

EXTERNAL STUDY

**UNITED NATIONS MEDIA STRATEGY
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING
OPERATIONS**

CASE STUDY: UN INTERIM ADMINISTRATION MISSION IN KOSOVO

Shira Loewenberg

August 2006*

* This paper is based on research completed in September 2005; the interviewing process continued through January 2006. This study does not reflect subsequent developments.



***Shira Loewenberg** is a consultant to non-governmental organizations. She was an information officer with two United Nations peacekeeping missions, UNCRO and UNTAES, and has a master's degree in International Affairs from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.*

This paper reflects the personal views of the author and does not necessarily represent the policies of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations or of the United Nations.

Please send your comments on this paper to the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section by e-mail at dpko-pbpuwebmaster@un.org.

UNITED NATIONS MEDIA STRATEGY: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An independent and unbiased media is integral to creating conditions of stability in a society emerging from violent conflict. Despite this general recognition, information initiatives in peace operations often lack adequate strategic planning and resources.

Much has been written about the media¹ as an instrument of war, intolerance, hatred, and violence. Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia are often cited as countries where gross bias and abuse of the media contributed to ethnic violence and xenophobia. Less has been researched about the positive role the media can play in conflict resolution and peace building. While there is an implicit understanding that a free and accurate media is important to democratization and sustaining democratic institutions, there is little practical acknowledgement amongst the large international organizations and governments involved in peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions that an independent and unbiased media is an integral part of creating any measure of stability and peace in societies emerging from violent conflict. As a result, information efforts are often a second-thought, and not allocated the warranted strategic planning and resources.

This paper addresses the organizational structures that determine UN mission information strategies and policies...

This paper looks at the structure and functioning of public information departments in peacekeeping operations, and at the relationship between the departments and the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Information (DPI) at Headquarters in New York. While recognizing that information strategies vary from one mission to another and are dependent on individual mission mandates, the paper addresses the organizational structures that determine mission information strategies and

¹ “Media” primarily refers to newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet. One should note that “public information” may also include other forms of communication such as street theater, posters, and songs. The choice in this paper to focus on television and radio is not intended to imply their value over other UN media communication methods, but merely a decision to allow a more focused examination of two mediums employed by UNMIK DPI that have relevance and implications on broader UN field mission communications issues.

...and takes as a case study the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Lessons may be extrapolated from UNMIK's information strategies and performance that are relevant to UN missions elsewhere in the world and to communication strategies in post-conflict environments in general.

UN-produced information frequently serves as the only reliable source of information in a UN mission area.

A mission mandate rarely includes any explicit statement regarding the media...

policies general to all missions. The paper takes as a case study the role of the public information department in the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), with a particular focus on public outreach by UNMIK's radio and television units.²

Recognizing that each peace mission is different in scope and mandate, and that Kosovo is characterized by an unusual degree of UN control and authority, the paper contends that lessons may nevertheless be extrapolated from the UNMIK experience that are relevant to UN missions elsewhere in the world and to communication strategies in post-conflict environments in general. In reviewing UNMIK's information capacity and policies 1999-2005, the paper reflects on the strengths and weaknesses of the mission's information operations, evaluates the strategies implemented, and makes conclusions and recommendations for improvement.

THE UN SYSTEM

Frequently in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, UN-produced information serves as the only reliable source of information for the local population. UN information serves not only as a source of news, but also as the standard of accuracy and professionalism that local media should emulate. UN information also reflects on the mission itself, and when it is not credible, the mission as a whole suffers from public distrust and, in some cases, outright hostility.

A mission mandate rarely includes any explicit statement regarding media, and most agreements regarding use of radio frequencies and broadcast over government or independent stations are negotiated once the mission is on-

² The primary roles of UN information initiatives in a mission area are broadly defined as 1) to inform and facilitate international media coverage of the UN mission, and keep journalists abreast of political, military, and humanitarian developments in the mission area; 2) to disseminate information about the UN mandate, policy, and actions to the local population; and 3) to inform UN personnel internally about mission-relevant issues and events. This paper looks primarily at the second role, as well as the ways in which UNMIK DPI impacted local media outlets in support of UN goals.

...and the distribution and broadcasting of UN information. Most agreements regarding the use of radio frequencies and broadcast over government or independent radio and television stations are negotiated once the mission is already in operation.

the-ground. In some cases, this may prove to be problematic, as in the UN mission in the former Yugoslavia where discretion to broadcast UN-produced television and radio programmes resided with the biased and ethnically-aligned “independent” and politically-affiliated broadcasters. Another example is the peacekeeping mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, UNMEE, which was effectively stymied by the Eritrean government from broadcasting over the airwaves for a period of approximately six months.³ Radio programmes were made available on the UNMEE web site, but these were accessible to only a very small minority of the Eritrean public. Additional problems regarding government vetting of the UN-produced magazine, too, arose with Eritrea in 2004, causing magazine publication to cease for a number of months until the situation was resolved through negotiation.

The Brahimi Report was convened to assess the UN’s ability to conduct peace operations effectively.

In March 2000, the Panel on the United Nations Peace Operations was convened to assess the UN’s ability to conduct peace operations effectively. After four months of intensive interviewing, analysis, discussion and debate, the panel offered its report and recommendations. Known as the “Brahimi Report,” after the name of the Chairman of the panel, Lakhdar Brahimi, it represents one in a series of recommended reforms for the UN system.

It called public information and communications an operational necessity, and called for an increase in resources available to public information in the field.

Among the many elements of peacekeeping operations that the report addresses is public information and communications, calling it an “operational necessity”.⁴ It points to the importance of credible information to dispel rumour, counter disinformation and secure the cooperation of local populations. The report states that it is essential that every peace operation formulate public information campaign strategies, and that such strategies and the personnel required to implement them be included among the first deployments to a new mission.⁵ The report further calls for an increase in the resources available to

³ October 2001 to April 2002.

⁴ United Nations General Assembly, Security Council, “Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects,” A/55/3-5-S/2000/809, (August 21, 2000) 25, par.146.

⁵ Ibid.

public information in the field, and cites that at the time of writing, information budgets were frequently less than 1% of a mission's total operating budget.⁶

The Brahimi Report pointed to a structural problem inherent in the established line of responsibility for public information in peace operation: authority rests with the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO) and not with the Department of Public Information (DPI).

The Brahimi Report describes a structural problem inherent in the established line of responsibility for public information components in peace operations. “The most concentrated responsibility for mission-related public information rests with the Office of the Spokesman of the Secretary General, and the respective spokespersons and public information offices in the missions themselves.” It is important to note that the mission staff members are part of the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), and not part of the Department of Public Information (DPI) which is headed by the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information. A senior UN official with that office characterized the relationship between DPI and a mission as one of support, primarily consisting of an initial information assessment of needs prior to the mission being set up. When a peacekeeping mission is under consideration, the initial needs assessment team usually includes a DPI officer who helps to determine the technical and staffing needs of the mission's information component and advises on the scope of public outreach—whether or not the mission will include a television unit, for example. Once a mission is established, however, the workings of the field information office have no formal line relationship with DPI and report to the mission Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and to DPKO, not to DPI. Susan Manuel, the head of DPI's Peace and Security Section, elaborated on this point, confirming that DPI has neither authority nor official political influence over field missions, but does offer guidance and other forms of support including maintaining mission websites, and offering occasional trainings and advice.

DPI does, however, offer guidance and other forms of support to field missions.

Despite improvements in the coordination between DPI and DPKO in the last decade, DPKO's attitude towards information and communication has

⁶ Ibid., 26, par. 149.

DPKO's attitude towards public information has been characterized as dismissive in the past, regarding it as an "add-on" not crucial to a mission's success.

The Peace and Security section of DPI was created as a conduit between DPI and DPKO. The section has inadequate capacity and authority to create policy or strategy for mission public information functions in the field, other than on an ad hoc basis...

been characterized as dismissive; public information is often regarded as an “add-on”, not crucial to a mission’s success. In the last two to three years, however, the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information has been regularly consulted by DPKO on recruiting and staffing of missions’ information units, which is certainly an improvement over not doing so, but hiring decisions and ultimate authority over the unit remains with DPKO.

As a result of the 2002 Report of the SG “Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change,”⁷ many improvements in the organization and function of DPI were made including the formation of a Strategic Communications Division to coordinate efforts between DPI and other Secretariat departments. One of the Division’s sections is devoted to peace and security, and it is this section that serves as the conduit between DPI and DPKO. The section produces publications and web site content about and in support of peace operations, and provides other services to a mission as requested. The section primarily deals with international media external to the mission area, such as the Bangladeshi media in regard to the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) where Bangladeshi troops are part of the peacekeeping force, for example. The Brahimi Report stated that the section had inadequate capacity to create policy or strategy for mission public information functions in the field, other than on an ad hoc basis.⁸ At the time of the Brahimi Report, there were a staff of four in the Peace and Security Section of DPI. Today, with 18 missions running, the number of professional staff has grown to only seven. In regard to structure and line of responsibility, the report advises that a unit of operational planning and support of public information should be established either within DPKO or within a new Peace and Security Information Service in DPI reporting directly to the Under-Secretary-General for

⁷ United Nations General Assembly, “Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change,” Report of the Secretary-General, A/57/387, September 9, 2002.

⁸ United Nations General Assembly, Security Council, “Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects,” A/55/3-5-S/2000/809, August 21, 2000, p.40, par. 235.

Communication and Public Information.⁹ Neither suggestion has been undertaken. Consequently, problems related to a lack of oversight and participation by HQ in the formulation of effective information strategies for peace operations remain.

...and does not offer sustained advice and strategy design unless specifically requested to do so by DPKO.

Although the staff of the Peace and Security Section may be the best qualified to offer sustained advice and strategy design for information initiatives in peace operations—five of the professionals have an accumulated total of more than 20 years of peacekeeping experience—they currently lack the authority to provide such guidance or intervention unless specifically requested to do so by DPKO. DPI is called in to provide assistance only when there is an information-related problem in a mission.¹⁰

Leadership of a mission plays a significant role in the effectiveness of a mission's information strategy and performance.

Leadership of a mission plays an enormously significant role in influencing the effectiveness of a mission's information capacity.¹¹ The biggest influence on how information works in a mission, an official with the Office of the Under-Secretary-General of Communications and Information stated, is whether or not the SRSG “gets it”—that is, the need for an information strategy that reinforces the mandate, and the need for the mission to establish its credibility using its own media capacity as well as local and international media outlets. In the last few years, DPI has made an effort to educate SRSGs on the importance of the mission's transparency with the local population and

⁹ Ibid., 40, par. 238.

¹⁰ The current head of the Peace and Security Section, Susan Manuel, related the following anecdote to illustrate the circumstances under which her department might be called upon to intercede and influence a mission's communication strategy and practices. The case involved the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). During a spate of violence involving rioting and protests against UN troops, perhaps because of allegations of sexual misconduct on the part of UN peacekeepers, the mission's radio station continued to play music throughout the day and made no mention of the violence, in which several people were killed. DPI was requested to intercede with the SRSG of the mission in order to press upon him the importance of establishing and maintaining credibility with the population via the UN news service. He was encouraged to direct UNOCI radio to provide coverage and information about such news-worthy events in his mission area, regardless of the implications made about the UN and its peacekeepers. Ignoring unpleasant but significant news—even when the news does not reflect well on the UN—does little to increase trust and confidence in the mission as a whole. This notion of credibility will be discussed later in the context of UNMIK television and radio.

¹¹ This point was made repeatedly, and by virtually every UN officer interviewed for this paper.

internationally, and of the role of media in communicating the mission's mandate, goals, and operations. This effort concentrates on the international media and how the UN and its work are perceived by the member states, but also includes guidance on effective communication strategy for the population within a mission area.

Although the Head of Mission and Chief of Public Information are advised to prepare and carry out a public information strategy in close coordination with other UN actors in the mission area and in consultation with UN headquarters, there is little indication that this is a common practice in the field.

A brochure published by DPI in 2004 suggests that “The Head of Mission should direct the Chief of Public Information to prepare and carry out a comprehensive and integrated public information strategy for the mission in close coordination with other UN actors in the mission area which would be calibrated to each distinct phase in the life of the mission. The Head of Mission or the Chief of Public Information should ensure that UN headquarters is consulted on the information strategy and its implementation.”¹² Research on UNMIK and interviews with UN officers who served on several peacekeeping missions gave little indication that this was a common practice in the field. Indeed, if there was an overarching strategy to their activities, they were, but for the case where the mandate stipulated the organization and monitoring of elections, largely unaware of an information strategy, much less of close coordination towards a common communications goal with other actors in the mission area.¹³

SRSGs have varying awareness and appreciation of the importance of public information to the success of a mission.

Given that the SRSG is frequently a political appointment, and understanding that different SRSGs have varying awareness and appreciation of the role of information, the matching of an SRSG to a mission is often the luck of the draw. Some SRSGs use media effectively, and others do not. Certainly, the Chief of Public Information also has a great deal to do with the staffing of the information unit and the scope, content and strategy of mission-produced media

¹² United Nations Department of Information, “Public Information and Media Relations in United Nations Peace Operations: Guidance to Special Representatives of the secretary-General,” DPI/2354, September 2004.

¹³ It appears that the existence of an information strategy, officially, has little to do with the reality and understanding of the existence of such a strategy by those UN officers responsible for implementing it in the field.

content and outreach, but this role, too, is highly subject to personality. This point will be illustrated later with examples from UNMIK.

The practice of bringing up information issues to DPKO headquarters only in the event of a problem makes it probable that changes made to a mission's information strategy are likely to be reactive rather than proactive.

The daily reports that come from the mission to HQ do not regularly include any information or assessment of the mission's media plan, strategy, or programmes. These subjects are likely to be included only in the event of a problem. The practice of bringing up information issues to DPKO only in the event of a problem makes it probable that changes in strategy and policy are likely to be implemented too late—that is, once the damage is done. The result is that information strategy becomes reactive rather than proactive, and the information unit and mission itself become one step (or more) behind the changing political and social tides in a mission area.

UNMIK DPI staff were neither required nor requested to submit regular reports of their units' activities to HQ, nor to provide explanations for their programming policy, broadcast/distribution system or programme content to HQ or to anyone in the mission.

The reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on individual mission operations, released at intervals throughout the year, include a paragraph or two on the mission's information initiatives and may include a summary of the media climate in the mission area. UNMIK mission staff producing or in charge of radio and television production said that they were never tasked with writing regular reports of their units' activities, nor with providing explanations for their programming policy, broadcast/distribution system or programme content to HQ or to anyone in the mission. The only exception would be in the case of a complaint or problem arising for which a report may be required.

There is little oversight of a mission's information strategy and production coming from HQ once a mission is up-and-running.

Through the study of the UN peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, and in interviews about the mission and more generally about the UN structure and relationship between peace operations and UN Headquarter, it became evident that there is little direction or oversight to a mission's information strategy and production coming from HQ once a mission is up-and-running, whether because of lack of interest on the part of DPKO, lack of authority on the part of DPI, or the belief that a mission's individual units function best when reporting only to the mission leadership and not to HQ. This last point is the most compelling, for it is reasonable to assume that a competent mission staff is best qualified to

make decisions concerning the mission and its operations. It is not uncommon, however, for such required competency to be lacking, and it is in those particular cases where one would wish for more forceful HQ oversight.

A carefully considered media strategy—one that is appropriate to the mandate and flexible enough to change with the political environment, and one that is adequately communicated to the mission information staff charged with implementation—is vital to establishing a realistic understanding of the mission mandate amongst the local population, and to establishing the UN’s credibility.

There are always tensions between the field and HQ, with field operations complaining that HQ does not give enough support, or makes decisions without any understanding of on-the-ground realities; and HQ responding that it is subject to its own pressures in the decision-making process—pressures unappreciated or unknown in the field. This surely is often true, yet in terms of information, it does not resolve the absence of direction and information strategy in some peacekeeping missions. Left to function without strong direction from HQ, some information departments or units therein have been reduced to irrelevancy—to fulfilling, for example, little more than archival roles.¹⁴ Information officers in a mission may be ineffective in cultivating relationships with local journalists and facilitating coverage of UN issues by the local media.¹⁵ A carefully considered media strategy—one that is not only appropriate to the mandate, but is also flexible enough to change with the political environment—and one that is adequately communicated to the UN information staff charged with implementing the strategy by producing and/or disseminating information materials—is vital to establishing a realistic understanding of the mission mandate amongst the local population, and to establishing the UN’s credibility. By subjecting an information department’s success to the leadership of one or two positions filled by people who may or may not be the best qualified for their station of authority, the UN inevitably limits the possibilities for successful mission communications, and ultimately, the mission’s success. Such cases are frequent enough to raise the question of whether or not a more sustained HQ supervisory and/or support role should be considered for all missions.

¹⁴ UNMIK DPI under SRSG Jessen-Petersen was cited by more than one interviewee as an example. Interviewees mentioning experiences with DPI in other UN missions such as post-election UNTAES and UNMIBH indicated that this is not an isolated example.

¹⁵ MINUSTAH, the UN mission in Haiti, was given as an example by one interviewee.

The Division of Peace and Security readily acknowledges some problems resulting from a lack of HQ oversight and guidance on information strategy and initiatives. It has made several improvements to address issues within its control, including conferences and trainings for information staff.

The Division of Peace and Security readily acknowledges some problems resulting from a lack of HQ oversight and guidance on information strategy and initiatives. It has made several improvements to address issues within its control. This year it held its second annual conference in Brindisi, Italy, for public information heads, spokesperson, press officers and staff responsible for video, photo and radio and web production in peacekeeping operations. Trainings and workshops on issues such as mission planning, working together with UN military, and communication strategies to deal with crisis situations were held. Sessions were led by officers from various HQ departments and by experienced field officers; case studies were referred to where appropriate. Such conferences, along with annual meetings of chiefs of public information units, are positive steps towards providing the tools and resources necessary for professional improvements in information operations in the field. Programmes giving staff support and training should be encouraged and sustained.

The Division of Peace and Security is keenly aware of the lack of its own authority, and of its limited staff and budget resources.

The Division of Peace and Security is keenly aware of the lack of its own authority, and of its limited staff and budget resources. There is some frustration amongst Division personnel who have ideas about how information operations could be more effectively run, but have themselves no authority to impose those ideas upon the DPKO mission staff. For example, it may be suggested that a mission spokesperson organize a regular monthly breakfast for local journalists and the SRSG to speak informally about mission issues—a technique used successfully in the past as a way of improving the UN image and communications between the mission and the local population, yet if the spokesperson does not take the initiative to do so, DPI has no way of forcing him/her to do so.

In a DPI March 2005 draft version of standard operating procedures for public information offices in the field,¹⁶ the role of an information unit, modules for staffing, and an information “start-up kit” are thoroughly outlined. The

¹⁶ United Nations, “Public Information Support: Standard operating procedures and deployment capabilities for public information offices in the field,” Internal draft document not for distribution, Version 2.0, March 11, 2005.

DPI has updated its standard operating procedures for public information offices in the field.

document is a clear and informative guide to the identities of key players in the planning and setting up of public information components in the field, the division of principle responsibilities between DPKO and DPI, the general function of a UN mission public information department and descriptions of individual units and staff positions, and more. It is an update to a document published in 1997 by DPKO in consultation with DPI, and is on most counts a very thorough guide to standard operating procedures; albeit, by definition, general.

The value of the standard operating procedures document lies mainly in the technical and logistical outlines of mission implementation and phase-out. It may, however, be criticized for inadequately addressing the formulation of strategy after the initial “enabling team” and “early deployment” phases of operation.

The value of the document lies mainly in the technical and logistical outlines of the phased process of mission implementation and phase-out. It can be criticized for inadequately addressing the minutia of information operations, including the formulation of strategy past the “enabling team” and “early deployment” phases of a mission going up to the fourth week of mission operations. This may well be explained, however, by the fact that DPI’s influence is limited to these early phases, and, as previously stated, does not include structural authority over mission information strategy and operations. The document includes statements indicating a responsibility to monitor media strategy and make adjustments accordingly, but provides no further explanation of who is to do this or how.¹⁷ Without the authority to enforce or monitor the implementation of any of the operational suggestions included in the standard operating procedures, the document may be disregarded by mission staff as irrelevant, or at best, unnecessary advice. As a senior HQ-DPI official commented, “who knows if anyone reads it anyway?”

¹⁷ A more elaborated discussion of the crucial importance of an evaluative method to information operations appears later in this paper.

THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM ADMINISTRATION MISSION IN KOSOVO

This paper addresses the role, credibility, and overall effectiveness of UNMIK information in the mission area within the context of the overall media situation in Kosovo.

The establishment of UNMIK's information department, and UNMIK-produced television and radio in particular, fits into a rather complicated media situation that existed in Kosovo as of June 1999. It is not within the scope of this paper to address all the issues associated with establishing a free and independent media in Kosovo—a territory administered by the UN—or in any post-conflict environment, for they encompass matters pertaining to international media law, democracy-building, human rights, and security. Nevertheless, it is useful to have a general grasp of the media situation in Kosovo in order to understand the role of UNMIK-produced information in its given context and climate, and to understand the authority granted by the mission mandate to UNMIK in regard to the establishment of a free and independent local media, and ensuring a secure environment for all residents.¹⁸ This paper addresses the role of UNMIK information in the mission area, and its credibility and overall effectiveness in achieving the mission's goals.

In the decade before 1999, Albanian-language newspapers, television and radio were strictly limited by the Serbian authorities in Belgrade.

In the decade before 1999, Albanian-language newspapers and television and radio were strictly limited by the Serbian authorities in Belgrade. The rise of Slobodan Milošević to power in 1989 led to an escalation of the repression of Albanian media in the province. An Albanian-language service on the provincial broadcaster, *Radio-Television Priština (RTP)* was suppressed in 1990, and the half-hour news programme that remained was broadcast from Belgrade and therefore had little credibility among Kosovo's Albanian population. Until the late 1990s there was no private-sector Albanian broadcasting; in late 1993 Albanians in Kosovo began watching the daily two-hour broadcast of State Albanian TV on satellite television. The ubiquity of satellite dishes in Kosovo today has been attributed to this time. The Albanian-language radio stations *Koha* and *Radio 21* were permitted to broadcast in the late 1990s, and in 1997 the independent Albanian news daily *Koha Ditore* was founded. Despite—or due to—frequent

¹⁸ Security is relevant to media issues such as the monitoring of and legislation against hate-speech, and the UN mandate's commitment to peaceful reconciliation between ethnic groups.

harassment and fines by the Milosević regime, the stations and newspaper gained in popularity. During the NATO-led war on Serbia, many media offices were looted and destroyed. Journalists were targets of violence. As Kosovo Albanian refugees fled over the borders, some Albanian-language papers set up shop in Macedonia and were distributed to refugees in Macedonia and Albania.

When NATO forces took control of Kosovo in June 1999, media outlets were permitted to restart or be created under conditions of an international protectorate—UNMIK. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK) was charged with institution-building and democratization, which included development of an “independent and democratic media”.

When NATO forces took control of Kosovo on June 14, 1999, media outlets were permitted to restart or be created under conditions of an international protectorate—UNMIK. UN Resolution 1244 established UNMIK and gave the mission legislative and executive authority in Kosovo. A four “pillar” system divided responsibilities for various aspects of the interim administration amongst the UN, the European Union, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK) was charged with institution-building and democratization, which included development of an “independent and democratic media”¹⁹, and to assign frequencies and grant licenses to broadcasters, and to regulate media content according to an UNMIK code of conduct.²⁰

The relationship between OMIK and UNMIK, in regard to local media development, was characterized by a lack of trust and cooperation.

The initial period of UNMIK was characterized by media chaos. The mission was deployed in an informational and legal vacuum.²¹ Mark Thompson, in his report on “International Assistance to Media” in Kosovo comments that the “Interim Agreement” for Kosovo recognized “international standards of freedom of expression without providing for media reform and development.”²² It gave no guidance to the OSCE, which subsequently commissioned its own report on UNMIK’s aims and priorities for the local media, of which Thompson

¹⁹ UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/36 on the Licensing and Regulation of the Broadcast Media in Kosovo. For all media regulations see OSCE Mission in Kosovo’s web site www.omik.org.

²⁰ Anna Di Lellio, “Empire Lite as a Swamp” in *Transitions—Les Intellectuels et les Médias: Dialogue Est-Ouest Sur la Démocratie pour les Balkans*, eds. Mariella Pandolfi, Annie Lafontaine, Laurence McFalls and Marie-Joelle Zahar, (April 2005) 155, no.1:63.

²¹ Mark Thompson, “International Assistance to Media: Missions, Media and Credibility,” *Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)* (March 2000), par. 147, www.archiv.medienhilfe.ch/Reports/osce/osce2000g.html.

²² *Ibid.*, par. 148.



was one of three authors. Thompson writes that the report was accepted by the heads of UNMIK and OMIK, and by the headquarters of each organization in New York and Vienna, respectively, and that it led to more clearly defined responsibilities for each body regarding media development and policy. Nevertheless, in practice, the agreement between the two organizations delimiting each body’s authority over different media issues had little positive result in the field. OMIK and UNMIK’s relationship in regard to local media development was characterized by a lack of trust and cooperation.

One example of the lack of cooperation between the two organizations relates to the granting of licenses and frequencies, where UNMIK initially insisted that management of the frequency spectrum fell under its “civil administration” authority, and not under the OSCE’s pillar of “institution building and democratization”.

One example of the lack of cooperation between the two organizations relates to the granting of licenses and frequencies. The OSCE understood that it had the authority to take on this function. The UNMIK leadership, especially the deputy SRSG and director of information, disagreed. Until July, UNMIK’s Press and Public Information Department had fulfilled the task of issuing licenses, as had the Kosovo Force (KFOR)²³ in parts of the province. At the end of the month, UNMIK stopped issuing broadcasting licenses, and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) ‘government’ filled the void.²⁴ The KLA, not unsurprisingly, quickly became the dominant political power to control provincial radio broadcasts and print media—not a positive development for the international community, intent on calming ethnic tensions in the region and supporting non-partisan, free and accurate reporting characterized as intrinsic to democratic development and sustainability. UNMIK initially insisted that management of the frequency spectrum fell under “civil administration” and was therefore part of UNMIK’s “civil administration” authority, and not under the OSCE’s “institution building and democratization”.

The heads of UNMIK and OMIK agreed to appoint a Temporary Media Commissioner (TMC)...

Over the course of the year, UNMIK’s SRSG Bernard Kouchner and OMIK’s head-of-mission Daan Everts agreed to appoint a Temporary Media Commissioner (TMC) with the responsibility of implementing a regulatory system for the duration of the interim administration, and to create a Media

²³ KFOR was the NATO-led troop deployment, providing security for the province under UNMIK administration.

²⁴ Thompson, “International Assistance to Media: Missions, Media and Credibility,” par. 152.

...and to create a Media Appeals Board (MAB) to curb the dissemination of incendiary and libellous media.

Controversy immediately arose over the exact authority and role of the TMC, especially regarding the issues of press freedom. Some people viewed an external control as censorship, while others supported such regulation as necessary in a region emerging from repression and violent conflict.

Appeals Board (MAB) as an independent body of local media representatives and intellectuals.²⁵ The TMC and Board were intended to curb incendiary and libellous media that contributed to the campaign of reverse ethnic cleansing and violence against Serbs and other “collaborators” with the pre-1999 Serbian regime, and to support media development to achieve western standards of independence and objectivity.²⁶

Despite initial agreement on the TMC, there arose a great deal of controversy over the exact authority and role of the post, especially regarding the issues of press freedom, self-regulation, and the creation of a journalist ‘code of practice’. Local journalists opposed external controls and monitoring for fear of censorship. Initially, UNMIK hesitated to authorize the imposition of any limitations that could be seen as an infringement on the freedom of speech. Mark Thompson calls this a “quintessentially American stance of First Amendment universalism.”²⁷ In contrast, others—mainly Europeans—tended to interpret press freedoms as having some well-justified limitations. Given Kosovo’s particular history and the mandate of the international administration in the region—including a responsibility to ensure safety and security for all people—some, including senior western journalists with experience in media reform in other parts of the Balkans, insisted that external regulation of the media was, at least initially, not only desirable but necessary to fulfilling the UN mandate. They asserted that Kosovo should not be viewed as a normal functioning democratic state, and instead should be considered as an occupied territory emerging from repression and violent conflict.²⁸ Until such time as Kosovo was well on its way to sustaining stable and democratic institutions and an independent judiciary, media monitoring to maintain minimum journalistic standards and some measure of enforcing the standards would be necessary.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Di Lellio, “Empire Lite as a Swamp,” 64.

²⁷ Thompson, “International Assistance to Media: Missions, Media and Credibility,” par. 151.

²⁸ Garentina Kraja, “Kosovo Journalists’ Deep Suspicion of OSCE Media Controls,” *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, September 6, 1999, http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr/bcr_19990906_2_eng.txt.

Developments in early 2000 showed further that UNMIK and OMIK were not unified in their strategies and actions regarding the development of local media.

Expressions of ethnic intolerance and hatred continued unabated in Kosovo's press and broadcasts, and in February 2000, the SRSG declared "Regulation (no. 2000/4) on the Prohibition Against Inciting to National, Racial, Religious or Ethnic Hatred, Discord or Intolerance."²⁹ This reflected a change in attitude towards international authority over media content, and presumably, was in response to the growing prevalence of hate-speech in local media. The regulation had little effect on local media content,³⁰ and the very fact that the SRSG sought fit to make the regulation undermined the OSCE's efforts to address the same issues of journalistic professionalism and responsibility and to deter hate-speech and ethnic hatred by developing a self-regulatory 'code of practice'. UNMIK and the OSCE were clearly not unified in their strategies and actions regarding the development of local media, and the result, unsurprisingly, was a great deal of confusion and inconsistency.

Another problem was establishing who would inherit the state media institutions in Kosovo formerly controlled by Belgrade—here, the public media.

Another problem was who would inherit the state media institutions in Kosovo formerly controlled by Belgrade. Resolution 1244 provided little guidance, for it established an interim administration under which "the people of Kosovo can enjoy substantial autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia."³¹ The contradiction inherent in the wording of Resolution 1244 resulted in ambiguity about the legal status and ownership of state-owned and operated property—here, the public media.

²⁹ Thompson, "International Assistance to Media: Missions, Media and Credibility," par. 155.

³⁰ Thompson cites several examples of hate-speech that appeared shortly after the Regulation was promulgated. One was a radio news bulletin on *Radio Rilindija*, a private station with international funding, that gave an objective report on Kouchner's regulation, followed by a news item that included the following language: "After the massacre that occurred in north Mitrovica, where the criminal bands of the terrorist Belgrade regime killed nine and wounded a dozen others, Serb criminals celebrated in their Chetnik style."

The example that spotlighted the problem of incendiary media reporting for the international community was the publication of an article with a photograph of Petar Topoljski, a Serb employee of UNMIK, in the Albanian-language newspaper *Dita* on 27 April 2000. The article listed his work and home addresses, and accused Topoljski of criminal activities against Albanians during the NATO bombing. Albanian witnesses included in the story were identified only by their initials. Topoljski was found dead on 15 May, and the ensuing police investigation produced no answers to the circumstances or perpetrator/s of his murder.

³¹ United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 1244 (1999)," S/RES/1244, June 10, 1999, annex 2, par. 5.

The OSCE proposed to resurrect Radio Television Priština (RTP) as a public broadcaster in partnership with European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

Radio Television Priština (RTP)—the largest state-run media outlet in Kosovo—provides an example of the confusion and its policy implications. In June 1999, after the NATO-led attacks, KFOR prevented a group of Albanian journalists with alleged ties to the KLA from occupying the *RTP* building. The OSCE proposed to resurrect *RTP* as a public broadcaster. The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) expressed interest in partnering the effort; despite the OSCE’s responsibility for institution building, contractual negotiations were held between the UN and the EBU. Subsequently, the OSCE signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the EBU to manage *RTP*, soon to be renamed *Radio Television Kosovo (RTK)*. The EBU appointed the senior international managers; all other hired staff were local. In this early period, the EBU, although answerable to the OSCE, held executive and editorial responsibility for *RTK* through its senior team.³²

Renamed Radio Television Kosovo (RTK), the station started broadcasting via satellite on 19 September, 1999.

A new station was formed that served as an outlet for UNMIK-produced radio and television, and promised to be the “nucleus of a future regional public service”³³ to meet the needs of all the populations of Kosovo. *Radio Television Kosovo (RTK)* started broadcasting via satellite on 19 September, 1999. Led by the international team, daily programming was developed. Programmes were initially aired only two hours a day on satellite television, the terrestrial lines having been destroyed. The EBU and BBC provided staff training and equipment to the station, and UNMIK’s television unit contributed a 5-7 minute news round-up broadcast twice daily in Albanian, and twice a week in Serbian. UNMIK’s daily news broadcasts on *RTK* continued for one-and-a-half years.

Despite UNMIK television’s informal...

The head of UNMIK television at the time, Janina Hřebíčková,³⁴ characterized the initial phase of *RTK* as a training process in which local staff—

³² The EBU senior team was comprised of a Director General, Technical & Operations Manager (who doubled as Programme Director in the early period), Finance Director, and Director of Radio. *RTK* also contracted with an international security company to provide a Head of Security. Written comments of former Director General of *RTK* July 2000-December 2001, Richard Lucas, November 17, 2005.

³³ Thompson, “International Assistance to Media: Missions, Media and Credibility,” par. 158.

³⁴ Janina Hřebíčková was the first Chief of UNMIK Television, 1999-2001.

...relationship with the fledgling RTK, according to the then Chief of UNMIK Television, there was no contact between her unit and OMIK's media unit in regard to strategies and plans for RTK or any other media related issue.

Towards the end of 2002 there was no direct international supervision or vetting of content at RTK despite the station being heavily subsidized by foreign funds.

An egregious example of biased reporting and the media's culpability for violence was the coverage of the March riots of 2004.

predominantly young people unschooled in professional journalistic practice—slowly replaced internationals who were at RTK primarily as trainers. UNMIK's television staff provided occasional advice to RTK's fledgling local producers, though this was done on an informal basis. According to Hrebičkova, there was no exchange of information regarding RTK or anything else with OMIK's media unit. UNMIK Television was not aware of the OSCE's plans for the local media, and did not consult with them on UNMIK programming strategy or content.

2001 was a transitional year in which a mixed international/Kosovar senior management team led RTK. By the end of 2001, however, the transition to local leadership was complete. The retiring international Director General, Richard Lucas, was retained for a six-month period as the Adviser to the new Director General, but after August 2002, there were no internationals at RTK except for two international members of the Board of Directors. Thus, towards the end of 2002 there was no direct international supervision or vetting of content at RTK despite the station being heavily subsidized by foreign funds. On the one hand, this might indicate the growing self-reliance and professionalism of the staff, which grew to include many experienced local journalists from the pre-Milosević time of RTP (pre-1989); yet RTK, though less severely than other local media outlets, was on several occasions in the following months and years faulted for shoddy investigative work and use of rhetoric supportive of ethnic division and violence against the Serb minority.³⁵

An egregious example of biased reporting and the stirring of ethnic tensions, if not outright incitement to violence, was the coverage of the March riots of 2004, based on the rumour of several Albanian children being drowned by Serbs near Mitrovica. After the event, RTK was criticized by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) and the OSCE for “creating a dangerously misleading, inflammatory context for the drownings,” “generating an explosive atmosphere of patriotic hysteria,” and failing to distinguish between factual news

³⁵ International Crisis Group, “Elections in Kosovo: Moving Toward Democracy?” *Europe Report* no.97 (July 7, 2000), http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/report_archive/A400007_07072000.pdf.

Perhaps the type of irresponsible journalism exhibited by RTK in March 2004 could have been avoided had international editorial oversight, if not direct editorial control, remained after 2000.

and emotional sensationalism.³⁶ “The performance of RTK during the riots and on the evening before should be viewed with special concern since this is the only public broadcaster in the protectorate... There is no evidence that the media presented the news after having checked all facts.”³⁷ The OSCE reported that UNMIK regional police spokesperson Tracy Becker’s appeal for calm and statement that “we have no evidence to support the rumour of Serbians killing Albanian children” went unheeded.³⁸ Perhaps the type of irresponsible journalism exhibited over a period of days in March 2004 could have been avoided had international editorial oversight, if not direct editorial control, remained after 2000.

Local journalists stated that RTK today is to be regarded not as a public broadcaster but as a broadcaster of the dominant political party or parties.

At a public forum on “Public opinion in Kosovo and those who form it” held in Skopje, Macedonia in September 2004, journalist Baton Hadzui stated that “The public broadcaster established by the UN and OSCE missions in the province does not meet professional criteria.”³⁹ He added that “public television in Kosovo is formally multiethnic,” but in fact, is not. According to an ethnic Serb journalist employed by UNMIK Radio as a producer, Zoran Culafić, RTK today is to be regarded as all “public broadcasters” in the Balkans—not as a public broadcaster but as a broadcaster of the dominant political party or parties. His point is echoed by Behar Zogiani, a Kosovo Albanian journalist and formerly an UNMIK TV senior producer, who said that RTK is largely devoted to one political party, the Party of Democratic Kosovo (PDK) led by former KLA leader Hashim Thaci, which is the main opposition party in post-war Kosovo.

³⁶ For a detailed account of events and RTK’s coverage, see Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Report, “An Inquiry into the Performance of Kosovo TVs,” April 23, 2004, http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2004/04/2765_en.pdf.

³⁷ Institute for War and Peace Reporting, “Media ‘Inflamed’ Riots,” *Balkan Crisis Report* no. 494 (April 30, 2004), http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr3/bcr3_200404_494_3_eng.txt

³⁸ Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Report, “An Inquiry into the Performance of Kosovo TVs.”

³⁹ “Journalists on Journalism in Kosovo” *ANEM Weekly Media Update*, September 14, 2004, <http://www.medienhilfe.ch/News/2004/SER/ANEM2004/040914.html>.

The value of minority language programming on RTK was dismissed by one local journalist, who described it as irrelevant and thoroughly inappropriate to its alleged target audience.

RTK does have minority language programming, but its value was dismissed by Culafić. RTK is not watched by the Serbian community at all, and if not perceived as outright propaganda by that community, certainly perceived as an exclusively Kosovo Albanian voice. The portion of news that is broadcast in the Serbian language is a translation of the Albanian-language news. Culafić described one story featured in an RTK Serbian news report to illustrate the lunacy of suggesting the programming is intended for a Serbian audience. In Serbian, an announcer read: “today we celebrated the anniversary of the heroic death of our great national hero Adem Jashari, who was shot dead together with his family in 1998 by the ugly Serb occupiers.” Such content can hardly be called “minority programming,” and is clearly inappropriate for any audience, whether Serbian or Albanian. It is certainly not conducive to creating an environment eased of ethnic tensions, as directed by the international community and UNMIK’s mandate.

Radio Priština, RTK’s radio component, was launched in July 1999 and soon renamed Radio Kosova—a change with a clear political message. Ultimately, the station ceased its Serbian language broadcasts—an unseemly development for an internationally supported public broadcaster.

RTK’s radio component was initially comprised of one station inherited from the old RTP. The OSCE had (re-)launched *Radio Priština* on 28 July 1999, and by mid-August it was transmitting 14 hours of programming in Albanian, Serbian and Turkish. The international community provided salaries and some equipment and training. That same month Agim Fetahaj, a Kosovar Albanian journalist with U.S. citizenship and experience working abroad, was appointed director. He changed the name of the station to *Radio Kosova*—the Albanian version of the region’s spelling—and a change not without a clear political message.⁴⁰ The Serbian language team was reduced to the point where the few remaining journalists resigned in protest. The result was that there was no longer any Serbian programming on *Radio Kosova*—an unseemly development for an internationally supported public broadcaster allegedly representing UNMIK’s goal of multi-ethnicity and reconciliation. *Radio Kosova* continues to broadcast today in Albanian.

⁴⁰ The ‘K’ in UNMIK stands for Kosovo, using the Serbian spelling used for the region under Federal Republic of Yugoslavia sovereignty.

Despite OSCE opposition to the formation of an UNMIK radio station, UNMIK created its own radio station in partnership with Fondation Hironnelle. Radio Blue Sky began its broadcasts in October 1999, becoming RTK's second radio service. It operates today and is regarded as RTK's station for minority populations.

UNMIK did not rely on *Radio Kosova* to broadcast its programmes, and instead created its own station in partnership with Fondation Hironnelle.⁴¹ *Radio Blue Sky* began its broadcasts on 2 October 1999, one day after the Media Advisory Board, an OMIK created and chaired body with local representation, unanimously rejected UNMIK's proposal to create its own station. The OSCE was opposed to the formation of an UNMIK radio station, citing that it would run counter to the goal of developing local media in a commercial marketplace, as well as to the plan to create a public service broadcaster.⁴² Furthermore, a UN station would attract the best local journalists (because of comparatively high UN salaries), would provoke resentment, and would inevitably be perceived as biased by one ethnic population or another. UNMIK's SRSG Kouchner wanted the mission to have its own station, apparently because local radio stations expressed reluctance to air UNMIK programmes in Serbian, alleging that their credibility with their Albanian audience would be damaged. In 2001, *Radio Blue Sky* became RTK's second radio service. *Radio Blue Sky* still operates and is considered RTK's station for minority populations.

UNMIK Radio broadcasts its programmes primarily on Radio Blue Sky, but also on a number of other Albanian and minority language stations.

Today, UNMIK Radio broadcasts its programmes primarily on *Radio Blue Sky*, but also on a number of other Albanian-language stations, several Serbian-language stations and a Turkish-language station. In most cases, the airing of UNMIK's 5-minute programmes is at the discretion of the radio station manager or news director who determines where and when to air the material. With RTK stations *Radio Blue Sky* and *Radio Kosova*, however, the stipulation of operating as a public broadcaster warrants as an informal guarantee of consistent play times.

UNMIK DPI—TELEVISION AND RADIO PRODUCTION

There are mixed reports about the coordination of strategy between the print, radio and television units of UNMIK's Department of Public

⁴¹ Fondation Hironnelle also partnered with the UN to create the mission-run radio station *Radio Okapi* in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

⁴² Susan Manuel, "UN Media and Post Conflict Peace-keeping," paper presented at UNESCO Seminar: Support to Media in Violent Conflict and in Countries in Transition, May 3, 2004, <http://www.portal.unesco.org/webworld/wpdf/2004>.

A coordinated strategy between the print, radio and television units of UNMIK's Department of Information existed only intermittently.

The absence of such a strategy during some periods of UNMIK operation is unfortunate because the unified efforts of UN-produced media would surely have been more effective and of better service to the mission.

Information.⁴³ From 1999 until at least 2003, UNMIK leadership held daily meetings that included the chiefs of all information services and addressed subjects to be highlighted by DPI. However, a coordinated effort at implementing a specific and clearly articulated strategy within the department seems to have been absent for the first couple of years.

In the first year and half of operations, the television unit held once-a-week internal screenings of programmes for the department staff to keep them apprised of what was being broadcast. Sometimes audio from a television programme would be used for a radio programme and the transcription for print; this was especially true for formal interviews with UN or local governmental officials. Jackson Allers, who worked as the radio team leader from July 2004 to April 2005, described contact with the Spokesperson's office as extremely limited. Apart from daily information briefings, Allers contends that there was no contact, and that his producers had no more access to the Spokesperson than other news reporters from the international or local press. Both Hrebičková and Allers reported that, to their recollection, there were no departmental discussions of overall programming "strategy" per se. The absence of a coordinated strategy during these times is unfortunate because the combined efforts of radio, television and print initiatives would surely have reinforced each others effectiveness, and thereby been of better service to the mission.

Such problems, however, have reportedly improved in recent months, according to Marcia Poole, the current Chief of the UNMIK Press Office and Deputy Director of UNMIK DPI. UNMIK press officers meet daily with the radio, television, and print units, and regularly exchange information and travel together with producers on trips accompanying the SRSG and other UNMIK senior staff. The current Chief of UNMIK Radio/Television/Production,⁴⁴

⁴³ Interviews with staff members and leadership at various points of the mission's life indicate phases where there was a pronounced lack of coordination and interaction between units as well as times when coordination was close; the variance perhaps indicates the changes in policy under different UNMIK DPI leadership.

⁴⁴ In 2004, UNMIK's radio and television units were combined and today remain under the direction of one person, the unit Chief, who reports to the Head of the Public Information. The

UNMIK DPI coordination problems have reportedly improved in recent months.

Patrick Morrison, concurred that interdepartmental communication is coordinated in daily meetings.

In UNMIK's first one and a half years, the Chief of UNMIK TV determined programming content by consulting with colleagues and attending daily UNMIK department head meetings. The only "official" guidance she received regarding programme content and strategy, she derived from Resolution 1244.

As stated previously, in the first one and a half years of RTK operations, UNMIK TV provided short news-block programmes to RTK for daily broadcast at two time-slots, including the prime-time 7:30 p.m. spot. The news was produced in both Albanian and in Serbian, and the news items included in each language block were frequently, but not always, identical translations of each other. In order to define the content of programmes and determine what issues should be addressed, UNMIK TV Chief Hrebičková relied upon consultation and teamwork; she met often with her senior producers to listen to their ideas and input, and then made her decisions. She regularly met with the Deputy SRSG Spokesperson, and with the UNMIK's Chief of Public Information but retained creative control over television production without their intervention or that of any other UN department. She attended daily meetings convening all UNMIK department heads and sometimes developed ideas for stories from these meetings. The only "official" guidance she received regarding programme content and strategy, she derived from Resolution 1244.

The 2004-2005 radio team leader said that he received no support or guidance from departmental and...

... mission leadership regarding DPI goals and implementation.

Allers reported that the goal of the Radio/TV unit was never formally nor explicitly defined to him. He "interpreted" the goal and complied based on his own intuition of what was required, and received no support or guidance from departmental or mission leadership. Hrebičková felt very comfortable without direct oversight, having served previously in UN mission television units. She was confident that she well-understood her own and her unit's role in the mission,⁴⁵ and felt supported by her superiors in the department.

joint Radio/TV staff is considerably reduced from what it was in the first years of the mission, which is not unusual considering that the mission is likely to be in a gradual phase-out of operations, as well as the fact that Kosovo now has a full media spectrum and serves all communities in contrast to its dismal state in 1999.

⁴⁵ When the UNMIK Chief of Information was replaced, however, and the new appointee Simon Haselock took a more directive approach to UNMIK TV productions, Hrebičková disagreed vehemently with some of his newly imposed policies. Her contract was not renewed in 2001.

One understanding of DPI's goals was that it serve all communities under UNMIK authority and uphold professional standards of journalism.

Hrebičkova understood the task of the television unit to produce objective and neutral stories reflective of daily reality for all of Kosovo's populations under UNMIK administration. Interviews with others in the television and radio units indicate that the goal of upholding professional standards of journalism and serving all communities under UNMIK authority was well understood by all staff. Additionally, Hrebičkova saw UNMIK productions as guides to the many inexperienced television and radio journalists in Kosovo, and viewed her own particular role as something of a "teacher" of television journalism.⁴⁶ She emphasized that although UNMIK TV was the voice of the UN administration, it was not propaganda. She encouraged her staff to work as a team professionally, to investigate stories thoroughly and not to inject their personal biases into their reports.

Although the television unit was not overtly instructed to avoid any subjects, the tacit understanding was that criticisms or failures of the mission were never to be the subject of a story.

The television unit was not overtly ordered to avoid any subjects, but criticism or failures of the mission were implicitly never the subject of a story. Hrebičkova pointed to one story involving riots in northern Mitrovica which was deliberately not covered by UN media. The basic story was that a number of ethnic Albanians from the dominantly Serbian side of the Ibar River became fearful of rioters and fled across the river. French KFOR troops, long accused by Albanians of favouring the Serbs, were blamed for not helping the Albanians to reach safety, resulting in the drowning of several. There were varying accounts of the story, and the responsibility for the deaths was disputed. Because of the gaps in accountability, and presumably because KFOR troops were the targets of such serious and contentious accusations, UNMIK television did not report on it.

However, if a programme included an interview with a person expressing unfavourable views of the UN or UNMIK, the comment would not be removed.

Hrebičkova explained that such occasions of omission were rare, and insisted that programmes did not gloss over UNMIK's shortcomings and included complaints about the mission. Although a voice-over would not include critical commentary of UNMIK, if a person interviewed expressed an unfavourable view of the UN administration, the comment was not edited out.

⁴⁶ This role corresponded to the initial mandate of providing a "western model" for balanced journalism. Once Kosovo's media was deemed self-sufficient, this function of UNMIK media was diminished.

In 2001, the newly appointed Chief of Public Information Simon Haselock determined that UNMIK TV should change its programming in response to RTK's increased capacity to produce its own professional news programmes.

Haselock defined UNMIK's media strategy as one focused on four specific issues: privatization, return of refugees, rule of law, and the meeting of Standards.

In 2001, UNMIK Television programming underwent changes. A 30-minute once-a-week magazine type programme featuring short documentaries on various mission events and issues replaced news productions in February 2001. The reason given was that *RTK's* capacity to produce its own accurate and professional news had developed to a sufficient journalistic standard, so that UNMIK news production had become unnecessary. Given the criticism of *RTK's* journalistic performance by such bodies as the OSCE, it is somewhat perplexing that this determination was made seemingly without consulting the very organization responsible for the development of independent media and monitoring of professional standards, the OSCE, nor with UNMIK TV producers who likely held informed opinions about *RTK* and the programming decision.⁴⁷

Later in the year, UNMIK's media strategy was more narrowly identified by Chief of DPI Haselock, who believed that UNMIK programmes should focus specifically on four issues: privatization, return of refugees, rule of law, and the meeting of Standards. This focused approach, in itself, seems to have been a good idea as it more narrowly defined a programming strategy for all units in DPI. It corresponds to the "clear conception" of the Department's role called for in the 2002 Secretary-General's Report "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change."⁴⁸ Haselock's leadership seems to have provided a clearer and more unified approach to UNMIK DPI radio and television programming.

⁴⁷ Prior to his post with UNMIK, Haselock had been appointed as the TMC. This former association with the OSCE may explain why he may have felt that there was no need to consult with UNMIK people on *RTK's* readiness to provide professional and unbiased news.

⁴⁸ Interviews with information staff who worked under Haselock revealed some controversy about his leadership, managerial style, and decisions regarding production and distribution. He aroused both great admiration and wrath. The manner in which his decisions were made displeased a number of staff, who regarded Haselock as ignorant of media (his background was military; he was not a journalist), disagreed with his reasons for programmatic change, and resented the fact that they were not included in the decision-making process. Others cited the strength of his direction and management positively, and credited him with correctly assessing UNMIK's public information needs. Whether or not Haselock was personally liked by mission staff, what is clear and is to his credit is that as Chief of DPI, he was a forceful personality who made authoritative decisions and freely expressed his opinions—i.e. he provided strong leadership.

UNMIK held no official position on the final status of Kosovo; UNMIK DPI therefore remained neutral on the issue as well.

Because UNMIK declaredly held no position on the determination of final status for the region, UNMIK TV remained neutral on the issue as well. Any discussion of final status was “strictly taboo,” and so for some stories it remained the elephant in the room. Two terms were specifically not used in reports: the Kosovo State—the aspiration of the Albanian population in Kosovo, and Kosovo and Metohija—the Serbian name for a region in Kosovo. Both terms were deemed too politically loaded for the UN to be able to use in any neutral context. As with all other UNMIK-produced information, this policy was not the result of a directive, but the result of the unit head and producers’ intuitive understanding of UNMIK’s mandate and their role as producers of UNMIK public information.

UNMIK TV content reflected the SRSG’s attitude towards the populations of Kosovo—that both communities must adjust to the new realities of the region.

Under SRSG Kouchner, UNMIK TV content reflected his attitude towards the Serbian population—that they should get used to a new reality where their community was a minority in the region and no longer the dominant authority.⁴⁹ UNMIK’s position was that the Serb minority should participate in the building of Kosovo’s institutions and government, and that a boycott of UNMIK’s efforts to that end, including elections, would be counterproductive for the community in the long-run. Similarly, UNMIK’s attitude towards the Albanian majority under SRSG Kouchner was that they must accept as a reality the Serbian minority presence in Kosovo, and behave according to internationally accepted human rights norms.

Particularly in the mission’s early years, UNMIK television and radio reports did not shy away from “sensitive” subjects.

UNMIK television and radio were able to produce stories from minority areas otherwise inaccessible to journalists from the majority ethnic-Albanian media, and thus effectively covered stories relevant to all communities. Zogiani credits UNMIK TV for producing fair and credible reports, even when receiving complaints from Albanian viewers. He cites, for example, complaints about the first stories about Serbs broadcast on RTK. The programmes were criticized by

⁴⁹ Many leaders in the Serb community refused to recognize UN authority of administration and took direction directly from Belgrade. They set up parallel administrative structures to those established by UNMIK, and lived in a number of protected enclaves guarded by KFOR troops. Their mobility in the region remains extremely restricted.

some Albanians for showing too much sympathy to Serb suffering; viewers protested that “we still don’t know (the location of) the graves of our sons and daughters” killed by Serbian police and military in the 1990s ... “how dare you tell us that Serbs are suffering.” UNMIK reporting of various events and issues conscientiously included representatives from both Serb and Albanian communities as well as other minorities, and especially in the mission’s early years, did not shy away from “sensitive” topics.

Although there is no formal training in conflict resolution for UNMIK DPI staff, some staff members express an intuitive understanding of its principles.

Although there is no formal training in conflict resolution for UNMIK DPI staff, some journalists express an intuitive understanding of its principles. Zoran Culafić, an experienced journalist working with UNMIK radio since 2002, related his attitude towards producing programmes to promote the core mission values and mandate—among them, to promote reconciliation. He explained that he wants to depict reality, which in many cases is ugly and painful because of “all that has happened,” but wants also to relay the positive message that people in Kosovo can really live together peacefully one day. “This is the truth. You can hear it when you go visit peasants in villages—Serbs, Albanians, Roma, Bosniaks, Turks, Goranies, etc... in doing interviews you can hear some sharp words, too, and I did not avoid them, but after a while when you talk to the same guy, you see that these sharp words were the result of accumulated tensions, hatred and misunderstanding ... not to say complete ignorance about the other community.” Culafić does not want to hide the fact that terrible crimes were committed, and that the perpetrators—of whatever ethnicity—should be brought before a court, but at the same time, he wants his stories to reflect hope. He would like his radio reports to contribute to greater understanding between communities. “People here want to live in peace and prosperity, and very few from both sides are extreme elements who would like to continue to fight. People need to work and earn money for their kids, and they cooperate even today, even yesterday...and they will cooperate tomorrow.”⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Transcripts of radio and television programs were not available for this research, so it is difficult to judge how well or badly the programs correspond to “conflict resolution” ideals. Still, the upholding of journalistic standards automatically inclines the author to believe that fair

The reception of UNMIK radio and television programmes by the Kosovo population seems to fluctuate as the mission itself is perceived to be taking sides—pro-Albanian or pro-Serbian.

According to Hřebíčková and senior television producer Behar Zogiani, UNMIK TV productions were initially considered by the population to be a reliable source of news. This observation, it should be noted, may be restricted to Kosovo's majority Albanian population, who initially welcomed UNMIK's presence and may therefore have been predisposed to accept UNMIK news as reliable and favourable to their cause for independence. Later in the mission, with the changing of SRSGs and with the extension of the unresolved final status, the reception of UNMIK media fluctuated as the mission itself was perceived to be taking sides—pro-Albanian or pro-Serbian. Nevertheless, radio and television programmes from the first years of the mission were described by several sources as being credible and reliable.

An important question for future UN missions' media components is can a mission's media products be regarded by the public as independent of the mission itself?

Today, Kosovo Albanians view UNMIK less and less as a friendly presence, but until 2003 or so, UNMIK was welcomed as an organization supportive of Albanian goals; Serbs widely perceive UNMIK as a foreign presence that came to build a state for Kosovo Albanians, and is not adequately protecting the Serbian community.⁵¹ An important question to consider is how independently of a mission a mission's media products can be regarded by the public? Is it possible to have a favourable reaction to UNMIK-produced programmes if the mission itself is distrusted by the population? The main problem for any UN mission-produced media is that it is imposed upon the local population, and, as in the case of UNMIK, one population (Albanians) may see the mission as a liberator while another (Serbs) may see it as an aggressor, oppressor, and occupier. Consequently, the media produced by UNMIK may be regarded as credible by the first group and as propaganda by the second.

In such an environment, and with relations between the two communities hardly improved in the last six years of UNMIK administration, it is difficult for UNMIK's media outreach to gain trust, but as all the journalists

coverage and the inclusion of voices and opinions representative of a diverse population lend themselves to the promotion of greater understanding and cooperation between former enemies.

⁵¹ Kosovo's Serbs live in enclaves protected by KFOR troops. Their mobility in the region is severely limited because of threats to their security.

If UNMIK producers maintain professional standards, UNMIK media can be trusted as a credible source of information by the local population regardless of their ethnic identity.

The appropriate role of UNMIK media is one which is highly contentious and subject to debate.

One critical aspect of the debate is the identification of the role of UN producers. Are they UN employees who function in a “journalistic mode” or are they “real” journalists who must comply with professional journalistic standards?

interviewed attest, it is not impossible if one maintains professional standards. Foremost, this means providing objective information on critical issues regardless of the “sensitivity” of the topic; it also means that the mission’s information units must not ignore or hide criticism of the mission itself and of the problems it faces.

The question of the appropriate role of UNMIK media is one which is highly contentious and subject to debate. Brian Kelly, currently the spokesperson of UNFICYP, characterized the role of UN information, in terms of the immediate community, as “to promote the mandate and ease tensions by making the mission’s role and functions known, spelling out its tasks, raising awareness, keeping people informed of developments and progress, countering mis- and disinformation, sustaining the credibility and integrity of the mission, and ensuring maximum transparency commensurate with security needs.”⁵² The issue is controversial when the role of informing the public about events and developments has a particular political context or impact—which, in fact, is most if not all of the time. To what extent does mission-produced information need to reflect only the positive things associated with the UN presence, and to what extent is the role of mission DPI to report on everything, even that which may not reflect well on the mission itself, the carrying out of the mandate, or the UN institution?

The question of what defines UN information is critical—not only to the mission-area public that is the recipient of the information, but also to the UN staff charged with producing and disseminating information, and to the UN official(s) responsible for creating and refining information strategies that make sense and have realizable goals. Susan Manuel distinguishes between UN producers who operate in a “journalistic mode” and “real” journalists, citing a “huge difference” between them. The latter’s “objectives are to ensure we do what we are paid and sent to do; that we do what we’ve said we would do; that

⁵² The UN may also produce public information messages relevant to campaigns about such diverse issues as human trafficking, avian flu, HIV and elections.

we live up to standards; that we are serving people honestly, etc. Our objective, on the other hand, is mandate implementation.”

Where the main division in opinion lies is at what point UN reports, programmes and publications may be permitted to be self-critical.

Everyone probably agrees that UN-produced information should strive to be unbiased and accurate; where the division in opinion lies is at what point UN reports, programmes and publications may be allowed to be self-critical. Admittedly, UN producers are employed by the UN and are therefore answerable to the institution, the Security Council, and the mission itself. But as information producers frequently working in post-conflict societies where they are looked to—whether by design or by default—as models of journalistic integrity, are they not also obligated to abide by internationally recognized journalistic norms? Can the mission mandate and presence be accurately represented and explained if particular issues are purposely omitted, glossed-over, or misrepresented? Does this not jeopardize the credibility of every piece of information the UN disseminates, thereby jeopardizing public trust in the mission and the UN itself?

Over the last two years, UNMIK DPI has focussed on the Standards Implementation process that will play into the determination of Kosovo’s final status. DPI has taken a decidedly positive approach to the process, reporting on successes but not on setbacks or failures.

Interviews reveal that today the public’s faith in UNMIK is low in both the Albanian and Serbian communities. The focus of radio and television programming over the last two years has been primarily on the Standards Implementation process that will ultimately determine Kosovo’s final status. According to former radio team leader Jackson Allers, although there were no verbal or written guidelines or overt instructions about programming content, it was clear to him that UNMIK-produced stories should promote the successful meeting of Standards benchmarks—for example, the return of IDPs, the successful resolution of missing person issues, the successful transference of powers to local authorities, and instances of smooth transitioning from state-run industries to private firms; reports of setbacks or failure were not to be produced. Allers indicated that his views on media content often clashed with the “press lines” encouraged by the DPI Press Office, which focused on political and diplomatic concerns. Allers felt that he did not have the backing of the Chief of DPI to bolster his argument that UNMIK media should be producing

stories—both positive and negative—and not, as he perceived, mission propaganda.

The result is that the public regards UNMIK media as superficial and propaganda-like.

The result is that, according to many of those interviewed for this paper,⁵³ over the last year UNMIK media coverage has been superficial and overwhelmingly positive, and therefore regarded as meaningless by the public. In response to a question regarding whether or not UNMIK media is trusted by the public as a reliable source of news, Allers unequivocally answered “no.” Others in Kosovo, such as Behar Zogiani and Zoran Culafić, made similar observations about the public perception of UNMIK media content as being propaganda-like.

LEADERSHIP

The importance of good leadership to the effectiveness of UN mission information initiatives cannot be overemphasized.

The importance of leadership to the effectiveness of UN mission information initiatives was emphasized by all those interviewed for this paper, including HQ staff and staff in the field. A number of television and radio chiefs and their deputies were praised for their professionalism and journalistic integrity. Some qualities of good leadership that were mentioned were independent thinking, a commitment to professional standards of journalism, managerial skills that included an interested and inclusive attitude towards the expression of ideas and opinions by all staff, the backing up of employees and of programme content in the face of criticism from senior UN people or other departments, an understanding of the time it takes to produce a quality report, etc.

An SRSG who knows how to use the media well can successfully reach out and communicate with the local population; this can be done effectively regardless of whether or not the mission itself is a popular or unwanted presence.

As discussed before, the SRSG sets the tone of the entire mission, and has a strong impact on the way in which the Department of Public Information is regarded internally. His/her support and attitude towards DPI has a tremendous influence on the level of cooperation the unit gets from other departments and the support and direction it gets from the top. An SRSG who knows how to use the media well can successfully reach out and communicate the mission’s agenda and goals to the local population; this can be done

⁵³ Interviews referred to include those with both internationals and locals employed by UNMIK and those who are not affiliated with UNMIK.

effectively regardless of whether or not the mission itself is a popular or unwanted presence.

EVALUATION

The 2002 SG Report identifies evaluation and monitoring as key elements to effective public information campaigns. Nevertheless, no formal assessment of UNMIK media programming or other information initiatives has been made by the UN.

“The United Nations must ensure that its information materials and related activities have the desired impact and constitute an effective means to project the Organization’s own distinctive voice to the world at large.”⁵⁴ The 2002 SG Report “Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change” identifies evaluation and monitoring as elements of key importance to effective public information campaigns. Nevertheless, no formal assessment of UNMIK media programming or other information initiatives and activities has yet been made by the UN.⁵⁵

The absence of a formal methodology of evaluation plagues media efforts in all UN missions, not only UNMIK.

The absence of a formal methodology of evaluation plagues media efforts in all UN missions, not only UNMIK. When asked about this evaluative deficiency, a UN official in HQ responded that there was no budget to conduct such evaluations; another questioned what methodology could be used to assess the effectiveness of UN-produced media, anyway, and asserted that a qualitative analysis would not indicate much of value. An official in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Information and Communications pointed out that surely any information officer in the field would rely on informal evaluations based on his/her own interactions with the local population and with mission

⁵⁴ United Nations General Assembly, “Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change,” Report of the Secretary-General, A/57/387, September 9, 2002, para. 61.

⁵⁵ The International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), produced a Media Sustainability Index in 2003 measuring Kosovo’s achievements in free speech, professional journalism, the plurality of news sources available to citizens, business sustainability, and the efficacy of institutions that support independent media. Index Kosova, a joint venture with BBSS Gallup International, conducted a public opinion survey in 1999, and again in 2004 and 2005 regarding Kosovo’s electronic and print media, but this survey did not include public reaction specific to UN programming and publications. Some of UNMIK’s DPI staff members were aware that the survey findings were published and available on the Web, but they did not indicate that the results impacted their work or the mission in any discernable way. Officials in DPI-HQ did not know of the existence of these surveys.

troops⁵⁶ to determine whether or not the UN message was regarded as credible and informative. The SRSG and information unit, he added, should be able to assess whether or not the UN message is getting through effectively or not.

Without a formal requirement for an assessment by an independent source, it is unlikely that any changes will ensue from informal and personal evaluations. This may be especially true when the “findings” are that UN information initiatives have little credibility with the local population.

This may very well be true, but without any formal requirement for an assessment by an independent source, it is unlikely that any changes ensue from informal and personal evaluations that require no official recognition or deliberation, even or especially when the “findings” are that UN media initiatives have no credibility amongst the locals. Like most organizations, the UN likes to report its successes and not its failures, yet such a policy can hardly be conceived of as encouraging trust and credibility in the institution. Rather, it instils doubt and encourages a dismissal of the UN mission’s proclaimed motives, achievements, and goals. Interviews with UNMIK information officers strongly indicate that the knowledge of being perceived as propaganda has little to no discernable influence on information policy or strategies.

Such assessments may best be conducted by outside contractors to avoid a conflict of interest.

Without evaluation, the mission risks wasting vast amounts of time, energy, resources and finances on the production of irrelevant information materials and activities. The production of these materials becomes an end in itself. Surely this is not the goal of public information. The UN Best Practices Section may be the best placed to implement surveys to monitor the effectiveness and reception of UN produced media at regular intervals throughout a mission’s life. Such assessments may best be conducted by outside contractors to avoid a conflict of interest.

CONCLUSION

In looking at UNMIK’s information capacity and performance, and particularly at the mission’s radio and television production operations, the goal of this paper is to draw out lessons from the UNMIK experience that are relevant to other UN missions, as well as to communication strategies employed by international bodies where they seek to intervene in post-conflict

⁵⁶ UN peacekeeping mission troops are often intimately involved with the local populations and frequently have a good sense of local impressions and opinions of the UN mission.

Based on a review of UNMIK's information capacity and performance, a number of recommendations can be made for improvements in UN mission DPI—namely in communication structure, accountability relevant policies and information strategies, resources, and capacity for change and innovation.

environments. By means of a broad review of UNMIK's information policies and operations 1999-2005, a number of recommendations can be made for improvements in mission DPI—namely in communication structure, accountability, relevant policies and information strategies, resources, and capacity for change and innovation. Taking these recommendations into account will result not only in better UN communications with the mission-area public, but contribute to more responsive and resilient peacekeeping missions that are better able to meet the needs of those they serve, and better equipped to fulfil their mandates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Public information should be recognized as an integral part of every UN peace operation and international intervention.

- 1) **Public information should be recognized as an integral part of every UN peace operation and international intervention.**

The recognition of UN media/information's importance is often mentioned rhetorically, but all too often neglected in practice.

Better coordination between the UN and other bodies participating in peace operations.

- 2) **Better coordination between the UN and other bodies participating in peace operations such as NATO, the EU, and OSCE is necessary to avoid duplication of effort, contradictory policies, and overall confusion concerning media institutions and regulation.**

A clear delimiting of responsibilities creates coherency and legitimacy, whereas disagreement over each body's authority results in confusion and incoherence, and a loss of credibility for all actors involved.

DPKO, DPI, UNDP, or the newly created Peacebuilding Commission should devote staff and resources to developing coherent media policies for post-conflict environments.

- 3) **DPKO, DPI, UNDP, or the newly created Peacebuilding Commission⁵⁷ should devote staff and resources to developing coherent media policies for post-conflict environments.**

A coherent UN policy regarding the development of an independent media in environments transitioning out of violent conflict—and frequently out of authoritarian rule—as well as strategies for effective

⁵⁷ UNDP includes the Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery/Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding. Whatever department this task would fall to, it should have the authority to implement and supervise the devised policy; currently, this would likely fall to DPKO or, as suggested in recommendation 9, to DPI.

UN media outreach in such environments would be useful to the UN as well as to other international organizations active in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and democratization.⁵⁸

Expert knowledge of the particular culture, history, and politics of a region should be brought in at the mission planning stage to advise on media issues.

- 4) **Expert knowledge of the particular culture, history, and politics of a given region should be brought in at the mission planning stage to advise on the design of information and media strategies.**

Currently, initial planning in the pre-mission stage focuses on technical and logistical issues and not on purpose, methodology, and message.

Elements of the UN communication strategy and information distribution should be included in the mission mandate whenever and to whatever degree possible.

- 5) **Elements of the UN communication strategy and information distribution should be included in the mission mandate whenever and to whatever degree possible; discussions and negotiations on media-related issues must not be postponed until after the mission is in deployment.**

The UN's authority to disseminate information on mission activities and developments, and the manner in which the mission will do so should be clearly defined in the mandate or into a SC resolution. This means, for example, that the right to a radio frequency, or to a time slot on a government-run television station, or to perform street theatre in a public space should be agreed upon prior to establishing the mission; officially establishing the UN's right to inform the public of its mandate, authority, and actions will avoid the necessity for later negotiations, which rarely work to the UN's advantage.

A deliberated and strategic media plan is vital to creating realistic expectations by the local population of the mission's impact on their lives, and to establishing the mission's credibility.

- 6) **A deliberated and strategic media plan is vital to creating realistic expectations by the local population of the mission's impact on their lives, and to establishing the mission's credibility.**

Too often, the production of vast amounts of information materials by DPI is touted as "successful" information and communications operations. This is far from the truth; volume should not be confused with efficacy. If the materials are not reaching their target audience, or if

⁵⁸ A blueprint approach to information strategy is inadvisable for direct implementation, but it is an excellent starting point from which a mission-specific strategy may be adapted to individual circumstances and conditions.

the content is dismissed as irrelevant or as propaganda, no amount of production will produce “success”. Media strategy must be constantly rethought and revised, according to changes in the mission environment.

The mission’s DPI must be proactive rather than reactive.

7) **The mission’s DPI must be proactive rather than reactive.**

A well thought-out media plan and information strategy anticipates developments in the political and social realms of the mission area, and makes changes in policy and strategy accordingly. Problems are thereby avoided, and the mission remains on the offence—creating positive change rather than reacting to circumstances imposed upon it.

The need for changes in the UN’s formal structures of authority, monitoring, and support regarding public information in peacekeeping operations should be formally addressed and...

8) **The need for changes in the UN’s formal structures of authority, monitoring, and support regarding public information in peacekeeping operations should be formally addressed.**

As is, DPI’s “suggested practices” are unlikely to result in lasting operational changes. **The Peace and Security Section of the Department of Information should be given the authority and resources to provide direct support and supervision of DPI in peacekeeping missions.** If not this option, then a new unit of operational planning and support of public information should be established within DPKO. Either alternative requires the close cooperation of DPI and DPKO officers on information issues of mutual concern. If the latter, experienced information officers from DPI who have previously worked in peacekeeping missions should be seconded to the DPKO unit. The first option is preferable, as the Peace and Security Section is already dealing with some DPKO information needs, and would likely improve its work if given more authority over information strategy and operations within the mission area. In either case, professionals with a solid understanding of the media, of field operations, and of the inner workings of the UN should be appointed.

...the Peace and Security Section of the Department of Information should be given the authority and resources to provide direct support and supervision of DPI in peacekeeping missions.

9) **Direction and continuous oversight from HQ is necessary for mission DPI to be most effective.**

Taking into account the variable quality of DPI staff, including the SRSG, Head of Public Information,

Direction and continuous oversight from HQ is necessary for mission DPI to be most effective.

Spokesperson, and the unit chiefs, monitoring and support from HQ would benefit the Department as a whole, the operation of its individual units, and the UN mission itself. HQ oversight would lessen the importance of individual personalities, and accommodate weaknesses in leadership. Mission DPI must be given the latitude to make its own decisions, devise strategies, and generally operate independently of HQ directives, yet its independence should not absolve it of any responsibility to perform effectively and justify its actions to HQ. By having HQ supervision come from DPI's Peace and Security Section, it is likely that the supervising staff will have an understanding of the difficulties endemic to mission operations, and be able to provide the necessary support for improvements. Oversight by the Peace and Security Section is unlikely to undermine already successful information operations in the field.

The importance of effective and transparent communication with the local population to the mission's successful fulfilment of its mandate must be emphasized to every SRSG.

- 10) **The importance of effective and transparent communication with the local population to the mission's successful fulfilment of its mandate must be emphasized to every SRSG.** Without effective communication, the mission is likely to rapidly lose public support, and will ultimately fail. The SRSG must create a climate in which DPI officers and producers are respected as professionals; they must not be regarded as clerks whose job it is to churn out mission PR material, nor must they be seen merely as producers of archival material for posterity. The SRSG must make him/herself available to local and mission journalists, and be forthright in explaining the UN mandate and developments affecting the local residents. The SRSG should frankly address all subjects relevant to the mission; by avoiding "sensitive" issues, s/he undermines the credibility of the mission.

Further training, support and resources must be provided to information officers in the field.

- 11) **Further training, support and resources must be provided to information officers in the field.** The annual conferences held by DPI and DPKO for information officers in peacekeeping operations (i.e. Brindisi), and the annual meeting for field mission Chiefs of Information

are an excellent example of training that serves to raise the level of professionalism and performance of UN personnel, thereby increasing the overall quality, capacity and effectiveness of information operations.

DPI's media production units must function professionally, upholding journalistic standards of honesty and accuracy—even if it means exposing the UN to criticism.

- 12) **DPI's media production units must function professionally, upholding journalistic standards of honesty and accuracy—even if it means exposing the UN to criticism.** A policy of providing honest and unbiased information is the best way to promote UN core values and the mandate of a mission. DPI producers must be given the support and backing of their leaders to perform their jobs as professional standards demand. Coverage of “sensitive” issues must not be discouraged; rather, it should be appreciated that in many circumstances the UN information teams are the best equipped to provide accurate and balanced coverage of controversial events and subjects.

The role of media in conflict prevention and resolution should not be overlooked.

- 13) **The role of media in conflict prevention and resolution should not be overlooked.** At its best, media can be used as an instrument of reconciliation, bringing greater understanding and empathy between people, creating bridges of communication where none other exist, and giving voice to the disenfranchised. Used effectively, the media can dispel rumour and misinformation by providing consistent and reliable news and information, effectively countering attempts at incitement and violence. It is important to distinguish between the use of information as a tool for conflict resolution, and the creation of propaganda, albeit “for a good cause.” It is commonly misconceived that the former necessitates the latter. To make the distinction clear, and to educate producers and other DPI staff about including conflict resolution in professional journalistic practice, training in the principles of conflict resolution should be considered for information officers working in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations.

Coordination is needed between the various units of DPI.

- 14) **Coordination is needed between the various units of DPI.** Currently, such coordination efforts vary greatly according to who is in a

leadership position and the practices he/she implement in the unit. A regularly instituted policy of coordination may be more effective.

Formal evaluation of the effectiveness of mission DPI must be conducted at regular intervals over the duration of a mission's existence.

- 15) **Formal evaluation of the effectiveness of mission DPI must be conducted at regular intervals over the duration of a mission's existence.** Public information campaigns cannot be effective without formal assessments of their impact on the intended audience. Some measure of the mission area's reception to UN information is crucial to determine whether or not strategies are working, and if not, how to alter them in a timely manner so that they are more effective.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Buckley, William Joseph Buckley, ed. *Kosovo: Contending Voices on Balkan Interventions*. Grand Rapids, Mich: William B. Eerdmans, 2000.
- Brunner, Roland. "How to build Public Broadcast in Post-Socialist Countries: Experiences and Lessons Learnt in the former Yugoslav Area." *Medienhilfe*, June 4, 2002.
<http://www.medienhilfe.ch/topics/PBS/inhalt.html>
- Chesterman, Simon. "Kosovo in Limbo: State-building and Substantial Autonomy." *International Peace Academy Report* (August 2001).
- Davis, Alan. "Regional Media in Conflict." In *Regional Media in Conflict*, edited by Alan Davis. London: Thanet Press Ltd. and Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 2000.
- Di Lellio, Anna. "Empire Lite as a Swamp." In *Transitions—Les Intellectuels et les Médias: Dialogue Est-Ouest Sur la Démocratie pour les Balkans XLV*, no. 1, edited by Mariella Pandolfi, Annie Lafontaine, Laurence McFalls and Marie-Joelle Zahar (April 2005): 61-78.
- Erlanger, Steven. "NATO Peacekeepers Plan a System of Controls for the News Media in Kosovo." *New York Times*, August 16, 1999, sec.1.
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=43937979&Fmt=3&clientId=15403&RQT=309&VName=PQD>.
- Fearon, James D. "Commitment Problems and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict." In *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation*, edited by David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. "Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity." *International Organization* 54, no. 4 (Autumn 2000): 845-877.
- Frohardt, Mark and Jonathan Temin. "Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies." *United States Institute of Peace Special Report* 110 (October 2003), <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr110.html>.
- Haselock, Simon. "Comment: Kosovo Serbs Making Progress." *Institute for War and Peace Reporting* (October 17, 2002), http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr2/bcr2_20021017_4_eng.txt.
- Howard, Ross. "The media's role in war and peacebuilding." Paper for *The Role of Media in Public Scrutiny and Democratic Oversight of the Security Sector conference* organized by the Working Group on Civil Society of the Geneva Centre

for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces. Budapest, February 6-9, 2003.

<http://www.impacs.org/files/MediaPrograms/media%20in%20war%20and%20peacebuilding.PDF>.

Ignatieff, Michael. *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1993.

———. *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000.

Independent International Commission on Kosovo. *The Kosovo Report: Conflict, International Response, Lessons Learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX). *Media Sustainability Index: Development of Sustainable Independent Media in Europe and Eurasia*. 2003. <http://www.irex.org.html>.

International Crisis Group. *Elections in Kosovo: Moving Toward Democracy? Europe Report no.97* (July 6, 2000), http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/report_archive/A400007_07072000.pdf.

———. *Reaction in Kosovo to Kostunica's Victory, Europe Briefing no. 14* (October 10, 2000), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1781&l=1>.

———. *A Kosovo Roadmap (I): Addressing Final Status, Balkans Report no. 124* (March 1, 2002).

———. *A Kosovo Roadmap (II): Addressing Final Status, Balkans Report no. 125* (March 1, 2002).

———. *Kosovo: Toward Final Status, Europe Report no. 161* (January 24, 2005).

———. *Serbia: Spinning Its Wheels, Europe Briefing no. 39* (May 23, 2005).

Institute for War and Peace Reporting. "Media 'Inflamed' Riots." *Balkan Crisis Report no. 494* (April 30, 2004), http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr3/bcr3_200404_494_3_eng.txt.

Joseph, Edward P. "Back to the Balkans." *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 1 (Jan/Feb 2005):111-122.

Kaufmann, Chaim D. "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars." *International Security* 20, no.4 (Spring 1996): 136-175.

———. "When All Else Fails: Ethnic Population Transfers and Partitions in the Twentieth Century." *International Security* 23, no.2 (Autumn 1998): 120-156.

- KosovaLive News Agency. "Serbia: G17 Official Says Kosovo Independence 'Possible' if Serbs Get 'Autonomy.'" *World News Connection*, April 7, 2005. <http://wnc.dialog.com.greenleaf.cc.columbia.edu:2048>.
- Kraja, Garentina. "Kosovo Journalists' Deep Suspicion of OSCE Media Controls." *Institute for War and Peace Reporting* (September 6, 1999). http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr/bcr_19990906_2_eng.txt.
- Krug, Peter and Monroe E. Price. "A Module for Media Intervention: Content Regulation in Post-Conflict Zones." In *Forging Peace: Intervention, Human Rights and the Management of Media Space*, edited by Monroe E. Price and Mark Thompson. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.
- Lehmann, Ingrid A. *Peacekeeping and Public Information: Caught in the Crossfire*. London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999.
- Maliqi, Shkelzen. "Special Report: Chaos and Complexities in Kouchner's Kosovo." *Institute for War and Peace Reporting, Balkan Crisis Report* no. 107 (January 14, 2000), http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr/bcr_20000114_2_eng.txt.
- Manuel, Susan. "UN Media and Post Conflict Peace-keeping." UNESCO seminar Support to Media in Violent Conflict and in Countries in Transition, May 3, 2004, <http://www.portal.unesco.org/webworld/wbfd/2004>.
- Marston, John. "Neutrality and the Negotiation of an Information Order in Cambodia." In *Forging Peace: Intervention, Human Rights and the Management of Media Space*, edited by Monroe E. Price and Mark Thompson. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.
- Marten, Kimberly. *Enforcing the Peace: Learning from the Imperial Past*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Medienhilfe. "Conversations with Kosovo Albanians about situation in Kosovo." Transcript of a broadcast produced by *Radio B-92*, March 3, 2000, <http://www.archiv.medienhilfe.ch/Projecte/Ser/Belgrade/B92/kosov-discussion.html>.
- . "Media in Kosovo." October 29, 1999, http://www.archiv.medienhilfe.ch/News/Archiv/1999/KosoWar/kosmed_med_aim.html.
- . "Journalists on Journalism in Kosovo." *ANEM Weekly Media Update*, September 14, 2004, <http://www.medienhilfe.ch/News/2004/SER/ANEM2004/040914.html>.
- Mertus, Julie and Mark Thompson. "The Learning Curve: Media Development in Kosovo." In *Forging Peace: Intervention, Human Rights and the Management of Media Space*, edited by Monroe E. Price and Mark Thompson. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.

- Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Report*. “An Inquiry into the Performance of Kosovo TVs.” April 23, 2004.
http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2004/04/2765_en.pdf.
- Posen, Barry R. “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict.” *Survival* 35, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 27-47.
- Price, Monroe. “Bosnia-Herzegovina and Post-Conflict Media Restructuring.” In *Media Reform: Democratizing the media, democratizing the state*, edited by Monroe E. Price, Beata Rozumilowicz and Stefaan G. Verhulst. London and New York: Routledge, 2002.
- . “The State and the Shaping of the Media: Identity, Loyalty, Dissent and the Reinvention of Ministers of Information” and “Rethinking Approaches to Media and Post-War Reconstruction.” Background papers for Media Development Strategies in Post-War and Crisis States conference, Crisis States Research Center, London School of Economics, March 21-22, 2005, <http://www.pgcs.asc.upenn.edu/events/lse05>.
- . “Journeys in Media Space, Global Media and National Controls: Rethinking the Role of the State.” Spry Memorial Lecture, University of Montreal, November 29, 2001, <http://www.com.umontreal.ca/spry/spry-e.html>.
- Spillman, Kurt R. and Joachim Krause, eds. *Kosovo: Lessons Learned for International Cooperative Security*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2000.
- Sullivan, Stacy. “Special Report: Is Kosovo Up to Standard?” *Institute for War and Peace Reporting* (April 1, 2005), http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr3/bcr3_200504_549_1_eng.txt
- Tarle, Zvonko. “Better 'Contact' Than Conflict.” *Institute for War and Peace Reporting, Balkan Conflict Report* 28, no. 135 (April 2000), http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr/bcr_20000428_4_eng.txt.
- Thompson, Mark. *International Assistance to Media: Missions, Media and Credibility*. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), March 2000. www.archiv.medienhilfe.ch/Reports/osce/osce2000g.html.
- United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations. *Provisional Guidelines for Public Information Components in United Nations Peacekeeping and Other Field Missions*. November 1997.
- United Nations Department of Information. *Public Information Support: Standard operating procedures and deployment capabilities for public information offices in the field*. Internal draft document not for distribution, Version 2.0. March 11, 2005.
- . *Public Information and Media Relations in United Nations Peace Operations: Guidance to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General*. DPI/2354 September 2004.

- United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, Mission to the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. *Civil and Political Rights, Including the Question of Freedom of Expression*. E/CN.4/2005/64/Add.4 February 8, 2005.
- United Nations General Assembly. *Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change*. Report of the Secretary-General. A/57/387 September 9, 2002.
- United Nations General Assembly, Committee on Information. *Substantive questions: role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping*. Report of the Secretary-General. A/AC.198/2002/5. March 4, 2002.
- . *Questions relating to information*. Report of the Secretary-General. A/57/157 July 3, 2002.
- . *Reorientation of United Nations activities in the field of public information and communications*. Report of the Secretary-General. A/AC.198/2003/2 March 7, 2003.
- . *Continuing reorientation of United Nations activities in the field of public information and communications*. Report of the Secretary-General. A/AC.198/2004/2 February 24, 2004.
- United Nations General Assembly, Security Council. *Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects*. A/55/3-5-S/2000/809 August 21, 2000.
- United Nations Security Council. *Resolution 1244 (1999)*. S/RES/1244 June 10, 1999.
- . *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo*. S/2004/348 April 20, 2004.
- . *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo*. S/2005/88 February 14, 2005.
- United Nations Association of the United States and Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) of Rome. *Options for Kosovo's Final Status: A Policy Conference*, Rome, December 12-14, 1999.
<http://www.unausa.org/issues/kosovo/rome/index.asp>.
- United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo. UNMIK Online home page, <http://www.unmikonline.org>
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID). *Assistance Strategy for Kosovo 2004-2008*. July 2003.
- Wimhurst, David. "Preparing a Plebiscite under Fire: The United Nations and Public Information in East Timor." In *Forging Peace: Intervention, Human Rights and the Management of Media Space*, edited by Monroe E. Price and Mark Thompson. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.

Yannis, Alexandras. "The UN as Government in Kosovo." *Global Governance* 10,
no.1 (January-March 2004): 67-82.