangladesh, among them over 500,000 Rohingya. Regrettably, the influx of the Rohingya continues unabated on a daily basis, and now reportedly from further interior in the Rakhine State. It is likely that the international media's attention would gradually shift away from this human catastrophe. In view of the enormity of the challenges involved and for keeping all Member States duly informed about the actual situation, we would urge DPI to continue focusing on this issue. While UN humanitarian agencies are active on the ground in Bangladesh, the overriding priority for the UN and the international community would be to prevail upon and engage with the Myanmar authorities for

creating a situation in Rakhine State that is conducive to the safe, secure, voluntary and sustainable return of the forcibly displaced to their original places of residence in Myanmar.

**Peace and security:**

The comprehensive goal and process of 'sustaining peace' is critical for the Secretary General's prevention agenda and for calibrating the thrust of his reform initiatives in the peace and security pillar. While much work is being done in the academic circle on 'sustaining peace', there is potential for DPI to play a catalytic role in further disseminating this notion among a wider audience in clear, understandable terms.

We encourage DPI to remain engaged with efforts to promote a 'Culture of Peace', including on its potential interface with 'sustaining peace'.

**Peacekeeping:**

UN peacekeeping operations is the UN's flagship activity, and particularly relevant for the work of this Committee. In order to serve some vested interest, peacekeeping is often being subject to misinformation and misplaced expectations. It must remain an abiding priority for DPI to project and promote objective, fact-based information on UN peacekeeping missions and the difficult challenges they face in complex, volatile and resource-constrained environments. We particularly seek DPI's enhanced contribution to advocacy for the safety and security of UN peacekeepers and humanitarian personnel serving in risk environments.

We thank the UN Information Office in Dhaka for partnering with our authorities in observing the International Day of UN Peacekeepers on 24 May 2017 in the presence of our Hon'ble President and Hon'ble Prime Minister.

**Counter-Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism:**

We believe DPI can effectively contribute to strategic communications to counter and defeat violent narratives online by promoting the UN values and principles, including through contents and messages targeted at a young audience globally.

We recommend DPI to work in partnership with the newly established Office of Counter-Terrorism to promote the comprehensive implementation of the Global

Counter-Terrorism Strategy, including the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

**Migration:**

We look forward to DPI's value-added contributions during our ongoing work of developing a Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration. Bangladesh underscores the importance of forging global public opinion in favour of a sound and comprehensive framework to govern and manage international migration.

We appreciate DPI's support to International Organization for Migration (IOM) for organising the Global Migration Film Festival in Dhaka and few other major cities around the world last year.

**Development issues:**

We encourage DPI to build on its relevant, visible and impact-oriented work on promoting the 2030 Agenda towards forging meaningful global partnerships for achieving the SDGs. One way of optimizing DPI's resources would be to highlight success stories as well as narratives that focus on existing and emerging challenges. We recommend that DPI continue to highlight the structural challenges faced by the Least Developed Countries, and stress the importance of fulfilling international commitments to addressing those challenges.

DPI has a critical role to play in present compelling case stories on climate change impact, as it had done in the aftermath of a number of deadly natural calamities this year including the unprecedented flooding in South Asia. DPI must continue to use its advocacy role in promoting adherence to and implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

**Multilingualism:**

My delegation reiterates its sincere thanks to DPI and DGACM for their excellent support in organizing the special event to observe the International Mother Language Day (IMLD) on 21 February 2017 for the first time at the UN Headquarters. We pledge our support for organizing this event in the coming years.

We look forward to DPI's sustained efforts in promoting multilingualism, building on the progress made in recent times. Our Government would like to explore opportunities for supporting DPI in further disseminating UN values and principles in our local languages.

**Mr. Chairman,**

DPI should continue to explore further diversified information outlets, including effective use of social as well as traditional media, to maximize its outreach efforts. We recognise the need for enhanced and predictable flow of resources for DPI to carry out its multi-dimensional work in an efficient and effective manner.

To conclude, Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by Ecuador on behalf of G77 and China.

I thank you.