

**STATEMENT BY MIAN JAHANGIR IQBAL AT THE 33RD SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF COI
(APRIL 27 – MAY 6, 2011)**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of Pakistan delegation, I would like to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau, on assumption of their offices. It is a matter of great pleasure for me to see you as the Chair of this important Committee and my delegation is confident that under your able guidance, this Committee will achieve optimum results. I also take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciations for your predecessor's excellent work last year.

2. We would also like to commend the valuable work done by the Department of Public Information (DPI), which has worked strenuously to carry out its mandate.

3. We align ourselves with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

4. We have heard with great interest the statement made by the Under Secretary General for Communications and Public Information, Mr. Kiyo Akasaka. It gives Member States a comprehensive account of the activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI).

Mr. Chairman,

5. Before I proceed further, let me thank DPI for projecting in a comprehensive manner the unprecedented destruction

7. Pakistan joined the international condemnation of the sacrilegious of burning the holy Quran. As stated by our Permanent Representative in his letter to the UN Secretary General, "While this reprehensible act is the work of extremists and is evidently designed to provoke dissent and discord among communities and peoples across the world, such sacrilegious acts also go against the very concept of inter-faith harmony and threaten the multicultural fabric of the societies and the brotherhood of the United Nations".

Mr. Chairman,

8. In our view, communications should be used to bridge differences and promote intercultural and inter-faith harmony that is basic to coexistence of mankind. The COI has a central role in ensuring that the UN public information policies help forge greater harmony and respect among peoples belonging to various societies, cultures and religions. We urge the DPI

12. We appreciate DPI's efforts for achieving parity among official languages of the UN. We also, welcome the initiative of the UN Information Centers for publication of information materials and translation of important documents into languages other than the official languages of the UN, as well as developing websites in local languages. We urge DPI to continue extending support to this important endeavor.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The importance of accurate, objective and balanced news and information services in print, radio, television and over the Internet cannot be overemphasized. In this regard, we call for continued strengthening of technology, multilingualism and partnerships. We support the continuation of outreach to civil society; efforts to improve accessibility of library services; and a wide range of other initiatives. We call for the strengthening of training programmes for media persons from the developing countries by ensuring provision of professional training facilities under the International programme for the Development of Communications of UNESCO to correct the imbalance in the world information order. We fully support the Dag Hammarskjold Memorial Scholarship Fund for journalists from the developing countries to study and cover the annual sessions of the UN General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

14. The Democratic Government of Pakistan is committed to freedom of expression and free media. Pakistan has created an enabling environment for private media which have registered unprecedented growth.

Mr. Chairman,

15. We expect the Secretariat to accede to Member States' long-standing request for additional passes to press officers during the high-level segment of the General Assembly. Favourable action in this regard would greatly enhance the efficiency and comprehensiveness of coverage.

Mr. Chairman,

16. In conclusion, we reiterate our support to the Department Of Public Information and its endeavours to effectively carry out its mandate. We assure you of our fullest cooperation in facilitating the Committee's work.

Thank you.