



UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA)  
UN Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF)

**Towards the Implementation of the Joint Plan of Action for the  
United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia  
Engaging the Media in Countering Terrorism in Central Asia  
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**CAPACITY BUILDING ON THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN  
COUNTERING TERRORISM  
Training Manual**

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<i>Session Title</i>	<i>Issues to be addressed</i>	<i>Objectives</i>
<b>Introduction:</b> Recognizing conditions conducive to terrorism and radical narratives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overview of issues</li> <li>- Main challenges and issues for the media in the context of counter-terrorism efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an understanding of strategic publics, relationship management in practice, working with pressure groups and local communities;</li> <li>• Reflect on social structures and controls;</li> <li>• Reflect on communications theories in relation to achieving counter-terrorism aims.</li> </ul>
<b>Session 1:</b> <b>Developing counter narratives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- News and current affairs vs. other types of programming</li> <li>- Different programme formats</li> <li>- Addressing different themes: exclusion; radicalization; counter-terrorism initiatives, policies and actions; victims; engaging the community against terrorism; support for public counter-terrorism actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine communication and organizational strategic responses to terrorist scenarios;</li> <li>• Analyze and understand narratives;</li> <li>• Develop strategic communication programmes reflecting creativity, styles and models of communication, direct and mediated channels, message strategies, communication.</li> </ul>
<b>Session 2:</b> <b>Reporting on victims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respect for victims (privacy, grief, interviews, right to truth)</li> <li>- Contacts with terrorists and their representatives, including statements and interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing an understanding of terrorism in the media, the popular imagination, and how the two are linked;</li> <li>• Understanding the function of responsible media in the terrorism and counter-terrorism context.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Session 3:</b>  <b>Preparing and dealing with the stress and trauma of reporting on terrorism</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The special pressures associated with reporting on terrorism</li> <li>- Ways of addressing the stress this creates</li> <li>- Stockholm syndrome</li> <li>- Safety measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing sound risk assessment and safety mitigation protocols;</li> <li>• Understanding psychological impact of shock and proximity to violence;</li> <li>• Monitoring psychological indicators;</li> <li>• Developing coping strategies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 4:</b>  <b>International legal instruments, conventions and standards in the fight against terrorism for media representatives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Human rights law (freedom of expression, criminal rights including due process, non-discrimination, emergencies, privacy and reputation, religion)</li> <li>- Overview of anti-terrorism treaties under international law and their subject matters</li> <li>- Specific standards: hate speech; contempt; media codes of conduct; respect for privacy and reputation; respect for religion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing an understanding of the relevant international legal instruments and their applicability to CT;</li> <li>• Respecting the law in the CT context for both the government and media.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 5:</b>  <b>Elements for a Code of Conduct for the media and government press representatives on covering acts of terrorism</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brainstorming on key elements</li> <li>- Discussion around suggested elements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a framework for a generic code of conduct;</li> <li>• Obtain consensus agreement on framework principles.</li> </ul>

## **INTRODUCTION:**

# **RECOGNISING CONDITIONS CONDUSIVE TO TERRORISM AND RADICAL NARRATIVES**

### **1. War amongst the people.**

Speaking Notes: From General Rupert Smith's Book the Utility of Force where he describes the end of inter state industrial war saying that today's wars and those of the future are and will be about ideologies, local power struggles, ethnic identities and amongst the people not between peoples.

### **2. Characteristics:**

- The ends that we fight for are changing from hard and absolute to more malleable objectives to do with the individual and societies not states.
- We fight amongst the people. Literally and figuratively, given the role of the media, in every living room via TV, radio, mobile phone and the internet.

*"More than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. We are in a media battle, a race for the hearts and minds of our Ummah." Ayman al-Zawahiri, al-Qaeda*

- Our conflicts tend to be timeless. Approaching decades not years.
- The sides mostly non-state. Multinational coalitions on one side against non state parties on the other.

### **3. Soft Power**

Getting others to want the outcomes that you want by attraction – co opts rather than coerces  
*"The soft pulling power of persuasion over the hard pushing power of coercion".*

A competition for attractiveness, legitimacy and credibility

The ability to share information [and benefits]– and to be believed [and trusted].

**Speaking Notes:** This new paradigm of warfare puts an increasing emphasis on 'Soft Power' over old-fashioned hard power and military force as a mechanism for combatting insurgency and terrorism. It's about a battle of ideas and for hearts and minds not for territory or resources.

### **4. It's about politics.**

### **5. Politics is about communications and persuasion.**

### **6. And all politics is local.**

### **7. It's about people**

**It's about what they believe and think.**

### **8. It's about listening as much as speaking**

**It's not just about the media.**

### **9. Ten things to consider in countering terrorist narratives and communications.**

### **10. 1. Integral part of policy-making and delivery.**

*"..for strategic communications to work, policies must be sound and unanimously supported by the organisations that issue them.."*

**Alastair Campbell, June 2009**

**Speaking Notes:** Communications should not be seen as a separate process that presents policy and activity, but an integral and inclusive part of policy-making and delivery. Successful policy implementation requires that the policies themselves must be sound, broadly understood and consensually supported by the organisations that issue them. Good communications are central not just in the delivery but from the beginning of the planning process and at the highest level. This how the terrorists operate.

**11. 2. Understand the information ecology**

**Speaking Notes:** A detailed and thorough understanding of the place, history and culture of the country and populations that are the subject of communications programs and campaigns is the essential starting point. Understanding the information ecology of the societies concerned is fundamental, as is the ability to divine and track public opinions and attitudes. This requires a rigorous research capacity from the outset that includes qualitative and quantitative research media monitoring and the development of local networks and contacts that provide cultural context, political understanding and street atmospherics. Research and feedback are also clearly central to campaign monitoring, evaluation and recalibration throughout the life of the project and beyond.

**12.**

**What stories do people believe?**

**Where do these stories come from?**

**How do they decide if they believe them or not and why?**

**How do they spread?**

**13.**

**The Tyranny of Real Time.**

**First Fast and Flawed.**

**14. 3. Flat Structures**

*“Governments (and institutions) have yet to adapt to the full implications of modern information technology. The rapid decline in the cost of information and communication calls attention to the draw backs of slow decision making and hierarchical communications.”*

**‘Fixing Failed States’ Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart 2008**

**Speaking Notes:** Institutions require internal communications that are horizontal instead of hierarchical. The nature of modern digital communications punishes slow decision-making and hierarchical bureaucracies. The institutional inertia inherent in traditional management structures has to be overcome, as speed is now an imperative not a luxury.

Information today can no longer be controlled, it can only be managed. Leaders, managers and bureaucrats need to become much more agile to cope with the ‘tyranny of real-time information’. But agility requires delegation and senior managers and editors must be prepared to allow their subordinates to engage more in the information space. For this to happen requires as much emphasis on internal communications as it does on external audiences. There must be an understanding that everyone is a communicator, and this needs to be embedded in the DNA of everyone and not just a specialist few.

**15.**

**Institutional inertia.**

**Control and delay.**

**16. 4. Local voices and ownership.**

**Speaking Notes:** An emphasis on the grassroots and local voices is fundamental as this provides the only genuinely credible conduit to local attitudes and behaviour. Achieving it not only relies heavily on the quality research, but it is also dependent on the ability to listen

more than talk and then ensure that communities can hear their voices in the conversations that emerge at the national and international levels.

Information is always more believable the closer it is to the people who hear it. It's very important to be able to tell stories through local eyes and voices. A primary principle of journalism has always been that in order to explain a complex issue or event it needs to be put in the context of an individual's or a family story.

Terrorism and violent extremists work from the bottom up – working with local communities and local issues – governments tend to work from the top down, which makes them distant, alien and often irrelevant.

#### 17. Networks.

**Speaking Notes:** Communications is all about networks not media platforms or media. Platforms are just the means that carry information, networks are how peoples own information ecologies function. Who do they talk with, who are the key nodes in individual networks.

Managing this means that communications teams should be predominantly drawn from the local community and identifying key local networkers from the beginning is crucial to early progress. Developing and animating robust multidimensional local networks is a critical precondition for success.

#### 18. Culture.

**Speaking Notes:** Cultural networks are crucial and its through them that information moves in many societies. What is the prevailing cultural form and which do the various demographic groups identify with and engage with. Music – poetry –dance -street theatre – equestrian events – sports etc.

#### 19. 5. Narrative and stories.

*“The great enemy of the truth is very often not the lie – ..... - but the myth. Too often we hold to the clichés of our forebears. We subject all facts to a predetermined set of impressions. We enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought.”*

J F Kennedy Yale speech, 1962

**Speaking Notes:** Narratives and stories define conflicts and generate emotions to which people respond. Telling stories – organizing our understanding of them in a basic narrative structure – is a fundamental human need that either reinforces or changes behaviours. Stories are more than a collection of facts or occurrences – they require a framework, and take on meaning with characters, plots and motives. Counter terrorist communications campaigns should be seen as large-scale, evolving, storytelling efforts in which the local audience is the key protagonist. The hub of a communications campaign should be a central but evolving narrative constructed on the principles described from which the supporting stories that need to be told are derived.

#### 20. Narrative and change theory

Understanding social norms through local narrative and stories.

Identifying those narratives and stories that drive change.

#### 21. Narratives constructed by:

- **History, grape vine and gossip**
- **Deeds & actions**
- **Direct engagement & outreach**
- **Conventional press & media**
- **Digital & social media**
- **Imagery**
- **Think Tanks & Academic Reports**
- **NGOs**
- **Lobbyists & campaign groups**

- **Governments & International Institutions**

## **22. What's your own story?**

**Speaking Note:** It is critically important to ensure that internal communications is well planned and executed to ensure everyone has a single narrative, speaks with one voice and remain credible coordinated and consistent

## **23. 6. The direction of travel.**

Hard objectives or positive trajectories?

**Speaking Notes:** Conventional wisdom assumes that all information interventions must have clear and definable objectives that enable plans to be drawn up to achieve them and benchmarks established to measure success. **In reality** this also presents problems as it provides a fixed target at which the terrorist organisations can aim. All they need to do is to prevent a single part of the stated goals being achieved and the whole campaign takes on a defensive character.

Aims and objectives are often overly ambitious and sometimes more visionary than concrete and achievable and as circumstances change on the ground they inevitably have to change. The approach should be to avoid hard-edged objectives where possible but instead set directions of travel or trajectories for progress. Given the timelines over which behavioural change is practical, measuring general progress over a diverse range of indicators is a more realistic and positive approach to demonstrating forward momentum and success.

## **24. 7. Media development?**

**Speaking Notes:** Understanding the media environment and information ecology is often not sufficient in conflict, post-conflict or societies plagued by terrorism. The established media often suffers from the prejudices of war and the problems of central control. Independence and journalistic professionalism are usually little understood concepts among the majority of media consumers and professionals. Encouraging these to improve also aids the propagation of the independent and informed debate necessary for genuine and widespread political dialogue and discourse to take place where the grievances of the terrorists are discussed and debunked and their ideologies challenged. Media development initiatives and particularly those that encourage the establishment of the legal frameworks that enable independent and professional media to flourish are a key element of counter terrorist communications initiatives.

Research has shown that openness and exposure to a wide range of opinion and discourse undermine terrorist propaganda and ideologies much more than restriction, censorship or closedowns.

## **25. Media development things to consider:**

Media landscape

Connectivity

Legal and regulatory structure.

Economic environment

Professionalism

Security environment

Access.

## **26. 8. Resources**

**Speaking Notes:** No campaign or project can be conceived or implemented without adequate resources or logistical support. Too many initiatives suffer from ambitious aspirations as to objectives and outcomes without sufficiently realistic resources to achieve them. To some media and information engagements are seen as cheap options and thus expectations and resources are not properly aligned. Resourcing team structures is meaningless unless the

team has the operational resources necessary to fund products, activities and campaigns alongside the support services such as IT, bandwidth, technical communications, distribution systems and transport to enable their work.

#### 27. 9. The 3 Cs.

- Credibility
- Consistency
- and Coordination

#### Speaking Notes:

- **Credibility.** Credibility is the gold dust of communications and must permeate all activities, platforms and narratives. Stories must be demonstrably true, voices and platforms must be seen as credible conduits to relevant audiences. Bad news must be given and managed as rigorously as the good. Wherever possible, transparency and disclosure should be a default position. Damage to reputation and credibility as a consequence or perception of cover-ups or spin, once embedded, is almost impossible to reverse.
- **Consistency.** A vital element of credibility is consistency. The notion of different messages for different audiences is dangerous as it can be contradictory. The methods of delivery and emphasis may be different but the basic stories need to be consistent and corroborative. Consistency of narrative and supporting stories across all platforms and activities is essential.
- **Coordination.** Maintaining credibility and consistency requires good coordination across all activities and voices. This is not a new notion but methods of achieving it are often arcane, over-engineered and regarded as obstructing real work. Endless coordination meetings whilst clearly required are often perfunctory and meaningless. Vision, narrative and stories widely distributed, understood and invested in across all actors, departments, spokespeople and individuals are the keys to agile coordination. Motivating all those involved through effective and rigorous internal communications is vital.

#### 27. 10. Repetition

**Speaking Notes:** Repetition is a basic principle of all communications campaigning. Stories need to be told and retold if they are to predominate against a background of multiple conflicting narratives. This is the approach taken by terrorist organisations – the same must be taken by those trying to counter them.

## SESSION 1: DEVELOPING COUNTER NARRATIVES

### 1. Respect and Ownership: Countering Extremist Narratives

#### 2. Drivers of extremism:

- Social, economic and political grievance and exclusion.
- Humiliation and trauma.
- Loss of self-respect.
- Need for a sense of purpose and identity.
- Sense of superiority.
- Sense of structure and rules.

#### 3. Ideology or grievance?

- It's not initially about religion or radical ideology but local conditions and circumstances.
- Terrorists and insurgents exploit local conditions and grievances.
- Their ideology provides an alternative to local administration or state failure.

#### 4. Examples:

- ISIS Iraq and Syria.
- Ansar Dine (AQIM) Mali.
- Al Shabaab Somalia.

**Speaking Notes:** Nearly all of the seemingly extreme Islamic insurgencies started at the local level and emerge from local grievances. ISIS in Iraq is about Sunni disaffection and marginalization from the Baghdad based Shia Government who they say discriminate against and intimidate them. Al Shabaab in Somalia emerged from the violent chaos of the feuding and fighting between the Somali War-lords, the collapse of central government and intervention of Ethiopia.

#### 5. Seven characteristics of insurgent -terrorist communications themes:

1. Competing voices
2. Narratives and counter narratives
3. Group integrity and cohesion
4. Operational capacity
5. Relevance
6. Religious authority
7. Strategic authority

#### **Speaking Notes:**

**Competing voices.** To contest government, official, conventional, reformist and status quo voices. Communications strategy is all about a contest for domination of the debate and the opinion, attitudinal, media and information spaces.



**Narratives and counter narratives.** Having their own clear alternative narrative to what they would describe as the failed state or status quo one; and developing specific detailed local narratives and stories that play into local issues and grievances and undermine those of the establishment.

**Group integrity and cohesion.** Stories that emphasize their unity of ideology, purpose and organization and exploit divisions within those of their adversaries.

**Operational capacity.** Stories that reinforce their operational strengths and courage and professionalism against the inadequacy of their opposition.

**Relevance.** Stories that emphasize their local relevance and understanding. Closer to the people as opposed to the distant officials in government.

**Religious authority.** Messages designed to establish and reinforce their religious authority and legitimacy against the perceived decadence of their enemies.

**Strategic authority.** Messaging about vision and sense of destiny and clarity of purpose.

## 6. Having your own strong proactive “Core Narrative”.

Why the core narrative - purpose?

What do we need to know to produce it?

- The pervading narrative or narratives - at the grassroots in particular.
- Overall – objective?
- Communications Aims or objectives?
- Target Audiences?
- Main themes/stories – messages?

## 7. The “Core Narrative” How:

What

Why

How (roles, tasks and responsibilities)

When

Outcomes

## 8. Core Narrative how (Continued).

Overarching story – simple explanation of what you are trying to achieve.

Broad themes setting out the main elements of what, why, how when and roles, responsibilities and outcomes.

Each element spawns a series of supporting stories.

Written from the perspective of the individual.

Include a phrase (sound bite) that encapsulates the whole story and shows progression - from X to Y - This is the headline.

## 9. Target Audiences:

- Internal
- Local
- Regional
- International

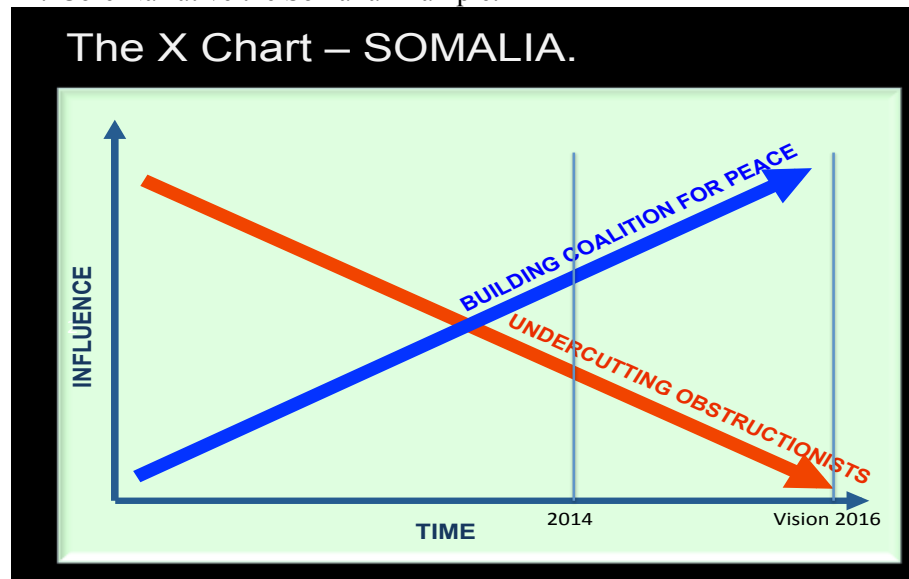
Each then further segmented

## 10. Or by attitude?

- The supporters – *who’s on our side.*
- Those who aren’t sure – *the swing voters.*
- The hardliners – *the no hoppers.*

**Speaking Notes:** Core Narrative needs to be relevant to all target audiences and so should be the same for every audience, but the constituent and supporting stories will be different depending on the audience and what the desired effect is on each of them.

11. Core Narrative the Somalia Example.



12. Mission Impossible to Mission Possible.

**Speaking Notes:** In 2009 the prevailing narrative of Somalia was one of a catastrophically failed state. In the West certainly it was seen through the lens of the movie Black Hawk Down. From the International communities point of view this was a place not to get involved in - and although they recognised the problem and particularly the refugee issue and the consequent large Diaspora communities in their own countries they felt there was nothing they could do about it. It was **Mission Impossible** and so what was the point of intervening in any meaningful way. AMISOM, the AU Peace Enforcement Force was restricted to a small coastal strip in Mogadishu and the International Community backed Transitional federal Government (TFG) was holding only one block of government buildings in the City protected by AMISOM. Al Shabaab controlled all the territory of South central Somalia.

During Ramadan 2010 AMISOM defeated an al Shabaab final assault to drive them into the sea and as a result were able to go on the offensive themselves and retake the whole city – this allowed the space for the political process to develop and a new more legitimate government was established with the backing of clan elders. Diaspora businessmen began to return and the economy in the capital began to flourish. All of a sudden the narrative became one of **Mission Possible** and the international community became more active – backing and funding an increase in size and capability of AMISOM moving the UN and EU into Mogadishu and providing direct aid for reconstruction and nation building to the new Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). The situation although far from perfect with much still to do has improved dramatically as a consequence and the prospect of free and fair elections in 2016 seems achievable.

14. **Building – the coalition for peace narrative**

15. The Security Story. (AMISOM)

**Speaking Note:** Story of military success and pushing back the terrorists.

16. The Political Story (Constitution and Transition)

**Speaking Note:** Story of building a locally owned interim constitutions and forming a new more legitimate government elected by legitimate representatives of the clans.

17. The Economic Story (Diaspora returns and investment)

**Speaking Note:** Story of businesses opening, restaurants starting up, infrastructure being rebuilt – street being cleaned and local services returning and traffic jams!!

18. **Undercutting – the al Shabaab Narrative**

19. The al Shabaab Story

- Foreign Led
- Foreign practice

- Counter cultural
- Reign of terror.

**Speaking Notes:** al Shabaab's own narrative was based around being a local reaction and resistance to foreign intervention and chaotic criminal war-lordism. All this was shown to be false as they were seen to be led by AQ foreigners from Yemen, had foreign fighters, had a foreign and harsh interpretation of Islam (most Somalis are Sufi), were counter cultural as they banned singing, poetry and sport and they introduced a reign of terror with through an extremely harsh interpretation of Sharia law and punishment.

So the counter narrative attack was to focus on the stories that will:

20. **Reinforce traditional Somali culture and values.**

21. **Expose their counter cultural practices.**

22. **Fatwa:** Challenge their religious interpretation and practice.

23. Demonstrate that they are: Foreign led

**Speaking Note:** This approach has worked and al Shabaab's reach, strength and appeal have been much reduced .

24. **The ISIS Narrative Example**

- ISIS post new twitter posts, YouTube videos and Facebook pictures every day.
- They include - massacre videos filmed in HD.
- Use of platforms such as Ask.Fm to answer user-submitted questions such as how to join.
- Other messaging focuses on their provision of social and community services

**Speaking Notes:**

ISIS (ISIL or now IS) has created to the local and international audiences a narrative, which has produced a picture of a much bigger and more terrifying organisation than is the reality. Their success is based on an alliance of convenience with a broad and disaffected Sunni community, which hates the Maliki government more than ISIS. But ISIS has managed to catch the imagination of the news networks in a way in which the street narrative sees ISIS as a super strong, super terrifying organisation conquering Iraq and establishing the old Caliphate. The more layered and complex story has not yet embedded.

25. ISIS Terror

ISIS disseminates pictures, which are deliberately taken create as much fear and sectarian violence as possible.

The media takes them and thus obliges them.

26.

Matt Berman: *There's journalistic and social merit in spreading the evidence of what's happening in Iraq, but this particular evidence is manicured by the people who are carrying out the abuses. It's not journalism, and without verification, it's not even an accurate depiction of what's happening. It's propaganda, and it's playing on our empathy for distribution.*

**Speaking Notes:** Coverage of its menacing online identity may have both obscured the role other Sunni groups have played in Iraq's insurgency – and made opponents wrongly assume that Isis has all of Iraq within its grasp.

27.

Part of the purpose of ISIS' social media activity:

*"is definitely to scare people,"*

*"But also it's to give ISIS greater prominence in wider media coverage. It becomes a kind of recruitment tool in the competition with al-Qaida in terms of leading the global jihad brand, and of winning the support of jihadis worldwide. In some ways they've won the battle: most of the foreign fighters who go to Syria join Isis. But around the world, it hasn't been definitively won one way or the other. Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia and Libya tend to be pro-Isis. But then you have the al-Qaida affiliates in Somalia which are clearly siding with al-Qaida."*

Aymenn Al-Tamimi, a fellow at the Middle East Forum, a US think-tank.

## 28. Live Tweeting the capture of Mosul

- Enabled ISIS to be perceived as bigger than al Qaeda
- Threatened Baghdad tweeting “We are coming Baghdad” with a photoshopped image of an ISIL flag above the capital.

*"The volume of these tweets was enough to make any search for 'Baghdad' on Twitter generate the image among its first results, which is certainly one means of intimidating the city's residents." As JM Berger -The Atlantic*

**Speaking Notes:** Seizing Mosul was a major propaganda coup, which has catapulted ISIS over al-Qaeda, with whom they are now estranged, as Iraq and the region's number one threat

## 29. Use of hashtags and Apps

- **#Baqiya (It will remain)** - the most recurrent hashtag they use.
- Filmed hostages saying Baqiya before executing them
- Use tricks to get into people's timelines
- App called the Dawn of Glad Tidings provides an innocuous gateway through which they swamp social media.
- This App pumps out news of ISIS advances successes or frightening videos like **Swords IV** – creating the impression of a rampant and unstoppable force.
- "Twitter bombing" ploy - hijack popular hashtags - #WorldCup and #Brazil2014 to misdirect unwitting soccer fans toward ISIS propaganda.

## 30. Potential counter narrative approaches to ISIS.

- Give voice to other Sunni groups and tribal leadership.
- Use majority Sunni voices to talk about 1920s nationalism – which most believe in
- Focus on the contradictions of their propaganda.
- Challenge their historical misunderstanding of the Caliphate.
- Challenge their unity of support and purpose.

## 30. Conclusions;

- Research – to understand the oppositions narrative and expose the contradictions
- Develop your core narrative focussed on what people can understand and recognise
- Identify the stories that will support and enhance the narrative.
- Make sure what you say is credible – words must correspond with actions and experience.
- Ensure good internal communications so everyone knows the same story.
- Research again to make sure its resonating and if not adapt to the circumstance.

**REMEMBER IT'S ALL ABOUT GETTING AS LOCAL AS POSSIBLE – NEED TO WORK WHERE THE TERRORISTS WORK AND START AT THE GRASSROOTS**

## SESSION 2: REPORTING ON VICTIMS

### Respect for victims (privacy, grief, interviews, right to truth)

In these times, stories about suffering, loss, and injustice, are central to the profession of journalism.

When people are grieving, it may not be the case that interviewing them is morbid, mawkish, or likely to make them feel worse.

But it can be negative. The issue is how to *minimize* the risk, and conducting the interview professionally and sensitively.

But remember: the journalist's primary responsibility is to the story. Journalists are not therapists or psychoanalysts, nor should they try to be. From a professional point of view, the journalist is there to bring context, to unravel contradictions, and to create understanding and shine light in for the audience.

Some points to make:

- Most of the time, it is impossible to know whether the interviewing process will harm or help;
- Every person experiences trauma uniquely, and so assumptions can be dangerous;
- Only those directly affected can understand their own emotional experience, and even then they may struggle to come to terms with their own psychological reaction to trauma;
- Recovery is a process, and recovery rates vary according to individual and circumstance.

Finally, and most importantly:

- the most important single concept in the relationship between journalist and victim is consent.

In general, journalists seek to convey a sense of compassion without condescension.

Approaching with deference and respect lessen the chances that the victim will view the interview as exploitative.

### Contacts with terrorists and their representatives, including statements and interviews

Journalists must constantly decide which facts to include or emphasize, whom to use as sources, and what is really at issue in reporting a story. These choices combine to create a frame that both supports the story and defines what belongs inside.

Lack of context can be ignoring overarching patterns of risk, historical and cultural interpretations of events, social patterns of violence, and links to broader social concerns. Getting both sides of the story is the sine qua non of journalism. But it may also mean you have to talk to people you don't want to talk to, or people who may try to manipulate you. Remember, your decisions cause you to come to physical harm or imprisonment, or it can endanger your sources. The decision has to be the journalist's based on his or her own analysis of their circumstances. Don't be afraid to seek help from experienced colleagues.

### Portrayal of / glamorising terrorism, violence, crime and other anti-social behaviour

Terrorists need publicity. They seek a favourable understanding of their cause, if not their act. They want to use the media to infer legitimacy on their cause, and on any other entity sympathetic to it. They want coverage that will damage their enemy. Amplifying or spreading fear, or causing economic loss or a loss of confidence in the government is a good result for terrorists.

You must also remember that terrorist organizations may also seek to court, or place, sympathetic personnel in the media.

Naturally, the public has a right to the truth, but a journalist and editor's dilemma involves being the messenger for the terrorist's aims.

The journalist must balance the need for accuracy with:

- the sensationalism which always presents itself in attacks (violence so commonly leads in the media);
- the requirement not to glamorise the "cause"; and
- the sensitivities of the victims and the community's grieving.

### *Self-censorship*

Journalists and editors always ask themselves about what they will include in their story. To show horror solely for its shock value is the same as being a pornographer of war.

So deciding what to include also means making difficult decisions about what to exclude.

The journalist or editor asks themselves certain questions.

- How much is too much?
- What pictures should be used, where and why?
- Which ones should we not use and why not?
- Should we blur parts to reduce the shock factor a bit?
- For print editors, should pictures go on an inside page or the front page?
- How should we caption and contextualize what we are showing?

The answer to these questions is about knowing your readership, the community which you serve, and the editorial policy of your media outlet.

## Respect for religion / minorities and non-discrimination

Having responsibility to the story first and foremost does not exclude you from responsibility for its consequences. You must be aware of incitement and hate speech.

During times of terrorist attack, people are at heightened states of tension and sensitivity, and frequently minorities, and also religious minorities, come under attack.

The media therefore has a particular responsibility towards balance, and not to exacerbate existing strains within society.

## Putting people in danger

In covering terrorism, you will deal with things - documents, recordings, sources, informants, and increasingly, social media - which undoubtedly will help a story and uncover truth.

But this can incur costs. It might:

- put the safety of human sources at risk;
- reveal enough about intelligence methods to enable significant damage to your government;
- compromise ongoing operations; or
- warn enemies of operations to come.

Withholding the evidence, on the other hand, renders citizens unable to judge about the current events in their own country.

But the basic principle as a journalist is that ignorance hampers us as participants in an ongoing act of national choice. If we don't know what our government is doing, we can't hold it accountable.

## Relations with police and other security authorities

Police, security organs, or even governments more broadly want understanding, cooperation, restraint, and loyalty from the media in efforts to limit terrorist harm to society and in efforts to punish or apprehend those responsible for terrorist acts. The government wants to advance their agenda and not that of the terrorist.

In the event of an attack, you will want information from the authorities about the attack, what they are doing about it, and how they intend to prevent further attacks. These are all perfectly legitimate questions your readers will want to know the answers to.

The skill is in getting the answers safely and legitimately, and then conveying them in a balanced way. Remember, everything in a good story is evidence-based. No conjecture, no guessing. If in doubt, leave it out.

### *Using sources*

Sources are an excellent way of creating context and providing evidence. Unnamed sources in the published product is not ideal, but at least the journalist knows who they are talking to you, even if the reader doesn't.

What's important is understanding the motive of why they are talking to you in the first place, and then verifying what you are told. Good reporters do not transmit a source's claims unexamined.

You need to piece together the story. The story almost never comes from one or two sources who tell you the whole thing. It comes from an accumulation of small facts that lead eventually to the big fact in your story.

## **SESSION 3: PREPARING AND DEALING WITH THE STRESS AND TRAUMA OF REPORTING ON TERRORISM**

### The special pressures associated with reporting on terrorism

With constant pressures from deadlines and competition, stress has always been intrinsic to the practice of journalism.

Today, the news industry is much more volatile and jobs are less secure than ever before, and technology puts reporters under relentless pressure to be more productive. Reporters are often expected to file for radio, television, and websites, as well as print.

This has sped up the demand for news, but reduced the amount of time available in which to do it. In recent years this has grown so intense it has become a serious occupational hazard in covering the news.

The basic point is that the journalist needs to be in good shape themselves before they can report well, and you must be alert to the possible negative consequences of covering terrorism and its traumas.

The most creative and productive journalists will be those who understand trauma and know how to cope with it for themselves and for colleagues.

Like every human being, people in the media suffer emotional consequences from their work. Common responses include:

- anxiety, fear, nervousness, anger, disbelief, shock;
- unremitting recall of disturbing images;
- social disconnection, and emotional numbness.

That someone else's suffering is worse should not serve as an excuse to deny or minimize your own.

Events can trigger the diagnosis of acute stress disorder, a milder form of post-traumatic stress disorder. When symptoms (eg dissociation, intrusive thoughts and images, generalized anxiety) last more than a month, they are described by the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

PTSD sufferers often relive the experience through nightmares, flashbacks, and estrangement from their own emotions and surrounds. These symptoms, in turn, may lead to insomnia and other conditions. They may be severe and enduring enough to significantly impair daily life.

Good journalism requires healthy journalists, not those who might filter the news through their own emotional problems.

### Ways of addressing the stress this creates

Although the job of the journalist is not to heal the community, they must realise that their words will have an effect not only on that community, but also themselves. Being careful can help to avoid any unnecessary suffering.

Given that stress disorder of some kind is a possibility, journalists rely upon a variety of coping strategies, including:

- individual therapy - talking to a professional therapist about their experiences;
- debriefing with other journalists - sharing experiences with others who have been in the same boat as you;
- stress reduction of hobbies or physical exercise.



## Stockholm syndrome

While we have mentioned self-censorship earlier, where essentially a journalist makes conscious decisions to exclude information, something else to mention is Stockholm syndrome.

There are no widely accepted diagnostic criteria to identify the syndrome, which is also known as terror-bonding or trauma bonding.

There are two facets to explore.

1. Stockholm syndrome causing terrorism, and so the need to understand it;
2. Stockholm syndrome taking effect on the journalist, reducing the quality or balance of his or her work.

1. The journalist must ask what leads someone to kill many innocent people, often committing suicide at the same time at the behest of someone whose authority to do so is highly questionable.

The power imbalance which is at the centre of Stockholm syndrome is also a useful unit of analysis with which to approach the causes of the terror attack you are covering. The underlying point to takeaway is that no terror attack exists in a vacuum. There is always more to the story.

2. Secondly, Stockholm syndrome taking effect on the journalist, reducing the quality or balance of his or her work.

The danger is that developing positive feelings towards perpetrators of an attack reduces your ability to cover the story objectively.

Ultimately, this is a point about balance in journalism. A good and fair journalist tells both sides of the story. Failure to do so means the balance swings too far to one side or the other. The journalist needs support networks, coping strategies, and he or she needs colleagues or editors at work to understand the pressures and be alert to the signs.

## Safety measures

### *Employers*

Having systems in place to protect and care for journalists covering traumatic events, or even to be aware of this issue, is not common.

In general, it is not a primary concern of a news employer. Generally employed journalists, and especially freelancers, face a burden in caring for themselves.

The result is that the industry loses out in terms of staff energy, productivity and morale.

Recognising the difficulties faced by reporters in the field, and understanding how best they can sustainably report the news, is important for employers to understand.

### *The individual journalist*

In the field, being physically fit can help you avoid injury and undue stress. One should also be emotionally prepared, appropriately equipped, properly trained, and adequately insured.

The right kind of training is highly recommended for journalists who cover armed confrontation of any kind. Skills typically taught include personal-awareness skills oriented toward combat risks and battlefield hazards, along with emergency first aid.

<b>SESSION 4: INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS</b>
<b>CONVENTIONS AND STANDARDS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM.</b>

### **1. Media Regulation in a Globalised World – Legal Standards and Implications**

#### **Topics to Cover**

- Start with some reasons why we regulate communications
- Discuss questions of jurisdiction
- Discuss various types of media and their differences and similarities
- Discuss new ways media is consumed
- Introduce international legal standards for regulation of media and the concept of ‘international best practice’
- Group discussion questions

### **2. General Reasons for Communications Regulation**

- Ensure technical quality
- Boost the sector and encourage growth
- Protect the public and consumers
- The special role of (broadcast) media in society

### **3. Starting Point: Questions of Jurisdiction—Can it be regulated?**

- Is the media outlet headquartered in the territory?
- Are there offices in the territory?
- Are the means of transmission in the territory?
  - Terrestrial broadcasting
  - Satellite broadcasting--uplinking
- Are means of distribution in the territory?
  - Cable operators
- What are the means of receiving, and can they be regulated?
  - Satellite broadcasting—receivers
- Is it possible for users to access without any other presence by the media outlet in the territory?
  - Internet

### **4. Context for Regulation: Different Types of Media**

- Terrestrial television (analogue and digital)
- Terrestrial radio
- Satellite television
- Satellite radio
- Internet
- Mobile telephony
- Print publications

### **5. Terrestrial Television and Radio Broadcasting**

- Delivers powerful visual images and sounds, often live, and thus has greater impact than print (and television perhaps has even more impact than radio because of its visual imagery)
- Is the most important source of news and information for most people in many countries

- Can be stumbled onto by mistake, when changing channels
- Can be watched/listened to in a group setting
- At least in theory, is open to anyone who plugs it in (and thus, unlike satellite television, requires no equipment for reception, selection of channels, etc.)

## 6. Terrestrial Television and Radio Broadcasting (cont'd)

- Uses radio frequency spectrum to broadcast, which is a scarce public resource
- Radio frequency spectrum requires some organisation to prevent interference
- Has high barriers to entry (expensive transmission equipment; need for license)
- Broadcast through transmitters with a limited geographical area, a government can generally control which broadcasters broadcast on their territory

## 7. Satellite Broadcasting

- Can be transmitted from abroad. Incoming satellite signals cannot be easily blocked, so more difficult to regulate.
- Not received just by plugging in, but rather requires special equipment. Such equipment normally allows the user to block channels (e.g., to protect children).
- High barriers to entry.
- Scarcity is much less of an issue than with terrestrial broadcasting.

## 8. Mobile Phones

- People now watch television on them
- Usually used by teens and older
- Less likely to be watched in a group
- Require the user to choose content

## 9. Internet

- Users search and select content
- Users can protect themselves and their children with filtering software
- Often used alone
- Usually used by older teens or adults or with adult supervision
- *Content posted and hosted abroad can be accessed as easily as local content*

## 10. Print

- Less expensive to set up than broadcasting
- More difficult to stumble upon offensive content (can see a headline and move on)
- No imagery and sound, thus arguably less of an impact
- Does not use a scarce, public resource, thus everyone, at least in theory, could own a “printing press”—all you need is a computer and printer or copy machine.

## 11. How are media consumption habits changing?

- Digital challenge: new nonlinear platforms are breaking boundaries that separate TV, radio, print and online and allowing consumers to receive virtually any kind of content whenever they want, wherever they want.
- Proliferation of new devices: accelerated the pace of innovation in applications that are altering the ways in which audiences experience content.
- Digital advancements have brought challenges for traditional media--“Porting Effect”: studies have shown that as people age, they don’t abandon the media they grew up with. It can be assumed that today’s youth will remain loyal to online media.

## 12. Important (relatively) recent changes in media consumption

- Nonlinear TV: video content that can be viewed online irrespective of time, location or provider. PSBs must prepare for the likelihood that the use of nonlinear TV will surpass traditional viewings in the near future.
- Web Radio: Linear web radio, which offers static online audio through browsers, is widely available, while nonlinear audio streaming (through Spotify and i-Tunes, e.g.) is gaining popularity.
- Dual Screening: consuming several forms of media at the same time such as chatting online while watching TV. As smartphones, tablets and other devices become more affordable and ubiquitous, experts predict that dual screening will become more prevalent and to capitalise on this trend, traditional media must increasingly offer complementary and interactive content.

## 13. Legal Protections for Free Speech and Media

- Most countries have a constitutional provision protecting freedom of expression.
- International agreements, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, contain provisions protecting expression and specifying a right to impart and receive information through any media.
- Most countries are signatories to these international accords, and thus are bound by them to a certain extent. They tend to be viewed as goals even in non-signatory countries.

## 14. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.*

## 15. Legal Standards for Restrictions on Media and Expression

- Right to freedom of expression is not absolute
- Every society restricts speech and media in certain circumstances
- Legal certainty and consistency of limitations are important
- In sum, restrictions should not be overly broad, but rather should be appropriately targeting to accomplish a legitimate purpose

## 16. Legal Standards for Restrictions on Media and Expression

Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights states:

*the exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.*

## 17. Legal Standards for Restrictions on Media and Expression

Under US law:

- Content-based restrictions on speech must be narrowly tailored to address a compelling interest.

- These interests are limited to things such as advocacy of imminent illegal conduct, defamation (meaning damage to the reputation of others), obscenity, and fraud (lying intentionally to take advantage of someone else).

#### **18. International Best Practice**

- There are standards for regulation of various media that are generally accepted in North America and Europe and have become models for countries with a more transitional communications environment—these are often referred to as ‘international best practice’ or ‘international standards’
- These take into consideration the legal standards that we have discussed today
- They also take into consideration the various similarities and differences among different types of media
- There is not always 100% agreement, but there are a number of generally accepted norms and principles

#### **19. Different types of media**

- Some media regulation can apply to different types of media but in many instances, the form of delivery determines the kind of regulation
- In a society with freedom of expression the media regulation should be as “light” as possible, adapted to the type of media
- Regulation is not restriction

#### **20. Print—light regulation**

- Print is ordinarily not subject to any licensing or registration requirements
- Often not subject to impartiality requirements, even in regimes that set such requirements for broadcasters
- Many countries allow self-regulation of printed press
- Rationale: At least in theory, people can counter speech with which they do not agree by printing and disseminating their own message. This is getting more and more true every day, as computers and printers become more and more affordable.

#### **21. Internet—light regulation**

- Lighter regulation than other media most everywhere.
- There seems to be a hesitation to burden what is seen as an exciting new medium with excessive restrictions.
- Internet requires activity by the user.
- Also, there is a recognition that, absent filtering, little can be done to prevent access to internet content, as restricted content can be hosted and accessed from abroad.
- The internet is now used daily for streaming audio and video content—content is more and more like broadcast content.

#### **22. Broadcasting—licensing regimes**

- Terrestrial television is most commonly regulated through licensing
- The license normally includes a requirement that the licensee follow certain content codes, rules and regulations
- Usually subject to content codes setting higher standards than that for print media (e.g., impartiality requirements and during elections)
- Public service broadcasters generally have additional obligations, such as universal service, programming for minorities, programming in minority languages, children’s

programming, and additional requirements during elections (fairness, voter information)

### **23. Why greater regulation for broadcasting?**

- The frequency spectrum as a limited natural resource
- Convergence of technologies, many uses of the frequency spectrum
- The impact of broadcasting as compared to other forms of media
- The special role of broadcasting in society (education, culture, minority cultures)
- The potential harm possible through media (incitement to hatred and violence, defamation)
- The special role of broadcasting in elections
- Advertising and broadcasting (consumer protection)

### **24. Broadcasting—licensing regimes**

Satellite

- Stations uplinking domestically or with headquarters in the country generally can be licensed and regulated like terrestrial stations.
- The problem is what to do with someone broadcasting inappropriate content from abroad. Cannot block incoming signals from abroad, so limited in approach.
  - Could try to restrict reception by, for example, prohibiting the sale of special decoding equipment (but this will hit also desired satellite broadcasting).
  - States can also enter into international agreements with the state from which content is uplinked to require compliance with certain content standards.
  - States can also work with satellite operators to ban the broadcast of certain stations.

### **25. Goals of broadcast regulation**

- Ensure quality of technical aspects and programming
- Allow for diversity of opinion and diversity of programming
- Protect and promote local culture
- Protect local cultural, moral, social and religious values
- Promote a competitive environment
- Protect minors from material that would harm them emotionally, psychologically or physically

### **26. Goals of broadcast regulation (cont'd)**

- Private v. public broadcasting: public interest requirements for all broadcasting?
- Encourage technical developments:
  - Digital broadcasting
    - More choice
    - Availability for all
    - Globalisation
    - Transition from analogue (protection of broadcasters, protection of audience)

### **27. Goals of broadcast regulation (cont'd)**

Broadcasting is pervasive and persuasive

- Protect and promote local social, cultural, moral, and religious values
- Protect citizens, especially minors, from harmful or offensive material
- Ensure that the public receives accurate and impartial news
- Ensure that people are treated fairly and privacy is respected

- Ensure that broadcasting is not used to incite to terrorism, violence, hatred or disorder or to promote crime
- Protect the public from improper advertising
- Provide a transparent and consistent framework for business investment

## **28. Protection of minors**

- Material that might seriously harm the physical, mental or moral development of young people under eighteen must not be broadcast at any time
- People under the age of eighteen must be protected by scheduling and warnings from material that is unsuitable for them
- Specific rules apply for specific themes and at specific times
- Rules apply for involvement of minors in programmes

## **29. Public service broadcasting**

- Public service broadcasters are different from state broadcasters, even though they receive state support (funding). The distinction is that they are independent of government. They are, in theory, obliged to provide some public interest programming in return for the state support they receive, but this programming is defined in terms of what the public wants, and not what the government wants.
- Public service broadcasters generally have additional obligations, such as universal service, programming for minorities, programming in minority languages, children's programming, and additional requirements during elections (fairness, voter information)

## **30. Public service broadcasting (cont'd)**

- PSBs often have difficulty adapting to the fast paced digital world.
- Most PSBs have been slow to move beyond the linear worked in which their audiences can tune into TV and radio programs only at specified times on specified channels.
- They lack the financial resources to compete with large global corporations in the new war for high-viewership content.
- Their freedom to offer programming, to provide new services on new platforms, and to compete for advertising revenue is typically constrained by law.

## **31. Discussion: Reasons for regulating broadcasting**

- Are the reasons for regulating broadcasting still valid? (as new technologies allow so much more space in the frequency spectrum and as the audience has so many more different channels of information)
- Should regulation change in this changed situation?

### **Case 1**

Silly cartoons of the President of the country and of her children are published in a main daily newspaper and on the paper's web-site. They are also discussed in a TV programme, where the person who made them shows even worse, very offensive cartoons and tells why he made them - the TV host makes no comments but just says that we shall listen to the artist. What should be the legal consequences and actions, if any? What steps, if any should the regulator take?

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### Case 2

A blogger uses a hidden camera to record a conversation with a university professor who expresses support for a group in a neighbouring country that has been classified by the local government as a terrorist organisation. The blogger puts it on her blog and sends it to the web-site of a newspaper who publishes a link to it on-line and in its print edition and sends it to a television station that shows a short excerpt in a documentary about the impact of modern media. How should media policy address this?

### Case 3

- The comments section of a popular local online publication is populated with personal attacks on a local businessman, stating that he is funneling money to groups labeled as terrorists by the government.
- The publication has received a written complaint from the businessman, including a factual refutation of the allegations.
- The businessman has published this rebuttal in the comments section online, immediately below the allegations.
- The publication has taken no action to remove the comments or otherwise address the issue after 72 hours.
- What policies and rules would you suggest to address such issues?

### Case 4

- A vast majority of readers of online news in your country get their information from the sites of 8 local newspapers and 3 foreign news sites. News is also widely available on thousands of other local and foreign sites.
- All of these sites have begun showing graphic images of violence committed by local groups labeled as terrorists by the government.
- Some have shown government retaliation and described it as unjustified.
- There has been local protests by both sides as a result.
- How would you try to address this?

### **Broadcast Code: Incitement to Terrorism, Violence, Hatred or Disorder—UK examples:**

#### Ofcom Relevant Codes:

- 2.4 Programmes must not include material (whether in individual programmes or in programmes taken together) which, taking into account the context, condones or glamorises violent, dangerous or seriously antisocial behaviour and is likely to encourage others to copy such behaviour.
- 3.1 Material likely to encourage or incite the commission of crime or to lead to disorder must not be included in television or radio services.
- 3.6 Broadcasters must use their best endeavours so as not to broadcast material that could endanger lives or prejudice the success of attempts to deal with a hijack or kidnapping.
- 5.3 Terrorist or criminal activity



- Particular care is required with a programme which carries the views of people or organisations who use or advocate the use of violence or other criminal activity within the British Isles or abroad to attain political or other ends. Programmes must not give the impression of condoning criminal activity, even (or especially) where its seriousness may not be accepted or recognised in every section of society. (See Appendix 4 - Terrorism Act UK 2000.)

### **Case Study: DM Digital**

- Ofcom fined Islamic Television Channel DM Digital for inciting hatred and murder live on air
  - Live lecture by an Islamic scholar who advocated killing people who insult the prophet Muhammad
  - Ofcom’s translation suggests he told viewers: “If someone takes a step in the love of the Prophet, then this is not terrorism”
  - Ofcom said: "The programme Rehmatul Lil Alameen featured a live lecture by an Islamic scholar, which included material that Ofcom considered was likely to encourage or incite the commission of crime or to lead to disorder
  - DM Digital became the first UK broadcaster censured by Ofcom for airing material "likely to encourage or incite the commission of crime or to lead to disorder".

### **Case 2: Woolwich Attack, May 2013**

- *“Ofcom received almost 680 complaints about the broadcast news coverage of the killing of Fusilier Lee Rigby in Woolwich on 22 May 2013. In summary, complainants considered the television coverage of the incident on several channels and programmes (which included mobile telephone footage taken at the scene of the incident) was too graphic and distressing, insensitive and disrespectful to the family of Fusilier Rigby, and gave one of the alleged attackers a platform to justify and explain his actions. Many complainants also expressed concern at the effect that the content may have on younger viewers. “*
- Verdict: Ofcom concluded that none of the broadcasts breached Rule 1.3 (material unsuitable for children must be appropriately scheduled) or Rule 2.3 (offensive material must be justified by the context) of the Code. We also concluded that LBC did not breach Rule 1.5 (radio broadcasters must have particular regard to times when children are particularly likely to be listening). While the coverage was detailed and at times distressing, we did not consider that the images were too offensive for broadcast given they were appropriately scheduled and justified by the context. We have however set out some guidance to broadcasters about, for example, the need to give appropriate warnings to viewers before broadcasting material which might cause offence or distress to viewers.”

### **Australia Communications and Media Commission (ACMA)**

#### **Narrowcast Code General Guidelines for programming**

- 1.3 Narrowcasters will not broadcast programs which are likely to incite or perpetuate hatred against or gratuitously vilify any person or group on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, sexual preference, transgender status, HIV/AIDS status, religion, age, colour or disability.

### **ACMA Ruling—Al Manar Television**

- Al-Manar Television Ruling (Dec. 2010)

- Breach - clause 1.2 of the Open Narrowcast Code [program was not presented fairly]
- Breach - clause 1.3 of the Open Narrowcast Code [gratuitously vilify a group on the basis of ethnicity and religion]
- Note: The French Broadcasting Authority (CSA) also ruled that Al-Manar's words constituted an incitement to hatred or violence on grounds of religion or nationality

**Case Study: Kosovo Ibar River Incident**

- On March 15 2003, the media reported that at least two Serbs and a dog chased four Albanian boys into the river that bisects Mitrovica and one of them drowned.
- Revenge generated by biased media coverage followed and reprisal attacks on Serbs claimed 30 lives and wounded 600
- Note: Radio Televizia Kosovo (RTK) was condemned for repeating on a loop the testimony of the brother of the drowned Albanian boy with no Serb response or alternative account

## SESSION 5: JOURNALIST CODES OF CONDUCT IN CRISES AND TERROR EVENTS

### CASE STUDY 1: BBC

Has Issued Editorial Guidelines to be followed in the case of war, terrorism and emergencies, covering various aspects of reporting:

War:

- Make the sources of information clear, particularly when there are conflicting claims
- Explain the rules under which they are operating if they withhold information
- Respect human dignity without sanitising the realities of war. There should be clear editorial justification for graphic pictures.

Terror:

- Do not tarnish credibility by the use of words that carry emotional or value judgements such as the word “terrorist” which can be a barrier rather than an aid to understanding
- We should not adopt other people’s language as our own. It is usually inappropriate to use words like “liberate”, “court martial” or “execute” in the absence of clear judicial process
- We should use words which specifically describe the perpetrator such as “bomber”, “attacker”, “gunman”, “kidnapper”, “insurgent” and “militant”
- Any situation where BBC staff may be in potential breach of the Terrorism Act must be referred to Controller Editorial Policy and Programme Legal Advice
- We should not reveal security details or other sensitive information not widely in the public domain which might assist an attack.
- We do not report threats against named individuals unless they have produced a visible effect, for example the cancellation of a public appearance.
- Any proposal to attend an event staged by proscribed organisations or groups with a known record for acts of terror must be referred to a senior editorial figure or to the commissioning editor

Hijacking, Kidnapping, Hostage Taking and Sieges:

- We do not interview a perpetrator live on air
- We do not broadcast any video and/or audio provided by a perpetrator live on air.
- We broadcast recordings made by perpetrators whether of staged events, violent acts or their victims only after referral to a senior editorial figure
- Delay broadcasting live material of sensitive stories if the outcome is unpredictable and if distressing material unsuitable for broadcast without careful thought is recorded

### CASE STUDY 2: USA Poynter Institute (A leading journalist institute)

Guidelines for covering hostage taking crises, terrorist actions that include:

- Always assume that the hostage taker, gunman, or terrorist has access to the reporting.
- Avoid describing with words or showing with still photography and video any information that could divulge the tactics or positions of SWAT team members.
- Fight the urge to become a player in any standoff, hostage situation, or terrorist incident. Journalists should become personally involved only as a last resort and with the explicit approval of top news management and the consultation of trained hostage negotiators on the scene.
- Be forthright with viewers, listeners, or readers about why certain information is being withheld if security reasons are involved.

- Seriously weigh the benefits to the public of what information might be given out versus what potential harm that information might cause. This is especially important in live reporting of an ongoing situation.
- Strongly resist the temptation to telephone a gunman or hostage taker. Journalists generally are not trained in negotiation techniques, and one wrong question or inappropriate word could jeopardize someone's life. Furthermore, just calling in could tie up phone lines or otherwise complicate communication efforts of the negotiators.
- Notify authorities immediately if a hostage taker or terrorist calls the newsroom. Also, have a plan ready for how to respond.
- Challenge any gut reaction to "go live" from the scene of a hostage-taking crisis, unless there are strong journalistic reasons for a live, on-the-scene report. Things can go wrong very quickly in a live report, endangering lives or damaging negotiations. Furthermore, ask if the value of a live, on-the-scene report is really justifiable compared to the harm that could occur.
- Give no analyses or comments on a hostage taker's or terrorist's demands. As bizarre or ridiculous (or even legitimate) as such demands may be, it is important that negotiators take all demands seriously.
- Be very cautious in any reporting on the medical condition of hostages until after a crisis is concluded. Also, be cautious when interviewing hostages or released hostages while a crisis continues.
- Exercise care when interviewing family members or friends of those involved in standoff situations. Make sure the interview legitimately advances the story for the public and is not simply conducted for the shock value of the emotions conveyed or as a conduit for the interviewee to transmit messages to specific individuals.
- Go beyond the basic story of the hostage taking or standoff to report on the larger issues behind the story, be it the how and why of what happened, reports on the preparation and execution of the SWAT team, or the issues related to the incident.

### **CASE STUDY 3: Iraq**

- Iraqi journalists identified and defined terms that had the potential to incite violence in the run-up to the Iraqi national elections in 2010. This lexicon was compiled and distributed before the elections to help journalists and editors avoid inflammatory reporting.
- In the second step, content analysis of the 2010 elections coverage identified the prevalence, intensity, and location of the terms so that news media could begin to self-regulate their coverage and regulators and media monitors could undertake more effective oversight.
- Third step: USIP shared the content analysis which each individual organisation could customize assess and modify conflict-related news coverage. During this stage, Iraqi media stakeholders added to their

The process produced a comprehensive on the kinds of words not to use when reporting during elections but also in crisis situations in order to avoid inciting hatred or divisions

### **CASE STUDY 4: Kenya**

Relevant sections of the Kenyan Media Council Code

#### **Obscenity, taste and tone in reporting**

(1) In general, persons subject to this Act shall not publish obscene or vulgar material unless such material contains news.

(2) Publication of photographs showing mutilated bodies, bloody incidents and abhorrent scenes shall be avoided unless the publication or broadcast of such photographs will serve the public interest.

(3) Where possible an alert shall be issued to warn viewers or readers of the information being published.

#### **Covering ethnic, religious and sectarian conflict**

(1) News, views or comments on ethnic, religious or sectarian dispute shall be published or broadcast after proper verification of facts and presented with due caution and restraint in a manner which is conducive to the creation of an atmosphere congenial to national harmony, amity and peace.

(2) News reports or commentaries shall not be written or broadcast in a manner likely to inflame the passions, aggravate the - tension or accentuate the strained relations between the communities concerned.

(3) Articles or broadcasts with the potential to exacerbate communal trouble shall be avoided.

#### **Acts of violence**

(1) The media shall avoid presenting acts of violence, armed robberies, banditry and terrorist activities in a manner that glorifies such anti-social conduct.

(2) Newspapers shall not allow their columns to be used for writings which tend to encourage or glorify social evils, warlike activities, ethnic, racial or religious hostilities.

#### **Westgate Mall Attacks—Failure of the Code of Conduct**

- Attempts by journalists to exclusively focus on ‘shooting’ the target—terrorists aiming their guns on their targets, so showing the victims of terror attack

Some tactics are considered as working in favour of terrorist groups, such as by identifying their targets among a list provided by the media. Comparatively, the media provide terror individuals the platform to compare themselves with governments as demonstrated in the following statement:

*“if terrorism is a description for aggression, brutally and those who destroy life and property for no reason, then the United States is a terrorist itself. America is just trying to show us its might and power”. The man does not hide his joy by stating that: “we are happy to be included in the list of terrorist ... only regret is that we are number 41 on the list and not number 1” Unidentified man, KTN, Oct 2013*

#### **The Media Council of Kenya Media Monitoring Report on the Coverage of the attack faulted the media for breaches in the Code of Conduct.**

- 70 percent of the respondents felt that media failed to ask hard and most critical questions of the attack of historical, cultural and social explanation of terrorism and instead focused on dramatic, most violent, bizarre, tantalising and brutal accounts of the attack magnifying the impact of their horrifying brutality.

- In some instances there was lack of verification of accuracy and reliability of information being relayed as well as challenges of live coverage and gate keeping of information before airing. Similarly, there were challenges of social media platforms as alternative sources of information about the incident

- Journalists were also found to report with disregard for personal safety as most lacked protective gear and training on how to tackle the challenges of covering terrorist attacks.

*Terrorism is a form of political communication where violence is used to gain attention  
(Kondrasuk, 2005)*

## CODES OF CONDUCT IN CRISES

### **UK**

BBC Editorial Guidelines

*On War, Terror and Emergencies :*

Attached as a PDF

CASE STUDY: BBC on the July 7<sup>th</sup> Attacks

<http://www.theguardian.com/media/2005/dec/16/terrorism.broadcasting>

### **USA**

USA Poynter Institute (Global leader in Journalism training)—Guidelines for covering hostage taking crises, terrorist actions etc

<http://www.poynter.org/uncategorized/1836/guidelines-for-covering-hostage-taking-crises-prison-uprisings-terrorist-actions/>

### **Iraq**

- Iraqi journalists identified and defined terms that had the potential to incite violence in the run-up to the Iraqi national elections in 2010. This lexicon was compiled and distributed before the elections to help journalists and editors avoid inflammatory reporting.
- In the second step, content analysis of the 2010 elections coverage identified the prevalence, intensity, and location of the terms so that news media could begin to self-regulate their coverage and regulators and media monitors could undertake more effective oversight.
- Third step: USIP shared the content analysis which each individual organisation could customize assess and modify conflict-related news coverage. During this stage, Iraqi media stakeholders added to their

Quite comprehensive on the kinds of words not to use when reporting during elections but also in crisis situations in order to avoid inciting hatred or divisions

<http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/Preventing%20Media%20Incitement%20Guidelines-English.pdf>

### **KENYA Journalist Code of Conduct**

Relevant sections of the Kenyan Media Council Code

#### ***Obscenity, taste and tone in reporting***

*(1) In general, persons subject to this Act shall not publish obscene or vulgar material unless such material contains news.*

*(2) Publication of photographs showing mutilated bodies, bloody incidents and abhorrent scenes shall be avoided unless the publication or broadcast of such photographs will serve the public interest.*

*(3) Where possible an alert shall be issued to warn viewers or readers of the information being published.*

#### ***Covering ethnic, religious and sectarian conflict***

*(1) News, views or comments on ethnic, religious or sectarian dispute shall be published or broadcast after proper verification of facts and presented with due caution and restraint in a manner which is conducive to the creation of an atmosphere congenial to national harmony, amity and peace.*

*(2) News reports or commentaries shall not be written or broadcast in a manner likely to inflame the passions, aggravate the - tension or accentuate the strained relations between the communities concerned.*

*(3) Articles or broadcasts with the potential to exacerbate communal trouble shall be avoided.*

#### **Acts of violence**

*(1) The media shall avoid presenting acts of violence, armed robberies, banditry and terrorist activities in a manner that glorifies such anti-social conduct.*

*(2) Newspapers shall not allow their columns to be used for writings which tend to encourage or glorify social evils, warlike activities, ethnic, racial or religious hostilities.*

#### **CASE STUDY: Westgate Mall Attacks**

- Attempts by journalists to exclusively focus on ‘shooting’ the target—terrorists aiming their guns on their targets, so showing the victims of terror attack

Some tactics are considered working for terrorist groups example, identify their targets among a list provided by the media. Comparatively, the media provide terror individuals the platform to compare themselves with governments as demonstrated in the following statement:

*“if terrorism is a description for aggression, brutally and those who destroy life and property for no reason, then the United States is a terrorist itself. America is just trying to show us its might and power”. The man does not hide his joy by stating that: “we are happy to be included in the list of terrorist ... only regret is that we are number 41 on the list and not number 1” Unidentified man, KTN, Oct 2013*

*ARTICLE: <http://www.mediacouncil.or.ke/en/mck/index.php/news/101-media-council-tables-findings-on-westgate-coverage>*