



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF THE SECURITY SERVICE OF UKRAINE

GENDER SENSITIVITY OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

UKRAINIAN STRATCOM: LESSONS AND CHALLENGES OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR

STATE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE WAR

STRATCOM AS A SYSTEM. A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE SECURITY AND DEFENCE SECTOR OF UKRAINE IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS UNDER THE WAR CONDITIONS

# IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS UNDER THE WAR CONDITIONS. RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST CASES

ANALYTICAL DIMENSION OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

ORGANISATION OF DISCOURSE PRACTICES OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

BEST CASES OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS IMPLEMENTATION. FIRST YEAR OF THE FULL-SCALE AGGRESSION OF THE RF AGAINST UKRAINE

ASYMMETRIC OPPOSITION TO INFORMATION PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS OF THE ENEMY

PROACTIVE RESPONSE TO HYBRID THREAT

PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE MILITARY AGGRESSION

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS IN SOCIAL NETWORKS



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**NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SECURITY SERVICE OF UKRAINE**

**IMPLEMENTATION  
OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS  
UNDER THE WAR CONDITIONS.  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
AND BEST CASES**

*Practical guide*

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The publication considers the experience of using strategic communications tools in the conditions of full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine. Specialists from the security and state institutions, scientists, journalists, volunteers address a number of important issues, in particular: the development of strategic communications of the state in conditions of war; proactivity of the strategic communications in overcoming the enemy information and psychological influences; changes in psychological mechanisms of implementation of strategic communications in conditions of military aggression; gender sensitivity of strategic communications; effective analytical technologies for systemic understanding of the modern context. Suggested recommendations are based on the field experience of the authors. The publication is the result of a joint project of the National Academy of the Security Service of Ukraine and the NGO "Youth Centre of the Atlantic Council of Ukraine," carried out with the support of NATO. For specialists of security and state institutions who deal with the issues of strategic communications.

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## LIST OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AF	–	Armed Forces (of any country)
ATO	–	Anti-terrorist operation in the east of Ukraine 2014-2018
CC of Ukraine	–	Criminal Code of Ukraine
CIMIC	–	Civil-Military Cooperation
CMU	–	Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
CRSV	–	conflict-related sexual violence
FISU	–	Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine
GS	–	General Staff
IDPs	–	internally displaced persons
ICC	–	International Criminal Court
JFO	–	Joint Forces Operation
MD NP of Ukraine	–	Main Department of the National Police of Ukraine
MESU	–	Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
MFA of Ukraine	–	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
MIAU	–	Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine
MoD	–	Ministry of Defence (of any country)
NG of Ukraine	–	National Guard of Ukraine
NGO	–	non-governmental organisations
NOEP	–	national organs of executive power
NP of Ukraine	–	National Police of Ukraine
NSDC of Ukraine	–	National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine
PsyOps (PSYOP)	–	psychological operations
PTSD	–	post-traumatic stress disorder
RF	–	Russian Federation
SBGS of Ukraine	–	State Border Guard Service of Ukraine
SBU / SSU	–	Security Service of Ukraine
SDS	–	Security and Defence Sector
SDSI	–	Institute(s) of the Security and Defence Sector
SESU	–	State Emergency Service of Ukraine
SESU	–	State Emergency Service of Ukraine
SIO	–	special information operation
SSO of the Armed Forces of Ukraine	–	Special Operations Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine
TA	–	target audience
TOT	–	temporarily occupied territories
UNSC	–	UN Security Council
ZSU	–	Armed Forces of Ukraine

## PREFACE

The full-scale military aggression of the Russian Federation became a serious challenge for the security and state institutions of Ukraine, an adequate response to which was made possible, in particular, due to the effectiveness of strategic communications system. Each institution received a unique experience of its implementation, developed its own methodologies and carried out unique information operations to counter destructive communications of the Russian Federation proactively.

On November 23, 2022, the best Ukrainian strategic communications professionals, participants of the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference *Strategic Communications under War Conditions*, which was held at our Academy, spoke about this. This day is remembered by all who were present there for the professional communication that took place for the first time since 24 / 02 / 22, and for a partial blackout. Then, after the shelling, in the dark hall of the academic library, we decided to create a publication that would summarise the experience of strategic communications of security and state institutions of Ukraine under martial law and offer recommendations for their implementation during a full-scale Russian aggression. These are the moments that *one voice* communications as NATO experts call them emerge.

The practical guide *Implementation of strategic communications under the war conditions. Recommendations and best cases* has a narrative history – birth in times of crisis for our State, understanding of the first year of the war, creation of a strategic communications interagency team.

In this edition, Ukrainian professionals and foreign partners consider a number of important issues: the development of strategic communications of the State under the conditions of war; realisation of strategic communications proactivity to overcome hostile informational and psychological influences; changes in the psychological mechanisms of strategic communications development under the conditions of military aggression; gender sensitivity of strategic communications; effective analytical technologies for a systematic understanding of the modern context.

The publication presents the success stories of Ukrainian StratCom, created, experienced and implemented by professionals-practitioners of the security and state institutions of Ukraine, scientists, volunteers, and journalists under the extremely difficult war conditions. These cases contain not only personal experiences, but also stories of courage, national resilience and indomitability.

Glory to the Ukrainian StratCom! Glory to Ukraine!

Rector of the National Academy  
of the Security Service of Ukraine

**Andrii CHERNIAK,**  
Doctor of Law

**BEST CASES OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS  
IMPLEMENTATION.  
FIRST YEAR OF THE FULL-SCALE AGRESSION  
OF THE RF AGAINST UKRAINE**

# INTERACTION WITH DIFFERENT TARGET AUDIENCES UNDER THE WAR CONDITIONS

## EXPERIENCE OF THE NATIONAL POLICE OF UKRAINE IN CARRYING OUT STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH VARIOUS TARGET AUDIENCES DURING THE WAR

Victoriia AZAROVA

With the start of military operations on the territory of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, strategic communications of various formats and at various levels became relevant. From the first days of the war, the losses of the Russian Federation in manpower were significant, and there was an information vacuum regarding real events in Ukraine in the aggressor country.

With this in mind, on the initiative of the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine Denys Monastyrskyi, **on February 26, 2022**, the hotline *Come Back Alive from Ukraine* was created (Case 1<sup>1</sup>).



Case 1. "Hotline Come Back Alive from Ukraine,"  
created by the National Police of Ukraine

<sup>1</sup> Here and further, all illustrative materials are translated from Ukrainian.

### **Aims of the Hotline:**

- collection of information about soldiers of the Russian Federation who are on the territory of Ukraine;
- encouragement of the relatives of wounded, captured Russian soldiers to take active actions to return them home;
- encouragement of the families of the victims to return the bodies of Russian servicemen for further burial on the territory of the Russian Federation;
- conveying to the population of Russia the information about real events in Ukraine;
- motivation of relatives of Russian servicemen to spread as much as possible true information about the war in Ukraine and organise mass actions against the war or participate in them.

The selection of police officers who later became hotline operators, taking into account the high level of physical and psycho-emotional stress, as well as the risk of rapid emotional burnout, was based on the analysis of their individual, professional qualities and internal motivation.

First of all, the following characteristics were taken into account:

- vocabulary development level, the ability to logically express one's own thoughts, argue one's position, negotiation skills;
- the ability to control oneself in emotionally stressful situations, both physical and psychological endurance, ability to work, discipline, and responsibility;
- psychological flexibility, adaptive abilities of future operators and their ability to recover quickly enough;
- focus on achieving results, the ability and willingness to compromise one's own interests for the sake of achieving a goal, priority orientation on socially useful activities as opposed to personal interests.

Thus, the group included the police officers well trained for conducting negotiations, including certified negotiators from the Preventive Communication Service (*Dialogue Police*), psychological support and investigative units of the Main Directorate of the National Police in the city of Kyiv.

The very first hours of operation of the hotline brought certain results:

- there was a rapid popularisation of the hotline, which proved the real need for its existence: in the first hour, more than 700 calls were

received – about 100 of them were processed by the only two operators who were working at that time. The main communication was carried out with regard to receiving information about possible military personnel of the Russian Federation, which were located on the territory of Ukraine, as well as reports about real events taking place in our country;

- the result of professional communications was the first mass protests of Russian citizens at the permanent bases of military units of the aggressor country;

- important information was obtained regarding the peculiarities of the Russian media coverage of the situation in Ukraine, as well as the psychological and worldview characteristics of a sufficiently large number of residents of the Russian Federation who are relatives of military personnel;

- conditions and reasons for the formation of worldview positions of Russians were clarified. The syndrome of ‘learned helplessness’, the predominance of basic (vital) needs, total dissatisfaction, all-encompassing fear for one’s life, which prevails over any other emotions, being in the psychological state of ‘victim’ and the inability to feel personal responsibility for one’s life-dominant features the vast majority of people who called the hotline;

- people interested in quick surrender contacted the hotline.

Considering this, **on March 1, 2022**, together with volunteers chat bots in Viber and Telegram (Case 2) were created for collecting information about Russian soldiers and making calls to those persons who were looking for their missing.

**Come Back From Ukraine!**

Hotline for relatives of Russian and Belarusian soldiers and officers

If your loved ones lately went to the exercises and you cannot contact them, most likely they are participating in an attack on Ukraine.

In the first seven days, Ukrainian troops killed and wounded more than 9,000 invaders. More than 200 were captured.

On the hotline you can find out if your relatives are alive, whether they are captured, if there are any wounds, or how to resolve the question of when and how you can receive the body of a dead relative.

+380 89 42 01 863  
+380 89 42 01 860  
+380 89 42 01 861  
+380 89 42 01 862

You can request a call back via QR-code and chatbots if our operator did not answer your call.

if your dear one is in captivity, you can leave a short message for him.

if you have received confirmation that your son is in his captivity, you should get to Kyiv:

get to Kaliningrad or Minsk, from there by bus or taxi to the Polish border, then through Polish territory you need to get to the checkpoint with Ukraine. There you will be met and accompanied to Kyiv.

**«COME BACK ALIVE FROM UKRAINE!»**

Instructions for relatives of Russian and Belarusian soldiers and officers

If your loved ones lately went to the exercises and you cannot contact them, most likely they are participating in an attack on Ukraine.

At this moment the database of prisoners and killed people is working effectively, many people have already been found. So look for an opportunity to call and find out information about your relatives quickly.

+38 089 420 18 60

On the hotline you can find out if your relatives are alive, whether they are captured, if there are any wounds, or how to resolve the question of when and how you can receive the body of a dead relative.

If your operator did not answer your call, it is due to overload. You can request a call back via QR-code and chatbots.

If your dear one is in captivity, you can leave a short message for him.

Case 2. Chatbots “Come Back Alive from Ukraine,” created by the National Police of Ukraine

On March 3, 2022, an additional hotline *Find your own* was organised (Case 3), the main purpose of which was to clarify the procedure for the surrender of military personnel of the Russian Federation who did not want to fight against Ukraine.

**Come Back Alive from Ukraine!**

**«Find Yours!»**

Hotline for relatives of Russian and Belarusian soldiers and officers

If you have received confirmation that your son is in our captivity, mothers of Russian soldiers have to get to Kyiv.

After the invasion of Putin's fascist army and the closure of the airspace, this can be done only in the following manner:

Get to Kaliningrad or Minsk

From there by bus or by taxi to the Polish border

Then through the territory of Poland, you have to get to the checkpoint with Ukraine. There you will be met and accompanied to Kyiv

Via the QR-code you can find out information about the killed and captured military of the RF AF in Ukraine

+380894201863

On this hotline you can find out where your relative is.

**Life scenarios of a family of a soldier in modern Russia:**

- Step 1. You go to the exercises.
- Step 2. You get to Ukraine.
- Step 3. Your truck gets stuck in a swamp.
- Step 4. Your column runs out of fuel.
- Step 5. Your entire squad is running out of food.
- Step 6. They kill you – a Ukrainian defends his homeland.
- Step 7. Russia burns you secretly somewhere in a mobile crematorium.
- Step 8. Your family is told that you are one of “we-deny-they-are-there.”
- Step 9. Your mother seeks the truth.
- Step 10. She receives a sentence of 15 years in prison.

**How many steps do you still have to go?**

+380894201863

You have an opportunity to stop.

Case 3. Hotline of the NP of Ukraine “Find Yours”

Already in the fall of 2022, using the acquired experience of the National Police of Ukraine, the Main Directorate of Intelligence of Ukraine created the project “*Look for Yours*” where, in addition to phone calls, there are chatbots and a Telegram channel.

**On April 10, 2022**, an additional mode of communication – using outgoing calls was organised, the main purpose of which is campaign regarding the appeal to the Union of Soldiers’ Mothers in the regions of the Russian Federation and the Commissioner for Human Rights to protect the rights and interests of servicemen.

The line was advertised through the *Pravda\_Gerashchenko* Telegram channel.

Information was also distributed at the following addresses:

[https://t.me/Pravda\\_Gerashchenko/487](https://t.me/Pravda_Gerashchenko/487);  
[https://t.me/Pravda\\_Gerashchenko/1122](https://t.me/Pravda_Gerashchenko/1122);  
[https://t.me/Pravda\\_Gerashchenko/492](https://t.me/Pravda_Gerashchenko/492);  
[https://t.me/Pravda\\_Gerashchenko/1441](https://t.me/Pravda_Gerashchenko/1441);  
[https://t.me/Pravda\\_Gerashchenko/1863](https://t.me/Pravda_Gerashchenko/1863);  
[https://t.me/Pravda\\_Gerashchenko/1864](https://t.me/Pravda_Gerashchenko/1864).

Considering the large amount of valuable information received from incoming calls, the issue of its systematisation and the possibility of further use arose. These were solved with the help of volunteers from IT companies cooperating with the largest provider of business applications in the world – Oracle Corporation. It was this company that developed the platform for the information portal *soldierz.zone* – the only and largest database in Ukraine, which made it possible to make the data of the occupiers public to society.

Both hotline operators – 22 police officers and 68 civilian volunteers – were involved in filling in the database. The total number of created cards of Russian soldiers amounted to more than 132 thousand. These cards contain:

- personal information, such as surname, first name, patronymic, date of birth, passport data, etc.;
- information about the location of certain military units, their personnel – military servicemen who are in any way related to the wanted person, etc.

At the beginning of the operation of the hotline, we established close interaction with representatives of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, later – with units of criminal analysis, operational and

technical support, information and analytical support, as well as the National Academy of Internal Affairs and the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine (Figure 1).



*Scheme 1. Establishing cooperation with Institutions of the Security and Defence Sector*

Of course, without mass media and Internet resources, information about the activities of the hotline would not be spread. Cooperation in the media space contributed to the dissemination of information about events in Ukraine among the world community and was one of the important components of the national foreign policy and confrontation in the information war.

During the first six months of work, interviews were given to about 14 different TV and radio channels and printed media, both Ukrainian and foreign (Case 4). In particular:

- Ukrainian mass media – *radio Svoboda*, *radio NV*, news of TV channels *STB* and *ICTV*, *Nastoyaschee Vremia* etc.;
- TV channels in Japan – Central TV and TBS NEWS;
- media operating in the information space of Great Britain, Germany and the United States of America: BBC NEWS, CNN LIVE, and ABC NEWS;
- analytical media of Germany and the Italian journalist Federico Fubini.



#### Case 4. Interaction of hotline employees with the media

Special attention was paid to communications with different strata of the people at the Central Railway Station of Kyiv during the evacuation of our citizens from the settlements of Kyiv, Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and other regions of Ukraine.

In the period between **06/03/2022** and **29/04/2022**, the operation of the psychological support and assistance station for people who had to stay in waiting rooms at the Central Railway Station in Kyiv was provided.

We understood that during a difficult time for Ukraine, many people lost a sense of security; their emotional state deteriorated significantly, and life was divided into ‘before’ and ‘after’.

That is why the psychologists of the Kyiv police initiated the provision of psychological support and assistance, uniting around this idea 30 employees of the State Police Department in Kyiv, the State Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and volunteers. In order to coordinate the work of the centre effectively a group called *Antistress Team* was created in *Viber* mobile application.

During the work of the Team, psychological support and assistance was provided to more than 3,500 citizens (Photo 1).



*Photo 1. Activities of the Antistress Team*

Psychologists were joined by volunteers who provided food, necessities, clothes and toys. Yevhen Klopotenko, a famous chef, and Anton Zavorodnyi, a *Hyatt regency Kiev* employee, were among the volunteers, as well as the representatives of LLC *Patriot Rental Service* and *Black Square*. Among other things, the children were delighted to get to know the four-legged police assistants. Employees of the canine centre of the Main Directorate of the National Police in Kyiv demonstrated how police officers work together with a service dog.

Monitoring the events of the spring of 2022 and directly communicating with people, the specialists of the NP of Ukraine realised that a large number of citizens needed psychological help. So, **on 03 / 21 / 2022**, it became possible to launch the operation of the *Helpline* hotline of the Main Directorate of NP in Kyiv. Not only city police officers, but also policemen from Kryvyi Rih district police department of the Main Directorate of NP in Dnipropetrovsk region (Case 5) joined these activities.

Psychological Service of the Main Directorate of the National Police in Kyiv

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Psychological Service of the Main Directorate of the National Police in Kyiv  
March 23

Crises are natural stages in the life of every person. However, they happen so suddenly that they knock the ground from under your feet, leaving just a feeling of fear and helplessness. Sometimes you need to talk to make things easier ... [Show more ...](#)

**Helpline**  
for victims of the war in Ukraine

+380894201866

We provide help through telephone counselling: reference and informational and psychological consultations.

10 Поширили: 18

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Конфіденційність · Умови · Реклама · Вибір реклами · Файли cookie · Більше · Meta © 2022

Case 5. Helpline Hotline on Facebook

This hotline offered, in contrast to similar services, a new one, in addition to psychological support, a reference and information service: psychologists-operators informed about the existing ‘green corridors’, told about the algorithms of actions in the event of finding oneself in the area of explosions, shelling, and also clarified the rules of behaviour in case of a desire to surrender.

Dissemination of information about the *Helpline* was carried out by placing information on the page of the psychological service of the Main Directorate of the NP in Kyiv, personal Facebook pages of psychologists.

Memos were created and distributed to citizens at the Central Railway Station (Case 6).

## MEMO TO PARENTS

### SYMPTOMS OF PANIC ATTACKS AND FEAR IN CHILDREN:

- feeling of lack of air or suffocation; dizziness, shakiness or weakness; fluttering or fast heartbeat; trembling or shaking; sweating; nausea or discomfort in the stomach;
- depersonalisation or derealisation;
- a feeling of numbness or tingling;
- hot / cold flushes;
- chest pain or discomfort;
- fear of death;
- fear of losing control or going crazy.

### FIRST AID

1. Breathing exercise. Inhale slowly through the nose. Exhale air through a narrow mouth. Exhalation should be slower than inhalation.
2. Moisten the mucous membrane of the mouth with small portions of water.
3. Periodically massage the earlobes and the tip of the nose.
4. Quickly clench and unclench the fists.
5. We count mentally from 100 to 1.
6. We recollect the words of a song or a poem.
7. If possible, drink warm mint tea.

1

### 8. Distraction.

Look around (Imagine ...)

Find 5 things you can see!

Find 4 objects you can touch!

Find 3 things you can hear!

Find 2 things you can smell!

Find 1 thing you can taste!

9. Tell your child that feeling of being afraid is normal. Fear helps us understand and realise what is happening. It is necessary to learn to control your feelings and the approach of fear (panic attack) and to perform a safe behavioural algorithm.

10. Children from the age of 8 can be told everything as it is (of course, within the limits of the child's understanding) without panic in the voice. Small children need to be distracted and calmed down; reassured that you are always there (tickling, reading a book, looking at pictures, drawing, inventing short stories, playing with words, the fourth extra, learning or repeating the names of the seasons, months, coming up with a rhyme (rhyme) to dreams, count to 10 (20,30,40 ...) and back to 0, names and patronyms of family members, etc. – all in a form of a

2

## Progressive muscle relaxation

Tighten all the muscles and hold this position for as long as possible, and then relax the whole body abruptly. By inertia, the muscles relax even more. When there are many stress hormones in the blood, the vegetative system turns on and begins to process them. Muscles are also involved in this process, so sometimes our back hurts, our neck tightens, we feel discomfort, etc. This exercise should be done when you feel severe anxiety. With moderate anxiety, it should be done two or three times a day, so protection against anxiety occurs due to the cumulative effect.

### Secret tapping

The working area for this exercise is the distal phalanges of the fingers on the right and left hands. By pressing the thumb on the phalanges, we stimulate the nerve endings. These impulses inhibit the activity of the amygdala, the brain centre responsible for anxiety. So press the pads of each finger in turn until you feel calm.

3

## WHAT IS WAR?

### HOW TO EXPLAIN THIS TO A CHILD

WE CAN EXPLAIN THAT WAR IS AN AGGRESSIVE ACTION BY ONE COUNTRY AGAINST ANOTHER. THE WAR HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR 8 YEARS; IT WAS JUST IMPERCEPTIBLE TO US. IT HAS CHANGED NOW. IF THE CHILD KNOWS WHAT VALUES ARE, IT CAN BE EXPLAINED THAT THE VALUES OF PEOPLE AND COUNTRIES MAY NOT COINCIDE. WAR IS ALWAYS SCARY AND TERRIBLE. WE HAVE TO HIGHLIGHT THE FOLLOWING: "LOOK, WE ARE SAFE NOW AND OUR ARMY IS DOING EVERYTHING TO KEEP US SAFE. AND TO BE SAFER, WE NEED TO LISTEN TO EACH OTHER, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU DO WHAT I TELL YOU. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS AND THAT." IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE THE CHILD RESPONSIBLE FOR SOMETHING. ANY CONVERSATION WITH THE CHILD SHOULD END WITH A HUG. THE SHIP DOES NOT SINK ON WATER. IT SINKS WHEN WATER GETS INSIDE IT. THEREFORE, IT IS NOT SO IMPORTANT WHAT IS OUTSIDE, WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS WHAT WE LET IN. TRY TO TALK ABOUT THESE MOMENTS WITH CHILDREN. IT WILL BE DIFFICULT, BUT YOU WILL MANAGE. THIS WILL BE THE FIRST STEP OF HELP.

# FREE HELPLINE

for victims of the war in Ukraine

 **+380894201866**

We provide help through telephone counselling: reference and informational and psychological consultations.

**ADDITIONAL LINES  
FOR ASSISTANCE**

telephone number of the evacuation line

 **0800507028**

**101** - Fire brigade

**102** - Police

**103** - Ambulance



More useful information  
you will find in our group  
on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/psihologkiev102](https://www.facebook.com/psihologkiev102)



# KYIV POLICE

2022

## *Case 6. Booklets for citizens on ensuring security during wartime*

Over the time, there was a need to develop cooperation with citizens of Ukraine, whose relatives and acquaintances disappeared, were captured or died. An analysis of the effectiveness of a large number of hotlines showed that a significant part of them deals only with recording the received information, and sometimes it is not possible to exchange it between departments of different lines of command. **01 / 06 / 2022** to consolidate the efforts of all hotlines on matters of accounting for prisoners and missing persons during military operations (recording of data about a person who applies for his family member, acceptance of photos, videos, etc.), as well as providing assistance in solving problematic issues, that arise with

relatives, the hotline of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine *Helpline* began to operate. The tasks of this hotline are as follows:

- provision of crisis psychological assistance;
- receiving and recording information from citizens whose relatives have disappeared, been captured or died, for systematisation and operational transmission to the NOEP, the NG of Ukraine and the Armed Forces of Ukraine, as well as the Coordinating Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine and the National Information Bureau of the Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine;
- obtaining information about existing household, medical, material, financial and other social problems, as well as taking steps to resolve them;
- providing citizens with clear action algorithms for independent resolution of a certain proportion of problems, regardless of whether these problems directly concern the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine.

At the same time close cooperation was established with the public organisation *Public Movement Women's Power of Ukraine* (head – Nataliia Umerenkova).

This organisation became a bridge to the Armed Forces of Ukraine for solving urgent controversial issues of a social nature, prompt notification of individual services of the Armed Forces of Ukraine regarding events involving servicemen who suddenly came into contact or came under fire, as well as settlement of relations between servicemen and their relatives, on the one hand, and the command of military units on the other.

Effective communications with the Council of Wives and Mothers of Defenders of Ukraine *Women of Steel* have also been established. This centre currently has 1,300 people. However, at the beginning it was a few enterprising women who sought to achieve justice.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and Kyiv Police directly came to the rescue:

- some women became operators on the hotline of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine *Helpline*. This allowed them to independently learn about the many people who suffered as a result of

military operations, which contributed to the formation of a sense of unity and trust in the authorities;

- understanding the importance of effective communication skills and the high level of psycho-emotional stress, trainings on the topic *Basics of psycho-emotional stabilisation and basic techniques of crisis negotiations* were organised for the *Women of Steel* and hotline operators.

This activity was facilitated by the public organisation Ukrainian Centre for Nonviolent Communication *Space of Dignity* (the head of the organisation Olena Hantsiak-Kaskiv) and the chief trainer of educational projects Carl Plesner<sup>2</sup> (Denmark).

The issue of effective systematisation of data was solved with the help of volunteers from IT companies of Ukraine, relying on the experience of the already created single database *soldierz.zone*.

Thus, an information portal (a single database) *searchukrainians.org.ua* has been developed, in which more than 11,000 soldiers' cards with information about Ukrainian military and civilian persons have already been created (Case 7).

The screenshot shows a web interface for a 'Fighters database'. The main heading is 'Soldier cards / Soldier's card #'. Below this, there are several sections for data entry:

- Personal information:** Includes a 'Main photo' field, and a grid of input fields for Surname, Name, Patronimic, Date of birth, Phone, Place of birth (town), Adress of residence, Place of residence (town), and Special signs.
- The person who is looking for:** Includes a dropdown for 'Contact Information', and input fields for Surname, Name, and Phone. Below these are fields for 'Date of disappearance', 'Confirmation of Information', 'The purpose of the appeal', and 'Source'.
- Problem:** A text input field.
- Additional Information:** A larger text input field.

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<sup>2</sup> Carl Plesner (Denmark) is an international specialist in restoring social ties after destructive events, a certified trainer in nonviolent communication (CNVC, USA), a certified specialist in crisis negotiations (International Association of Hostage Negotiators, USA).

esleskorohod@gmail.com

Create a record

**Data of a serviceman**

Department Official status

Military rank Status on request

Position  NIB inquiry

Woman

Military unit Identification tag

Place of deployment (settlement)

Branch of the military

Place of the event

Location of the military unit

Close

has been resolved at the resolution stage transferred to: ZSU

No duplicates found

*Case 7. Soldier's card, searchukrainians.org.ua*

### **Advantages of the information base:**

- possibility of combining the information from all departments and services that deal with the issues of citizens affected by hostilities, and quickly searching for the necessary information with its further processing;
  - reliability of the platform where the base is created, its high level of security against access by third parties or cyber-attacks;
  - opportunity to quickly create not only statistical, but also analytical reports.

The soldier's card has various fields that allow you to enter data for further sorting and searching for both an individual person and an array of information.

Currently, thanks to the filling of this database, there is an exchange of information with the National Information Bureau (NIB), which made it possible to speed up the registration of citizens' appeals. Relevant interested specialists analyse the information received regarding servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Therefore, the process that started on 24/02/2022 with the launch of *Come Back Alive from Ukraine!* Hotline thanks to the efforts of many caring people and well-built communication, has become widely distributed, which makes it possible to oppose the Russian Federation with joint efforts both in the information space and in attempts to disorganise Ukrainian society, undermining trust in the power structures.

## **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS IN THE FIELD OF GENDER POLICY: ACHIEVEMENTS, LESSONS, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS**

*Kateryna Levchenko*

Experts of security and state institutions, among others, faced challenges related to the importance of correct coverage of the subject of sexual violence by Russian servicemen in Ukraine as a weapon of war. Today, this situation has the following dimensions:

1. A large number of facts of sexual violence committed by the Russian military in the temporarily occupied territories.

2. The need to provide assistance to victims and the organisation of such assistance, primarily by public organisations and social services. Creation of rescue centres on the initiative of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, with the participation of the Government Commissioner and with the support of the UN Population Fund. Such centres are already open and operating in Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Lviv, and Kyiv. At the beginning of 2023, their opening is being prepared in Poltava, Odesa, Kropyvnytskyi, Chernivtsi and Uzhhorod, as well as outside Ukraine.

3. The process of the development of state policy in this area – signing of the Framework Programme of Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the UN, development and implementation

of the Implementation Plan for its implementation, amendments to the National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, development by the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine of a Strategy in the field of combating conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). All these issues require communication with society at both the national and international levels.

4. The work of state structures aimed at countering CRSV (Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Interdepartmental Working Group on Combating Sexual Violence Committed by the Russian Military and Providing Assistance to Victims, which is headed by the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, NP of Ukraine, Security Council of Ukraine and others).

5. Intense activities of public organisations, aimed at helping victims, informing communities, training various groups of specialists.

6. The need to improve the Ukrainian legislation on countering CRSV, the presence of different points of view and the holding of discussions on these issues.

7. Low level of awareness of citizens, including victims, about the rights and possibilities of receiving assistance.

8. The need to tell the world, to international partners, the truth about Russia's crimes in Ukraine and to counter Russian manipulations in various countries, in particular, regarding the discourse of "the same Russian and Ukrainian military men," etc.

9. Implementation of the victim-centred approach as the basis of state policy and the activities of law enforcement agencies.

At the same time, there are many unresolved issues in organisation and implementation of communication around this topic:

- dissemination of unverified information used by Russia to discredit Ukraine at the international level;
- violation of ethical rules of communication with victims by journalists, which leads to the dissemination of personal data of victims and violation of the principle of confidentiality;
- insisting on the presence of the affected person when covering the subject and her / his interview;
- lack of communication skills among various groups of specialists (journalists, social workers, representatives of law

enforcement agencies, and public organisations) and, as a result, neglect of their interests and needs.

As a result – the important principle of policy formation and implementation with the participation of the victims is not implemented effectively, and the very experience of such participation is traumatic for the victims; prejudiced attitudes towards victims, including the spread of narratives – including “provocative behaviour” in cases of CRSV according to the principle of “one’s own fault,” emphasis on the fact that in order to launch criminal proceedings on the fact of sexual violence committed by the Russian military in Ukraine, the testimony of the victim is not mandatory; misunderstanding of the essence of CRSV, errors and inaccuracies in its interpretation, which lead to incorrect coverage of the phenomenon, and, accordingly, strategies for helping victims and organising countermeasures. The latter needs a deeper disclosure of its content. Such errors include:

- presentation of sexual violence exclusively as rape, while the content of the CRSV covers a wider range of crimes, in accordance with the definitions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, it includes sexual slavery, forced prostitution, human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, genital torture, forced nudity, etc.;
- neglecting men affected by CRSV, concentrating attention exclusively on women;
- focusing on young and middle-aged women when covering the topic, while according to the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, the youngest victim was 4 years old, and the oldest was 85;
- ignoring witnesses of sexual violence, including children, while witnesses of the CRSV are also victims of it.
- not taking into account the fact that the crime of CRSV, as a war crime, has no limitation period. This leads to an underestimation of the importance of the testimony of victims about the facts of crimes that were committed some time ago, and, as a result, not including the victims of the war since 2014 in the practice of investigations and communication.

In order to overcome stigma and prejudice towards victims of CRSV, to build trust in law enforcement agencies for the cooperation of victims with them, it is necessary to carry out constant communications both in Ukraine and abroad.

## **Recommendations**

### **I. Regarding implementation of strategic communications in the field of ensuring gender equality.**

1.1. The Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine should finalise and immediately submit for the Government's consideration and approval the Plan for the implementation of the Communication Strategy on Gender Equality, aimed, among other things, at overcoming gender stereotypes and patriarchal ideology, as such, which encourages violence.

1.2. State, international, non-governmental organisations, and local self-government bodies should base their communication policy in the field of ensuring gender equality on the Gender Equality Communication Strategy and the Plan for its implementation.

### **II. Regarding the further advocacy of the implementation of the Convention of the Council of Europe on the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence and the fight against these phenomena.**

2.1. Continue information and advocacy campaigns on the importance of the principles and standards of the Istanbul Convention, their implementation in legislation and practice.

2.2. To analyse the emergence, origin, distribution and transformation of narratives aimed at discrediting the Istanbul Convention and gender issues in general.

### **III. Regarding raising public awareness of CRSV issues and providing assistance to those affected by it.**

3.1. To develop and conduct a nationwide information campaign on CRSV issues with access to an international audience, defining target groups, tasks and goals of the campaign.

3.2. Develop and implement a training course on the correct coverage of the CRSV topic for press officers of SDSI.

3.3. In order to comply with the rules of communication with CRSV victims, develop and use a memo on the ethical approach of covering the subject based on the Murad Code.

3.4. SDS press services have to establish cooperation with public and international organisations that work with victims and provide them with assistance.

3.5. The best informational materials (articles, publications, videos, etc.) highlighting the war crimes of the Russian military in Ukraine, in particular the CRSV, should be translated into foreign languages for distribution in other countries.

3.6. To work out the mechanisms of cooperation of all interested organisations and institutions (international, public, state) with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine with the aim of distributing materials abroad about war crimes committed by Russians in Ukraine (in particular, the CRSV), with special attention to the countries of Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific region.

### **KEY MESSAGES OF THE CHAPTER**

1. Media independence and society's resilience against misinformation are critical to the functioning of democracies.

2. Engagement of critical target audiences (leaders of public opinion, scientists, parliamentarians, politicians, media representatives, non-governmental organisations, analytical centres, scientific institutions) in counteracting the destructive effects of the Russian Federation is one of the steps to strengthen the stability of society.

3. Disinformation should be countered systematically. Proactive, transparent and timely communication is the key to stopping the spread of myths and misinformation. As an example, NATO has developed a comprehensive approach to combating disinformation based on understanding the information environment, engaging audiences, and cooperating with Alliance members, partners, and international organisations.

4. Since large volumes of disinformation are created and published in Russian, effective countermeasures must also be carried out in this language and reach Russian-speaking audiences wherever they are. It is also necessary to fill the information vacuum in the aggressor country regarding real events in Ukraine.

5. The work of hotlines, such as the Helpline initiated by the NP of Ukraine, convinces the internal audiences of Ukraine that the Security and Defence Forces are capable of providing security and timely assistance. Hot lines, in addition to psychological support, should also provide reference and information services: inform about existing 'green corridors', tell the algorithms of actions in the event of falling into the

area of explosions, shelling; record information from citizens whose relatives disappeared, were captured or died.

6. Gender narratives should be used as a tool of strategic communications, which will ensure opposition to pro-Russian manipulations around gender issues.

7. Misunderstanding of the essence of CRSV leads to incorrect coverage of the phenomenon, development of strategies to help victims and organisation of countermeasures. Such mistakes include presenting sexual violence exclusively as rape; neglecting men affected by CRSV; focusing on young and middle-aged women when covering the topic; ignoring witnesses of sexual violence, as well as victims of it; not taking into account the fact that the crime of CRSV as a war crime has no limitation period.

# PROACTIVE RESPONSE TO HYBRID THREATS

## PROACTIVE RESPONSE TO THE CAMPAIGN ON THE DISCREDITATION OF UKRAINIAN-POLISH RELATIONS (from the Experience of the Centre for Countering Disinformation of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine)

*Anait Khoperiia*

Russia spent a significant part of its financial and human resources on another sphere – information. Thus, according to the enemy’s ‘ideal’ plan, a combined attack in two dimensions was supposed to force the Ukrainians to surrender within a matter of days, and at most a week. It seems that the blitzkrieg was supposed to go according to plan – the military was supposed to capture large cities, such as Kyiv, and the psychological operations specialists – to break the will of Ukrainians, forcing them to surrender.

However, having met strong opposition from Ukraine and its international partners, Russia decided to change its tactics: it envisioned an aggressive information war against the entire anti-Putin coalition, with the aim of forcing it to leave Ukraine alone with the Russian war machine.

The first country that suffered an informational blow was the Republic of Poland, which from the very first days of the war came to the protection of Ukraine. Seeking to break down the ally of the Ukrainians, the Russians began a large-scale discreditation campaign on Ukrainian-Polish relations, trying to inflame enmity between the governments and create distrust between the peoples of the two countries.

To carry out their attack, the Russians conducted a series of information and psychological operations, the foundation of which was laid even before the start of a full-scale invasion. Thus, at the beginning of February, reports began to appear in the Russian information space, which claimed that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine was preparing diplomatic notes with a request to return to Ukraine citizens of conscription age. The mentioned messages were noticed by the Centre

for Countering Disinformation of the National Security Council of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the Centre), after which monitoring of their further dissemination and development began.

After 4 months of active monitoring, namely, on 17 / 06 / 2022, the Centre discovered a message with a similar content in the enemy Telegram channel *Joker DNR* (Джокер ДНР). In the mentioned message, it was said that hackers allegedly intercepted a letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Dmytro Kuleba, addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Zbigniew Rau. In this letter, the Ukrainian Minister allegedly asks his colleague to deport all men of conscription age from the territory of the Republic of Poland to Ukraine for their further mobilisation (Screenshot 1).



Szanowny Pan Zbigniew Rau!

Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych Ukrainy wyraża swój szacunek dla Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej i uprzejmie informuje.

Dziś Ukraina powstrzymuje ataki rosyjskiej maszyny wojennej i chroni bezpieczeństwo nie tylko swojego kraju, ale całego kontynentu europejskiego. Ofarami zdradzieckiego ataku Rosji ofiarami już zostały dziesiątki tysięcy niewinnych obywateli, którzy stanęli do walki z agresorem.

W związku z tym prezydent Ukrainy postanowił o powrocie w Ukrainę z zagranicy obywateli płci męskiej w wieku poborowym, zdolnych stanąć z bronią w rękę, żeby bronić nie tylko swojej ojczyzny, ale i całej Unii Europejskiej.

Biorąc powyższe pod uwagę, strona ukraińska prosi Rząd Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej o podjęcie decyzji w sprawie przekazania wszystkich niezbędnych informacji o przebywających na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej ukraińskich obywatelach płci męskiej w wieku od 18 do 60 lat w celu ich powrotu w Ukrainę.

Korzystając z okazji, Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych Ukrainy składa Ministerstwu Spraw Zagranicznych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej wyrazy głębokiego szacunku.

Z poważaniem,

Minister spraw zagranicznych Ukrainy

Dmytro KULEBA

*Screenshot 1. Fake letter of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba, allegedly addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Zbigniew Rau*

On the same day Caesarius Nobis, who positions himself as a Polish politician, published a series of documents from the diplomatic institutions of Ukraine and the Republic of Poland and stated that an official decision was made to search for all persons of conscription age who evade service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. After that, the above-mentioned telegram channel referred to the publication of Caesarius Nobis to confirm the previous message. Later, the news was picked up by the Russian mass media.

Taking into account the significant volume of distribution, the Centre analysed and established all elements and stages of implementation of the described psychological operation. The Centre addressed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, which confirmed **the fakeness** of the specified 'letter'.

In addition, the Centre has informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine about the conduct of an information and psychological operation aimed at discrediting Ukrainian-Polish relations, creating distrust in the Ukrainian authorities, as well as spreading a sense of fear for their own safety among the target audience (men of conscription age who were forced to leave Ukraine due to the beginning full-scale invasion of Russia, as well as members of their families).

Immediately after that, the Centre contacted the Government Security Centre of the Republic of Poland (hereinafter – the Government Security Centre), which was sent analytical materials containing all the details of the psychological operation.

As a result, the Centre and the Government Security Centre informed the public and relevant state institutions about the Russian Federation's conduct of the psychological operation through established communication channels, as well as neutralised possible negative consequences (Screenshot 2).

**RCB** **DisInfo Radar**

**W sieci internet są powielane fałszywe dokumenty i informacje o rzekomym porozumieniu Polski i Ukrainy mającym na celu poszukiwanie i zatrzymanie obywateli Ukrainy uchylających się od służby wojskowej.**

**Weryfikuj informacje i nie daj sobą manipulować**

gov.pl/rcb @RCB\_RP @rcbgovpl @rzadowecentrumbezpieczenstwa

The Centre for Countering Disinformation at the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine reports

**Fake about the mobilisation of Ukrainians from Poland**

Centre for Countering Disinformation National Security Council of Ukraine National Resistance

*Screenshot 2. Informing the Public and State Institutions by the Centre for Countering Disinformation of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine and the Governmental Security Centre regarding the conduct of the psychological operation by the Russian Federation*

However, despite the successful liquidation of the above-described enemy information and psychological operation, the enemy did not stop its attempts to discredit Ukraine in the eyes of Polish allies. Thus, after a certain period, the enemy used certain differences in the interpretation and perception of particular moments of the common history of Ukraine and the Republic of Poland, choosing the conservative part of the Polish population as its target audience.

Already on 16 / 08 / 2022, a letter appeared in the above mentioned enemy Telegram channel, in which the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine allegedly addresses the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland with a request to rename the street on which the Embassy of the Russian Federation is located in the city of Warsaw in honour of Stepan Bandera.

The accompanying note stated that the ‘letter’ was intercepted from the Office of the President of Ukraine, although the form on which the letter is compiled belongs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, and the signatory instead of the President is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba (Screenshot 3).



*Screenshot 3. Fake letter of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland with a request to rename the street on which the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the city of Warsaw is located in honour of Stepan Bandera*

Taking into account the coincidence of the form, content and original source, the Centre concluded that the emergence of this ‘letter’ with subsequent distribution in enemy resources is a planned psychological operation, the purpose of which is discrediting Ukraine and Ukrainian-Polish relations, which was immediately reported to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the Government Security Centre (Screenshot 4).

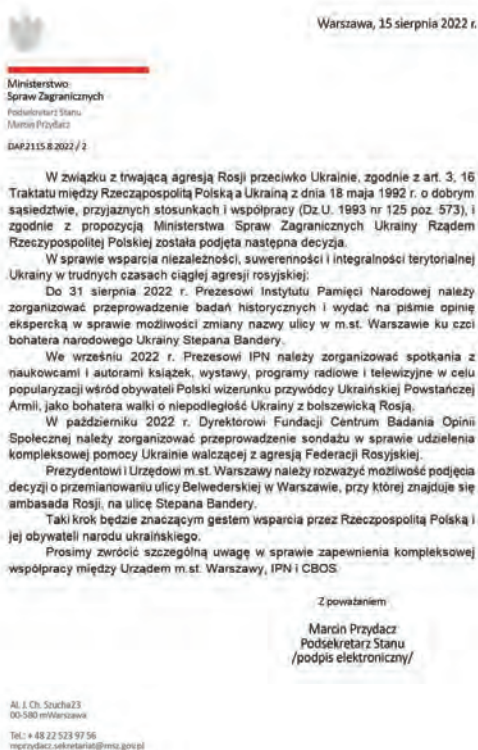


*Screenshot 4. Debunking fakes regarding Ukraine’s appeal to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland with a request to rename the street on which the Embassy of the Russian Federation is located in the city of Warsaw in Honour of Stepan Bandera*

It seems that another trivial enemy psychological operation was eliminated, but the next day Polish colleagues discovered the continuation of the enemy’s operation already in the Polish information segment.

Thus, a ‘letter’ allegedly from the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Martin Pshidach, began to circulate on the Internet, in which he gives a positive answer to the fake letter of

the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. In addition, the 'letter' is about ways of future popularisation of S. Bandera among the Polish population (Screenshot 5).

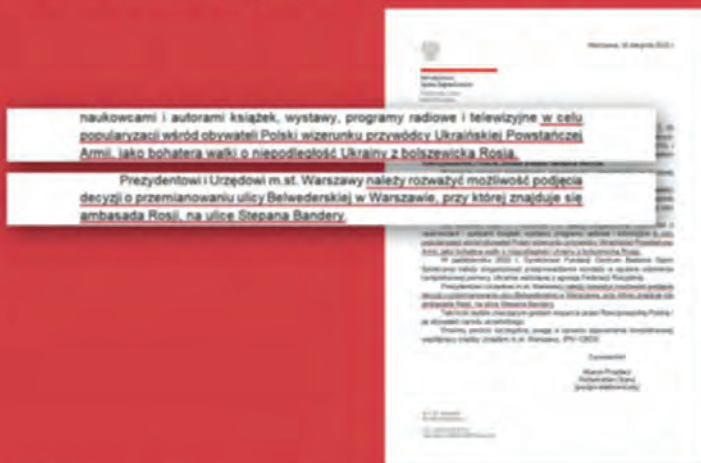


*Screenshot 5. Fake letter of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Martin Prządacz, in which he allegedly considers the ways of future popularisation of S. Bandera among the Polish population*

The Centre and the Governmental Security Centre jointly decided to publicly debunk the mentioned psychological operation in order to eliminate possible negative consequences. Thus, a number of publications were prepared for social networks, the representatives of the foreign affairs bodies of both countries were notified, and the mass media were notified of the hostile information attack (Screenshot 6).



## A fake letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland is circulating on social media



*Screenshot 6. Debunking of fakes regarding the 'letter' of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Martin Pshidach, in which he allegedly considers the ways of future popularisation of S. Bandera among the Polish population*

Summing up, it should be noted that as a result of the prompt detection of information threats, the presence of a well-established system of strategic communications, as well as a clear algorithm of actions between the state bodies of Ukraine and the Republic of Poland, the Centre for Countering Disinformation of the NSDC of Ukraine and the Government Security Centre jointly intercepted the specified series of Russian psychological operations at the very first stages, thereby preventing the enemy from spoiling the relations of the two allied states.

**SPECIAL INFORMATION OPERATION  
FOR DISCREDITATION  
OF THE RUSSIAN ECONOMIC FORUM SPIEF-22:  
EXPERIENCE OF CONNECTING NEWS PEGS**

*Ivan Ablazov,  
Karyna Rubel*

Under the conditions of war, any attempts by the Russian Federation to use the business environment to lobby the interests of a terrorist country on the international arena require the efforts of the world community to neutralise their image effects. The system of strategic communications developed in Ukraine allows the initiative groups of the SDSI to detect such enemy actions timely by monitoring the information space and to develop recommendations for neutralising threats to Ukraine in business communications.

*The case* is dedicated to the idea of organising a special information operation (SIO) on the part of Ukraine and its partners, it also highlights the peculiarities of the analytical support of the countermeasure information operation during the economic forum in the Russian Federation – St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF, June 15-18, 2022). [1] Part of this programme was implemented in strategic communications of Ukraine.

*The purpose of the SIO:* hinder Russia's attempts to use the 25th economic forum SPIEF-2022 as an informational occasion to demonstrate to internal and external target audiences the capabilities of the Russian economy to resist sanctions during the war with Ukraine, as well as an occasion for escalating an informational campaign around the topic of global hunger and energy crisis

*Features of the initial situation.* St. Petersburg international economic forum (SPIEF) – annual business event, the largest for the Russian business environment and the country's political establishment, launched in 1997. Since 2006, it has been held under the patronage and with the direct participation of the President of the Russian Federation. In recent years, the forum has been positioned as an alternative to Davos in the Eurasian space. It is also a platform for establishing informal business contacts. The business programme of the event is supervised directly by the representatives of the national government in the

corresponding sphere (discussion panels). The topic of the planned forum is very broad and covers almost the entire range of current political, economic and social issues, technology development. The forum is accompanied by a technology exhibition at which the leading state enterprises of the Russian Federation are presented. Before the introduction of sanctions against the Russian Federation, the first persons of foreign countries, as well as the heads of transnational corporations, leaders of the foreign business environment, attended the business programme of the forum; significant international commercial agreements were concluded. This year, their participation in the forum was not announced until the moment of its opening and was supposed to become an indicator of foreign policy guidelines in wartime conditions. SPIEF was supposed to become an indicator of international political and economic processes in Russia and among its partners.

For Ukraine, monitoring the discourse on SPIEF allowed solving the following tasks:

- assess the real impact of sanctions on the Russian economy in wartime conditions;
- determine changes in the personal positions of the leaders of the Russian business environment under the influence of sanctions regarding loyalty to the ruling regime, as well as readiness to sponsor the war;
- to identify among the guests and journalists invited to the forum persons whom the Russian Federation plans to use as agents of influence (participation in the forum is paid for, inviting guests is possible only on the basis of sponsorship);
- collect compromising materials about the speakers and participants of the forum, which will be used in information campaigns by the Ukrainian strategic communication centres, as well as in diplomatic communication.

In addition, the format of Putin's participation in the forum can be considered as a marker of his health, the level of his trust in the business environment, as well as readiness to mobilise the economy and Russian society as a whole in war conditions. For the first time, a number of forum sessions were held in a closed non-public format. It was taken into account that the SPIEF-2022 programme testified to the prevalence of security issues. Special attention was paid to the problem of import substitution opportunities in strategic sectors of the economy.

Annually, SPIEF attracted the attention of global media and became a media event to inspire mass media campaigns. It was expected that in 2022 the forum would be the object of greater criticism from media structures and a reason for journalistic investigations. It was important for Ukraine that the agenda by topic in the global mass media corresponded to the interests of the state and contributed to the support of the anti-Russian coalition.

*SIO goals:*

- recapture the information initiative in relation to the Western foreign target audience and level the possible image effect of the forum held by Russia;
- to use the event as an publicity opportunity for conducting a discrediting information campaign about the artificiality of SPIEF under sanctions;
- intensify informational pressure on the business communities of countries and international organisations that continue partnership with the Russian Federation during the war, promote the expansion of sanctions and the strengthening of the anti-Russian coalition;
- to influence the positions of members of such international organisations as the SCO and BRICS regarding cooperation with the Russian Federation in the context of the war against Ukraine;
- use the information campaign around SPIEF to support Ukrainian issues at the top of the news flow of the world mass media.

Below are the narratives in the formulation at the time of the information campaign.

*SIO target audience:*

1. Foreign audience:

- business elites and the political establishment of Ukraine's partner countries: for this target audience, SPIEF can become a publicity opportunity for media appearances criticising the event, perhaps a PR occasion for brands that left the Russian market under the influence of sanctions (many Western entrepreneurs previously participated in the forum, today they can act as opinion shapers in the business environment);
- diplomatic circles are a TA segment to which general information about the results of the forum under sanctions should be delivered as proof of the need to strengthen them; it is also possible to control through diplomatic channels the intentions of individual

entrepreneurs to participate in the forum, to influence the decision-making process regarding the leaders of Russia's partner countries.

2. Russian audience. The mass audience of Russian consumers should receive information about the forum as an event that is a 'feast in time of plague', an expensive gathering of oligarchs against the background of the impoverishment of the masses.

3. Ukrainian audience: mass audience (Russian holidays are a news peg for trolling the aggressor country).

*Narratives for Western foreign audiences:*

- "under the influence of sanctions, SPIEF turned from an investment forum into a tool for propaganda of a new world order based on Putin's model,"

- "bringing certain Western companies into the orbit of SPIEF is an attempt to use the levers of division of the anti-Russian coalition in the conditions of Russia's invasion of Ukraine,"

- "a number of transnational business leaders, Russian oligarchs, public activists, journalists and artists deliberately condemned this 'feast in time of plague'. Participating in it despite the sanctions does not bring honour."

*Contextual (background) topics for coverage of the Russian forum in a negative context.* The opening of the Russian forum coincided with the start of the **Ramstein 3** meeting of defence ministers of more than 40 countries on the issue of supporting Ukraine in the fight against Russian aggression (Brussels, June 15). Therefore, the foreign mass media will cover both events in opposition: real steps of military cooperation against image passages of "euphoria of Eurasian partnership" in the conditions of Russian aggression. In the segment of Western mass media, Ramstein 3 became a dominant topic, which will contribute to the formation of the Ukrainian agenda in the information space.

Russian mass media covered the forum in the context of an information campaign around the topic of global hunger. The official information channels of the Russian Federation demonstrated business support for the construction of a "self-sufficient closed economy and the success of import substitution" in the context of the destruction of the idea of globalism. At the same time, in the media space of the Russian Federation, there was an opinion about the inexpediency of expenses by *Roscongress* as the organiser of the forum of budget funds, as well as

criticism of the oligarchy for demonstrative partying in the conditions of the economic crisis.

In the European information, it was planned to cover the topic of SPIEF against the background of the introduction of the seventh package of anti-Russian sanctions, to emphasise the presence at the forum of representatives of countries against which sanctions are also in effect (Iran, Afghanistan, etc.).

The topic of poverty in the Russian Federation, especially in the national regions, was the background for coverage of the ‘oligarchs’ party’ and can serve as an argument for the movements of national minorities against the declared unity of Russia.

The task of information and analytical support of the SIO was supposed to be distributed among the centres of strategic communications in three stages. On the eve of the event (13.06-14.06), the most important thing was to organise the delivery of the main narratives and informational materials on the topic to the target audiences through strategic communication channels with the key goal – to give preference to the coverage of the Ramstein 3 meeting of defence ministers, and to consider the topic of SPIEF in the context of the above-mentioned event. During the event (15.06-18.06), expert monitoring of the speeches of PMEF-22 participants was implemented in accordance with the forum programme, especially regarding the speeches of the first persons of the Russian Federation, with the aim of prompt response in the global mass media. The personal accounts of the declared participants of the forum were monitored, on which leaks of confidential information were expected regarding the realities of the impact of sanctions on the economic situation of sectors of the Russian economy, since a number of forum sessions were held in closed mode for a very narrow circle without the participation of the press.

Organised proactive actions – a series of expert interviews of domestic and foreign politicians, scientists, and public figures with the aim of levelling the image effect of the Russian forum and establishing the Ukrainian agenda in the information space through the presentation of information through the prism of the influence of Russia’s war against Ukraine. The information and analytical units prepared samples of anti-Ukrainian quotes from the statements of forum participants, which contained threats of escalation of the war. They also required comments from experts in the field of economics, military-technical

cooperation, etc. Particular attention was paid to the statements of representatives of international organisations, in particular the SCO and BRICS. All this made it possible to avoid contradictions in diplomatic communication in the international arena.

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## **INFORMATION CAMPAIGN ON COUNTERING THE EXPLOITATION OF THE TOPIC OF RUSSIAN SPORT IN RF PROPAGANDA**

*Roman Trofymenko,  
Borys Bakaliuk*

In the spring of 2022, our team identified certain threats of the exploitation of the “Russian sport” factor by Russian propaganda. We have organised a corresponding information campaign of a counter-propaganda orientation and in cooperation with the relevant state bodies ensured the implementation of thematic measures of diplomatic and public communication. Currently, a stable counter-propaganda narrative has been formed, which is implemented as an independent track at the national and international levels.

The information campaign is based on the following facts:

- aggressor country’s use of well-known Russian athletes to carry out information influence campaigns aimed at promoting imperial ideology, supporting military aggression and Putin’s regime;
- involvement in Russian propaganda of “prominent figures of Russian sports” – deputies of the Russian Federation State Duma V. Fetisov and V. Tretyak (members of the Putin’s Team), A. Karpov, I. Rodnina, as well as Senator of the Council of Federations of the Russian Federation O. Karelin, etc.;
- suspension of the powers of Russian representatives in most international sports organisations after the beginning of open Russian military aggression. In particular, the powers of the president of the International Fencing Federation (FIE) A. Usmanov (Russian entrepreneur and philanthropist, multi-billionaire) and of wife-‘coach’

A. Kabaeva, since February 2022 – a sanctioned person in the EU, Great Britain, USA, Japan, Canada and Australia have been suspended. At the beginning of 2023, only three international sports organisations remained under the leadership of the Russians: the International Chess Federation (FIDE, president A. Dvorkovich – former deputy head of the government, assistant to the President of the Russian Federation, fled from Russia in March 2022 and openly criticised the aggression against of Ukraine), the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF, headed by the Russian multi-billionaire V. Lisin, who was sanctioned by Australia in April, and representatives of the federations of Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Germany, Great Britain, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden and the USA sent letters to the ISSF with calls for his suspension) and the International Boxing Association (from 2020 it is headed by the scandalous U. Kremlov (Lutfulloev) – a connection of the previous head of the IBA G. Rahimov, an Uzbek criminal leader who has the nicknames Gafur Black, Pirizhok, the most famous drug lord in the post-Soviet space, one of the possible leaders of the Brothers' Circle – international criminal organisation).

In order to block the corresponding hostile information and propaganda activity, our team produced and ensured the systematic placement in the mass media of a number of thematic revealing informational materials (including the production and distribution of more than 10 targeted video stories and a selection of foreign language materials).

Also, in May 2022, for use at the diplomatic and professional levels, as well as in the public sphere, the necessary information (of revealing nature) and organisational measures (blocking the participation of Russians in sports events, ensuring support for existing sanctions, as well as introducing new sanctions), summarised materials on the specified topic were officially sent to the address of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, as well as additionally processed jointly with specialists of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine.

In particular, with the appropriate orientation of the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine issued a thematic assignment to foreign diplomatic institutions of Ukraine to facilitate the adoption of the following decisions:

- termination of the membership of the Russian Federation in the leadership of the International Military Sports Council (CISM);

- the cancellation of the CISM decision to hold the World Cadet Games in St. Petersburg and to hold the 78th CISM General Assembly and Congress in Moscow in 2023;
- boycott by participants of the World Cadet Games on the territory of Russia;
- depriving the Russian Federation of the opportunity to conduct similar events in the future.

The described information campaign gained diplomatic support and wide discussion in public communications, as a result, a stable narrative was formed, which is currently used in the domestic and foreign media space by various non-state and state actors, and contributes to restrictive and sanctioning responses.

Examples of recent information and organisational activities:

a) thematic information events:

- *Ex-deputies from OPZZh N. Shufrich and I. Surkis joined the National Olympic Committee – flirting with collaborators will end very badly* (publications dated November 18, 2022);

- *Ukraine introduced sanctions against a number of athletes from the aggressor country. Among them are representatives of football, hockey, gymnastics, wrestling, figure skating and even Formula 1, including provocateur Kuliak, Peskov's wife* (October 21, 2022);

b) sanctions measures at the international level:

- according to the press service of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine (September 20, 2022), Ukrainian fencers sent an official letter to the International Fencing Federation (FIE) to prevent the return of Russian and Belarusian athletes to international competitions (the relevant statement was signed by the President of the National Fencing Federation, Minister of Youth and Sports V. Huttsait).

## **HAVE FUN, DADDY – TOMORROW IS A HOLIDAY OR HOW TO GET RID OF THE BLOODY HUGS OF THE ‘OLDER BROTHER’**

*Lesia Fedorenko*

A holiday for a person is always a special psycho-emotional condition when he/she is very sensitive. Excitement and elevation

during festive rites and rituals is a completely natural, and at the same time a very powerful process, which has become a convenient tool for ideology and propaganda, and therefore for influencing public consciousness. In the second half of the 20th century, the ideological component in the festive and ceremonial culture was especially massively introduced in the USSR, and in particular the Ukrainian SSR, when the communist propaganda machine began to make every citizen an ideologically fuelled builder of communism. At that time, various new holidays were created to manipulate public consciousness, to replace or completely supplant Ukrainian religious rituals, 'correct' historical memory and destroy Ukrainian national identity, and special methodical brochures with recommendations for their implementation were published for propagandists. [2]

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, many ideologised holidays disappeared according to the principle: there is no state – there is no state holiday. However, quite a few of them were reborn in the newly created countries and remained the same candy, just in a new wrapper. Mostly we are talking about the so-called professional holidays. In most cases, they were reintroduced with new regulatory documents and often the dates were not even changed. As a result, today we have about two dozen holidays that are celebrated simultaneously in Ukraine and the Russian Federation. It is clear that this common heritage is, first of all, a nostalgia for the Soviet past of the heads of young states, yesterday's party functionaries, who were still stuck in the communist swamp with one foot, and tried to change to a new, democratic system with the other. In the second place is the attempt of the Russian Federation to cement the conviction about the commonality and unity of the peoples of different states, enveloped in the illusory idea of a 'Russkiy Mir' (Russian World).

We will remind you that since the beginning of the 2000s, the concept of 'Russkiy Mir' has become one of the main ideologies in the foreign policy doctrine of the Russian Federation and was supposed to become the basis of Russian influence in any part of the world where there was minimal interest in the Russian language, culture, and history. At the same time, the main attributes of national pride that are inherent in modern society – the development of science and culture, the presence of high social standards, etc. – are practically absent in the reality of Russia, so Russians have to be proud of the achievements of

the Soviet government or construct myths about these achievements and actively impose them to others. [3]

We are experiencing the consequences of this extremely aggressive imposition right now, in the period of the Russian Federation's full-scale aggressive war against Ukraine. And in view of the statement of the President of Russia Putin, who declared that one of the greatest tragedies of the last century was the collapse of the Soviet Union, and therefore of 'historical Russia', [4] now is the highest time to get rid of everything that even with the most invisible threads connect us with the imperial past of the Soviet Union and the modern Russian Federation.

Family Day on July 8 is a vivid example of using the holiday as an informational and psychological operation to establish another marker of the 'community' of the Russian Federation and Ukraine. In Russia, this holiday is called the Day of Family, Love and Fidelity and was introduced in honour of Saints Peter and Fevronia of the Russian Orthodox Church. The strange and dubious history of these canonised princely persons deserves an individual consideration and detailed study, but the day dedicated to them was celebrated in Russia in 2008 at the initiative of the State Duma, the Federation Council and the Russian Orthodox Church. And on December 30, 2011, the then President of Ukraine Yanukovich signed the Decree on establishing Family Day in Ukraine. [5] As you may know, until that moment in our country the International Family Day was celebrated on May 15, established in accordance with the resolution of the UN General Assembly in 1993. Such a change in the direction of movement from the international community to the 'older brother' fits perfectly into the concept of 'Russkiy Mir'.

It is worth mentioning that Ukraine is finally gradually getting rid of the heritage that ideologically binds us to the Soviet past. For example, the transfer of the Day of Airborne Assault Troops of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (former Airborne Forces) from August 2 to November 21 marked the beginning of the revival of Ukrainian military identity. Also, starting in 2022, we will celebrate Youth Day on August 12, International Youth Day, and not in June, as it was in the USSR and currently in Russia. [7]

But there are about two dozen such 'stones' that drag us to the bottom of the communist – Russkiy Mir' swamp. Moreover, two of them require an immediate reaction. Just imagine that during the current

Russian-Ukrainian war both in Ukraine and in the Russian Federation on the same day – the second Sunday of September – Tank Crewman Day is celebrated. This is at a time when Russian tanks, without any emotion or warning, simply shoot the Ukrainian civilian population. In addition, on December 22, together with the Russian Federation, we will celebrate Power Engineers Day. Yes, yes, this is a holiday of both Russian energy experts, who advise the armed forces of the Russian Federation on the destruction of the Ukrainian energy system, and Ukrainians, who are trying to restore it after massive bombings.

In Ukraine, we have the following holidays, which coincide in time with Russia:

- the day of employees of housing and utility services and services for the population – on the third Saturday of March;
- Geologist's day – on the first Sunday of April;
- Chemist's day – on the last Sunday of May;
- Day of the workers of the consumer goods industry – on the second Sunday of June;
- the Day of the medical worker – on the third Sunday of June;
- the Day of workers of the sea and river fleet – on the first Sunday of July (at first it was established by the President of Ukraine L. Kuchma by his Decree, then V. Yanukovych moved it to the last Sunday of July on the day of the Russian Navy, and P. Poroshenko returned it to the first Sunday July);
- Fisher's day – on the second Sunday of July;
- Metallurgist's day – on the third Sunday of July;
- Day of retail workers – on the fourth Sunday of July;
- Builder's day – on the second Sunday of August;
- Miner's day – on the last Sunday of August;
- Forest worker's day – on the third Sunday of September;
- Machine builder's day – on the fourth Sunday of September;
- the Day of food industry workers – on the third Sunday of October;
- Glassmaker's day (dedicated to the Russian scientist Lomonosov) – November 19.

In addition, there are several holidays the dates of which differ by only one day. For example, the day of the land manager in Ukraine is celebrated on the second Saturday, and in the Russian Federation – on

the second Sunday of March; the day of the National Guard of Ukraine is March 26, and the National Guard of Russia is March 27.

The Day of the Archaeologist (August 15) has an interesting story. Initially, this holiday in Ukraine was unofficial (in Russia it remained so), but in 2008 it became official by Presidential Decree. However, among archaeologists there is an opinion that the Soviet Russian researcher of the Trypil culture Tetiana Pasik, whose birthday is celebrated as Archaeologist's Day, wrote reports to the NKVD against many researchers, including Vavilov. Therefore, it is worth studying this issue more deeply and then make an appropriate conclusion.

At the same time, the public tried to take some steps in order to get rid of such joint holiday ideological markers. So, in the summer of 2022, the Honourable Council of the Order of Saint Panteleimon appealed to the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyi, Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal, the head of the Ministry of Health Viktor Lyashko and the Head of the profile parliamentary committee Mykhailo Radutskyi with a proposal to establish a new date for the celebration of the Day of Medical Workers. The authors of the appeal offered a choice of four dates: August 9 (according to the Gregorian calendar on the day of St. Panteleimon the healer, who was a doctor and is revered by the Catholic and Orthodox churches) or July 27 (the day when the Orthodox Church honours the memory of St. Panteleimon the healer according to the Julian calendar), June 14 (on the day of commemoration of Reverend Agapit Pecherskyi, who entered the history of Ukrainian monasticism as a monk who healed physical and mental illnesses with prayer) and October 31 (on the day of commemoration of St. Luke, the evangelist, companion of St. Apostle Paul in his apostolic travels, author of the third Gospel and Acts of the Holy Apostles). [1] And a year later, on June 13, 2023, the Presidential Decree appeared, according to which the Day of the Medical Worker is now celebrated on July 27. [6] Now Ukrainian doctors, who save hundreds of lives every day, will not celebrate their professional day with those who kill the civilian population.

Today, Ukraine is fighting to gain its right to be a full-fledged part of the democratic world. And the price of this struggle is the highest – human lives. We still have a lot to do to win this hybrid war – a war for territories, for minds, for identity. It is necessary to not only defeat the external enemy, but also to change from the inside, get rid of all

negative social phenomena, cut off all the threads that still connect us with the totalitarian Soviet regime, and break free from the bloody embrace of the northern neighbour. We must destroy all enemy weapons, including ideological ones. Therefore, the Office of the President of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada should review and analyse the entire list of holidays shared with the aggressor state and radically change this situation. This is our liberation struggle on all fronts and it is just in time.

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## KEY MESSAGES OF THE CHAPTER

1. The SDSI information and communication activities, in particular their strategic communications units, are coordinated and synchronised at all stages of planning military operations to ensure consistency and repel Russian aggression.

2. Operationalisation of the strategic communications in the conditions of Russian aggression led to the transformation of the theory of informational-psychological operations and the division of informational-psychological operations into information and psychological operations, their main tasks are defined as: *information influence* – influence on the enemy’s computer networks by introducing special programmes into them; radio-electronic suppression of the enemy’s electronic warfare means and implementation of radio-electronic protection; protection of information in computer networks; *psychological impact* – creating a positive impression of the population about the actions of their troops; prevention of the consequences of the enemy’s psychological influence and its neutralisation; dissemination of negative and contradictory information among enemy personnel, etc.

3. Modern information and psychological operations of the Russian Federation are aimed at the entire international anti-Putin coalition, with the aim of forcing it to leave Ukraine alone with the Russian war machine.

4. Prompt detection of information threats, an established system of strategic communications, a clear algorithm of actions between state bodies of Ukraine and other states ensure proactivity in countering information and psychological operations of the Russian Federation.

5. In the conditions of war, any attempts of the Russian Federation to use the business environment to lobby its interests on the international arena must be levelled. One of the proactive technologies for the prevention of such attempts is the combination of several news pegs in information campaigns, which involves: intercepting the information initiative in relation to the foreign TA and levelling the possible image effect of the measures of the Russian Federation; using the event as a news peg to conduct a discrediting information campaign about the artificiality of international business events of the Russian Federation under sanctions; increasing informational pressure on the business circles of countries and international organisations that continue

partnership with the Russian Federation during the war; the use of an information campaign around business initiatives of the Russian Federation to support Ukraine in the world media.

6. The proactivity of informational and psychological operations should be based on the detection of Russian disinformation even in areas that do not seem to be the first line of attack, in particular, sports and ceremonies and rituals. A stable counter-propaganda narrative “*Supporting Russian sports – supporting Russian aggression*” has already been formed, which is implemented in information campaigns at the national and international levels. They are based on the following facts: the aggressor country’s use of famous Russian athletes to promote imperial ideology, support military aggression and Putin’s regime; involvement in Russian propaganda of ‘prominent figures of Russian sports’; the suspension of the powers of Russian leaders in most international sports organisations with the beginning of open Russian military aggression.

7. A significant number of ideological holidays from the time of the Soviet Union have been revived in Ukraine and are celebrated simultaneously with the Russian Federation. Most of them are more than 20 so-called professional holidays. In most cases, they were reintroduced with new regulatory documents and often the dates were not even changed. These holidays should be cancelled in Ukraine, because they are used by the Russian Federation as ‘society glue’ to convince people of the commonality and unity of different states, enveloped in the illusory idea of ‘Russkiy Mir’.

# **STRATCOM AS A SYSTEM. A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE SECURITY AND DEFENCE SECTOR OF UKRAINE IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR**

## **COMMUNICATION, COORDINATION, COOPERATION. FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF THE SPOKESMAN OF THE EAST GROUP OF THE ARMED FORCES OF UKRAINE**

*Serhii Cherevatyi*

The main tool of the spokesman / speaker of security and state institutions is a daily proactive communication.

For example, as the speaker of the Eastern Group of Forces, I daily have live broadcasts on foreign and Ukrainian TV channels (including the national telethon) about the fight against Russian propaganda. I highlight to partners the work of the Ukrainian army in an available manner; promote the image of the Armed Forces of Ukraine; coordinate public communications and information campaigns.

Interaction with the media is one of the main directions of my activity. Within the information security system of Ukraine together with the Infospace Monitoring and Countermeasures Centre of the Land Forces Command Headquarters, we proactively counter hostile propaganda in the media space (Screenshot 1), in particular:

- promote the page of the Land Forces of Ukraine on Facebook as an innovative platform. The number of its subscribers during the year of the war increased from 68,000 to 843,000. This was facilitated by the placement of innovative content. We were the first to call for the destruction of the occupiers and their equipment, to mask road signs and street name and house number signs, to report on the movement of enemy columns;

- create innovative content with vivid appeals by public figures, for example, Ukrainian artists, to oppose and destroy the enemy. This content is distributed on the Internet resources of the enemy; quoting by propagandists of the Russian Federation only adds to its popularity (clips with negative comments by Solovyov, Skabeeva, etc. were shown in prime time on Russia 24). Thus, our messages reach a wider Russian audience;

- together with volunteer resistance networks of Internet activists we create content about the losses of the enemy, in particular, comments are added to certain Google Maps places. In support of the national resistance, social networks provide reports on the destruction of the occupiers, advice on confronting the enemy based on the principle of ‘minimal risk – maximal result’;

- help in the collection of evidence and video recording in the areas of hostilities and liberated areas to document war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Russian occupiers against the civilian population, we cooperate with representatives of various security and state institutions in this domain, in particular with the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy of Ukraine, the National Police Department in Kyiv and the Kyiv region, the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine and representatives of Ukrainian and international advocacy, legal aid and human rights NGOs;

- develop and implement communication campaigns through Telegram channels in coordination with the academic community to highlight the real state of affairs in the army and society of Russia and Belarus. The target audiences of the campaigns are residents of the Russian Federation and Belarus;

- monthly we publish the magazine “*Land Forces*” in printed and electronic formats, which contains stories about heroism, training and everyday life of women and men who serve in the Land Forces units; promotes service and training in the Land Forces and the Armed Forces in general;

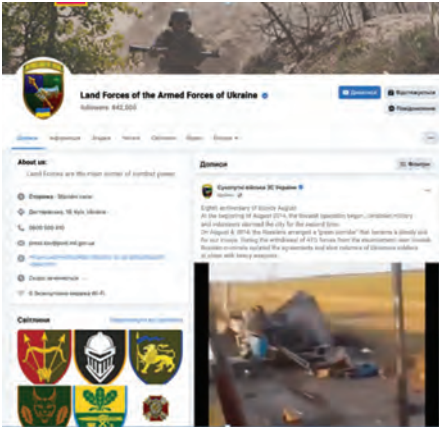
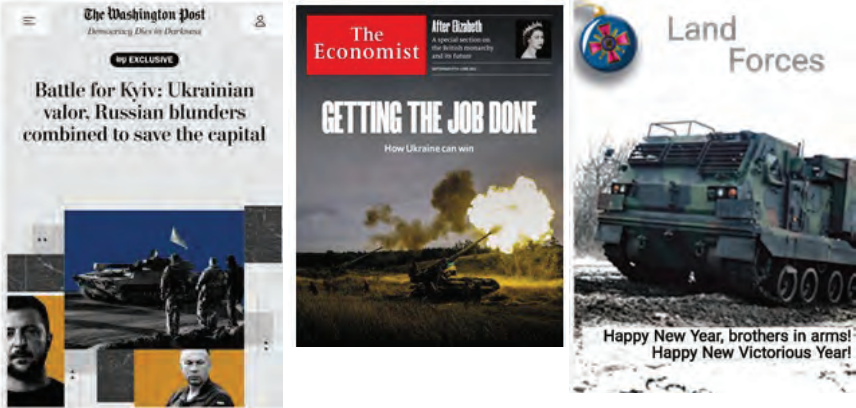
- every week we process the requests of hundreds of foreign and Ukrainian mass media and accompany them to the front lines in order to show the war honestly and objectively;

- engage ordinary military personnel from the frontline in the live broadcasts. This is one of the new and innovative approaches in war communication. Recipients of information tend to trust more the people who are direct participants in the events, show the war as it is and thus build trust in the Ukrainian army;

- support the initiative of our soldiers who want to show the war from the first person in social networks. This project promotes Ukrainian narratives against Russian propaganda in the Internet space;

- accompany the first persons of the country to the front line. For example, Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskyi – Commander of the Eastern

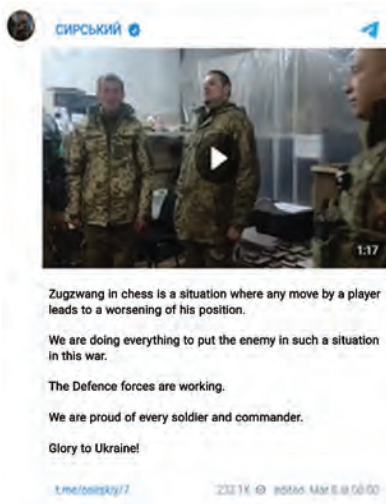
Front – gave interviews to the most influential media such as The Economist, ABC News, The Washington Post, in order to spread true information about the progress of offensive operations. After the Battle for Kyiv, the paradigm of journalists’ work at the front changed. Representatives of the Ukrainian and foreign mass media filmed equipment and visited the ‘zero positions’ of our troops to show the heroic resistance of the Ukrainian army. By the time of Kharkiv counteroffensive operation and Lyman operation, press tours were organised to liberated cities and villages to document the crimes of the Russian army against civilians.



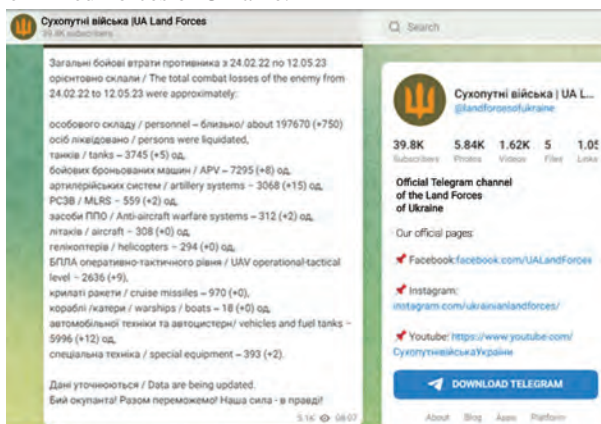
Screenshot 1. Media production of the Land Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

- we are creating Telegram channels for communication with various strata of Ukrainian society and countering Russian propaganda (Screenshot 2).

*СИРСЬКИЙ* (*Syrskiy*) is the official telegram channel of the Commander of the Eastern Front, Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskiy.



*Сухопутні війська* | *UA Land Forces* is the official channel of the Land Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.



*Screenshot 2. Telegram channels of the Land Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine*

**We see the following as further directions of development:**

- cooperation with security and state institutions of Ukraine and Western partners in the analysis of Russian propaganda, development of media monitoring;
- development of new public diplomacy information projects;
- coordination of the information war against the Russian mass media around the world.

**HOW MODERN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION  
INFLUENCE COMBAT ACTIONS.  
BEST CASES OF INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS  
BY THE INFOSPACE MONITORING  
AND COUNTERMEASURES CENTRE  
OF THE LAND FORCES COMMAND HEADQUARTERS  
OF THE ARMED FORCES OF UKRAINE**

*Serhii Karnaukh*

The Infospace Monitoring and Countermeasures Centre of the Land Forces Command Headquarters as a part of information security system of Ukraine has long been taking care of the issues of monitoring, analysis, and content creation in the interests of ensuring the security of the state. Among the main directions of our activity are the following:

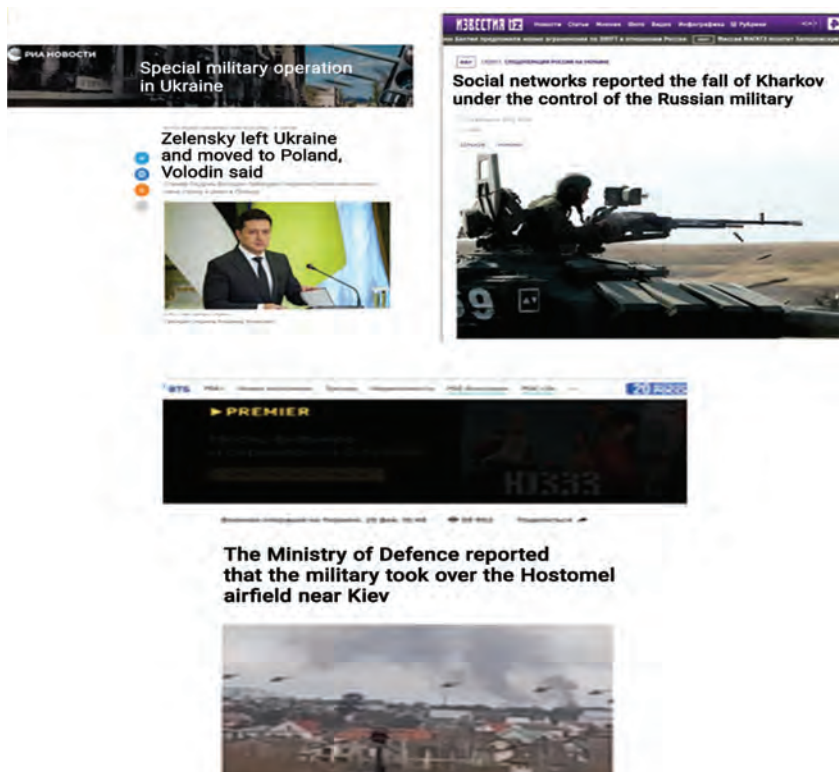
- monitoring and analysis of the information space;
- strategic communication campaigns for broader target audiences: servicemen of the Land Forces and the Armed Forces of Ukraine, civilians of Ukraine, residents of the occupied territories, residents of Russia and Belarus;
- professional expert consultations for leading Ukrainian and foreign mass media (for example, project “*Ukrainer*”);
- documenting combat operations and interaction with the commanders and key participants in the events;
- cooperation with cyber defence units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine.

From the first days of the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation, the Centre has been carrying out research into information

operations of the Russian Federation and proactive countermeasures against them.

Thus, from February 24, 2022, Russian propaganda began to promote the following strategic narratives:

- Ukraine surrendered (Screenshot 1);
- dominance of Russian weapons;
- a strong Russia has all the necessary resources and time to win the war;
- Europe will freeze – Ukraine will not survive the winter;
- Europe is tired of the war.



*Screenshot 1 Promotion of the Russian narrative “Ukraine has surrendered” in the Internetmedia*

These narratives became key to information operations of the Russian Federation aimed at:

- convincing defenders and the Ukrainian public that Ukraine was conquered in the first hours and days of the invasion. This idea was promoted through fake news about the seizure of airfields in Kharkiv, Kyiv, etc. in Russian-controlled mass media, including Telegram channels;
- convincing the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the Ukrainian public and international partners that Russia will definitely win, no matter what.

Russian propagandists used a number of methods to achieve destructive goals:

- rhetoric of hatred and intimidation;
- provoking the division of society;
- discrediting the military leadership of Ukraine;
- fake news about the inability of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to master Western weapons.

All mentioned methods were supported by psycholinguistic means (Table 1).

**Table 1. Psycholinguistic markers of intimidation rhetoric**

Psycholinguistic markers	Examples of pro-Russian media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• defeats of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (<i>surrendered without a single shot, forces exhausted, moving away from positions</i>);</li> <li>• fear of the armed forces of the Russian Federation (<i>the Armed Forces fled, they lost the power of speech</i>);</li> <li>• the shame of the Armed Forces (<i>shameful surrender, that's what was called evacuation</i>)</li> </ul>	 <p>The screenshot shows a news article with a headline: "They surrendered Nikolayev without firing a single shot. The Armed Forces flee to the West, throwing away American weapons, their forces are exhausted". Below the headline, there is a sub-headline: "The huge advertising campaign of the Ukrainian president was built on the return of Kherson. Because of this, units of the Ukrainian Armed Forces had to be withdrawn from Nikolayev." The main text continues: "It was also called an evacuation, like the shameful surrender in Mariupol. Weak officers were sent to Lviv, and experienced ones were sent to Kyiv. Most likely, the Zelensky's regime intends to fight for the Kherson region without fuss: This is strange, because Ukrainian propaganda continues to declare how a large-scale offensive on Kherson will be organised. Where is it? It looks like surrealism, because after each announcement about the start of the offensive, the Ukrainian Armed Forces, on the contrary, move away from their positions." At the bottom of the article is a photograph of a city at night with a large fire or explosion in the sky.</p>

- protection of Russian speaking population (*peaceful life reigned in Mariupol*);
- protection from the Nazis and their punishment (*the city was completely protected from the Ukrainian Nazis and neo-fascists; a tribunal for Azov militants will be held*);
- Azov is a terrorist organisation (a tribunal will be held for Azov militants; *prohibited in Russia terrorist organisation*)

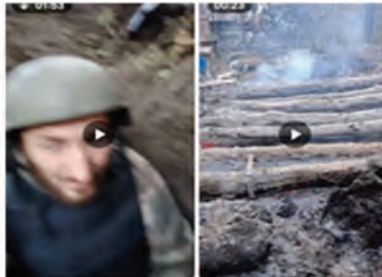


**Peaceful life reigned in Mariupol after the city was completely cleared of Ukrainian nationalists and neo-Nazis.** In the near future, a tribunal will be held in the city for the militants from Azov (a terrorist organisation banned in the Russian Federation).

- symbols of pseudo-ideology Russian Federation (V, Z)



- victories with of Russia Armed Forces over ‘fascism’ (*knock Ukrainian fascists out of positions, not a chance for resistance*)



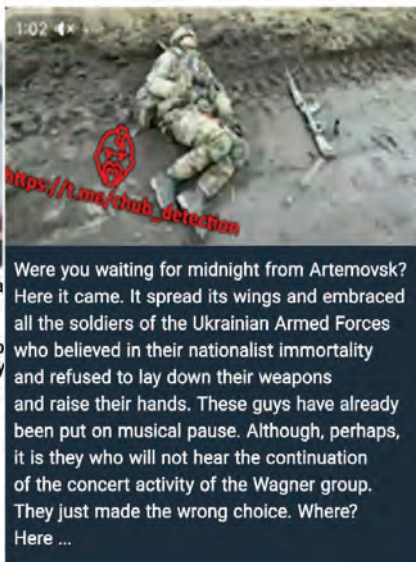
**Artillery of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation continues to knock the Ukrainian fascists out of their positions, leaving not a single chance for resistance**

Information and psychological operations of the Russian Federation in social networks are based on the following communicative and cognitive tactics (Case 1):

- to find/create a problem and hyperbolise it: Russian propagandists distributed fake videos in which Ukrainian units allegedly leave combat positions and address accusations to the President of Ukraine and the Commander-in-Chief;
- distort facts / create fake facts with the aim of undermining trust in the military-political leadership, demoralising the Armed Forces of Ukraine and disrupting mobilisation;
- call for the massacre of the commanders of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.



The address of Ukroneikh soldiers from the materia support division of the 53rd separate mechanised brigade of Ukraine, who were sent to strengthen positions in the Donetsk frontline, but there they go under fire and suffered heavy losses. They also say that there was no comprehensive provision, some did not have body armour and uniforms, and all orders were verbal and there are no documents confirming their presence in hell. Having realised that denazification was inevitable, they decided to retreat, but the commanders did not like it, so they confiscated their weapons (naturally, no one put a mark in military cards) and took them to ...



Were you waiting for midnight from Artemovsk? Here it came. It spread its wings and embraced all the soldiers of the Ukrainian Armed Forces who believed in their nationalist immortality and refused to lay down their weapons and raise their hands. These guys have already been put on musical pause. Although, perhaps, it is they who will not hear the continuation of the concert activity of the Wagner group. They just made the wrong choice. Where? Here ...

*Case 1. Implementation of the opinion regarding distrust of the Armed Forces by Russian propagandists in social networks*

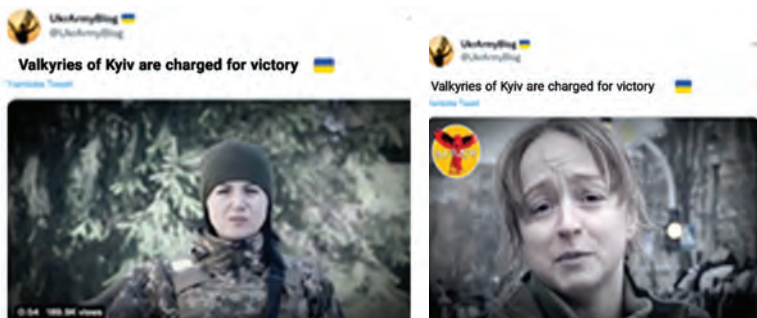
Since the beginning of the war, the Centre has conducted several informational and psychological campaigns:

***The Ghost of Kyiv.*** The first success of Ukrainian aviators in the sky of Kyiv allowed to create a generalised image of the superhero ‘The Ghost of Kyiv’, first mentioned on the Facebook page of the Land Forces on February 28, 2022. Soon it became an urban legend, reproduced in memes, prints for clothes and murals (Case 2).



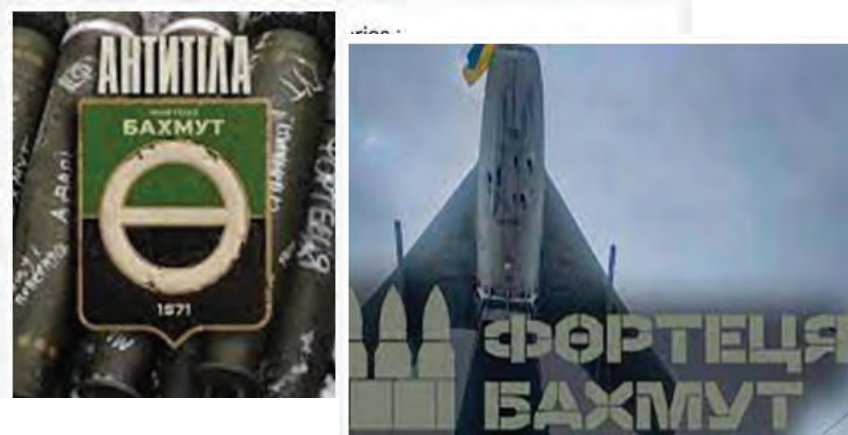
Case 2. Legend of Ukraine – The Ghost of Kyiv

***The Valkyries of Kyiv.*** The campaign was developed and implemented together with servicewomen of the Territorial Defence Forces, and its success was facilitated by the government’s decision to distribute firearms to all citizens of Kyiv who have the right to do so. The main message of the campaign: “Russian soldiers! When night falls, Kyiv Valkyries will destroy you. You still have time to give up!” (Case 3);



Case 3. Information campaign “The Valkyries of Kyiv”

**Bakhmut Fortress.** The information campaign developed at the initiative of the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyi, accompanied the military actions. During the attempts of the occupiers to seize the city of Bakhmut and despite colossal enemy losses, the city held on like a fortress – “*Bakhmut Fortress.*” The success of the campaign was facilitated by the paralysis of Russian troops in the eastern direction, the inability to hold critical lines, excessive (even for Russia) high losses of the enemy (Case 4).



Case 4. Information campaign “*Bakhmut Fortress*”

**Cultural Front.** Ukrainian masters of Petrykiv painting decorated the helicopters and helmets of fighter pilots who defend the east of Ukraine. This event became a precedent and an information news peg for many Western mass media (Case 5).



Case 5. “*Cultural Front*” information campaign

**Bayraktar.** During the first few days of the full-scale Russian invasion, the media did not provide positive and motivational messages for the defenders. On the Facebook page of the Land Forces, the patriotic song “*Bayraktar*” by Taras Borovka was published on 01.03.22. It was one of the first positive media events in Ukraine during the first days of the war. Today, the song “*Bayraktar*” is heard on the main Ukrainian radio and TV channels, and Taras Borovok gives concerts in military units and hospitals (Case 6).



*Case 6. “Bayraktar” information campaign*

Appeal through leaflets – the target audience of the leaflets is mainly Russian soldiers and members of the national resistance. In the first case, the leaflets call on Russian servicemen not to participate in war crimes, to surrender; in the second – continue to fight and destroy the enemy. Usually leaflets are placed into artillery shells (Case 7).



Case 7. Leaflets developed by the Centre for Infospace Monitoring and Countermeasures of the Headquarters of the Land Forces Command

**Documenting History.** For this purpose, documentaries and programmes are created. Among the successfully implemented projects – the films “*Battle for Kyiv*” (chronology of the liberation of the Kyiv region in the first months of the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation) and “*Kruty Heroes of the Hostomel Bridge*” (the story of the cadet battalion that gave battle to the Russians near Kyiv).



QR-link 1. “*Battle for Kyiv*”



QR-link 2. “*Kruty. Hostomel line*”

Among the further projects of the Centre: a film about the Kharkiv counter-offensive operation; a series of films about the Battle in the East; three films supported by NATO: “*The work of the NATO mission in Ukraine,*” “*The Word ‘War’ is Feminine*” (about women in combat professions in the war), “*NATO Kitchen with Yevhen Klopotenko.*”

## **PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION IN MILITARY MEDIA CENTRE BRIEFINGS. PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Oleksandr Zaruba*

The Military Media Centre (hereinafter – MMC), which has been operating since August 2022, is a media platform where all the communication capabilities of the Defence and Security Forces of Ukraine are accumulated.

The Centre for Research of Trophy and Prospective Weapons and Military Equipment (hereinafter referred to as the Centre) is intended for the organisation of information gathering, conducting research and tests to determine technical (constructive and technological) solutions implemented in trophy samples (complexes, systems) of weapons, military and special equipment, munitions (hereinafter – WME), which can be used during the development of promising WME for the needs of the defence forces, as well as for the formation of an information base on the use of prohibited means of warfare during armed aggression against Ukraine.

From November 2022, the Centre’s specialists will use MMC to publicise the results of their activities with the aim of:

- informing the military attachés of foreign countries and the general public about the facts of the enemy’s use of WME against civilian objects and the state of development of individual trophy samples of WME in the Russian Federation;
- proving the presence of foreign components in modern models of Russian weapons in order to stop their supply to the territory of the Russian Federation;
- debunking myths about the so-called ‘second army of the world’ and its advanced weapons;

- informing about the enemy's use of prohibited means of waging war in the course of large-scale aggression against Ukraine.

Specialists of the Centre took part in eight briefings. During this time, a certain preparation model was developed, which includes:

- planning the date of participation in the briefing and the topic of the speech;
- preparation of presentation material (samples of trophy weapons, information boards, exhibition equipment);
- speech and presentation preparation;
- coordination of narratives and key messages of the speech;
- preparation of the speaker and persons demonstrating the trophy WME.

The date and topic of the speech are planned in the general system of planning MMC briefings, as a rule, agree on the main narratives with the speeches of the speakers of the institutes of the security, and defence sector of Ukraine.

Samples of trophy weapons, which are exhibited during the briefing, must be properly prepared for inspection, have an information plate with tactical and technical characteristics and manufacturer's data.

When preparing the text of the speech and presentation, it is advisable to study and be guided by a number of regulatory and legal documents:

- The Order of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine # 73 of 03 / 03 / 2022 *On the organisation of interaction between the Armed Forces of Ukraine, other components of the defence forces and representatives of the mass media during the legal regime of martial law*, which defines the officials responsible for communication, the procedure for their actions, the procedure for the actions of mass media representatives, a list of information that is limited to publication;
- a set of information constituting a state secret, approved by the order of the Central Department of the Security Service of Ukraine # 383 of 12 / 23 / 2020, registered in the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on 14 / 01 / 2021 # 52 / 35674;
- Armed Forces of Ukraine *List of Information* constituting official information, approved by the order of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine of 22 / 11 / 2017 # 408.

The speaker must be authorised to do so by the relevant manager, commander (chief) only after the briefing on preventing the distribution

of limited access information and the requirements of the legislation of Ukraine in this area.

Special attention should be paid to the preparation of visual elements of the presentation. For this, *The guidelines for the use of graphic style in visual communication of the Armed Forces of Ukraine* are applied. It is characterised by regulated colours by codes, fonts, layouts, logos and methods of their combination, layout, in particular in the presentation. Cartographic elements should be checked especially carefully if they are used during the presentation. Even using the map of the Russian Federation with the occupied territories of Ukraine in a negative sense can cause an ambiguous assessment and corresponding comments.

An English version of the presentation is made for foreign audiences. At the same time, it is important to carefully check the quality of the translation.

The speaker who publishes the prepared data should be informed in detail about all the details and technical nuances outlined in the report. Questions from the audience at the end of the briefing can be complex, requiring an answer to the essence of the question, while not disclosing official information or information with limited access.

Communication with correspondents of mass media accredited for the briefing takes place, as a rule, after the briefing. It should also be prepared in advance. The limited time of the presentation does not allow all materials and details to be made public. They are presented in interviews or comments to the presentation after the briefing (Photo 1).



*Photo 1. Briefing T-90M Tank – Failure instead of Breakthrough, March 16, 2023*

The briefings themselves in an online format and the speeches by individual speakers MMC posts on its YouTube own account and other resources. This enables the unit's press officer to further monitor comments, the number of views, reposts and publications in other online media. In this way, it is possible to evaluate the effectiveness of the performance in quantitative and qualitative dimensions. Those topics that are of interest to Ukrainian society are the most resonant.

As a result of the briefing, there may be a certain reaction and even special information operations on the part of the enemy. They should also be monitored and, if necessary, responded to.

Such an order of action will contribute to the achievement of the communication goals defined by *the Communication Strategy of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for 2023*:

- strengthening the trust of the Ukrainian society in the Armed Forces of Ukraine;
- objective information about the activities of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and its individual parts (institutions, units);
- countering disinformation and manipulative information that harms the performance of the tasks assigned to the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS  
BY THE STATE BORDER GUARD SERVICE OF UKRAINE  
UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF RUSSIA'S FULL-SCALE  
INVASION AND MARTIAL LAW**

*Andrii Demchenko*

The State Border Guard Service of Ukraine is an integral part of the Security and Defence Forces of Ukraine. On February 24, 2022, at the time of a full-scale invasion by Russia, the border guards were the first to face the enemy attack. The armed invasion of the aggressor country took place from the side of the Russian Federation, Belarus and the temporarily occupied territories of the Republic of Crimea and within the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Such events, of course, could not do without informing society and countering disinformation. In addition, every informational or communicative decision is made taking into account the real context of the situation and hostilities.



After February 24, Russia invented information about the introduction of a Polish-Lithuanian military contingent into Ukraine, violations of human rights, restrictions on the travel abroad of Ukrainian youths, etc.

In general, on February 24, Ukraine as a whole and each state structure individually faced new large-scale challenges. At the same time, in the SBGS of Ukraine, those best practices and the communication system that was in place allowed us to respond promptly to new realities. In addition, the necessary results in communication were achieved due to close cooperation and information exchange with other security institutions, as all participants understood their role in a single information field.

From the very first hours of the full-scale invasion, border guards informed the public about the Russian attack, in which directions it was taking place, and what actions the terrorist country was taking. All possible photo and video materials were collected to confirm the criminal actions of Russia.

A working group was created in the SBGS of Ukraine to respond, coordinate the work of regional units, prepare key messages, monitor the media, etc.

All communication units of the SBGS of Ukraine acted in a coordinated manner – from the units that participated in hostilities to units on the western part of the border.

Every piece of information was weighed; the possible consequences of information waves were calculated. In particular, to demonstrate the indomitability of Ukrainian defenders, even in the most difficult moments, a well-known phrase was spread – the response of a border guard from Zmiiny Island to a Russian warship. Later on, this phrase, in fact, became popular and very famous. It began to personify the indomitability of Ukraine, Ukrainian defenders and the unity of the entire people in the fight against the enemy – the Russian Federation.

Another large-scale challenge faced by Ukraine, as well as European countries and Moldova during the Russian invasion, is citizens, primarily Ukrainians, as well as foreigners who, fleeing the war, crossed the border en masse to leave Ukraine.



One more problem solved was to deliver to Ukrainians the information on the opportunities to return to Ukrainian controlled territories for those, who had to enter the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus due to hostilities, or were forcibly deported by Russia from Ukraine.

And of course, the most important issue was the defence of Ukraine, in which the Border Guards took an active part. In the first months of the full-scale invasion, the communication units had to some extent explain to the public how much the Border Guards were involved in hostilities, what weapons they were using. Border Guards were mistakenly associated exclusively with the protection of the state border. We also had to counter Russian propaganda, which tried to depict the participation of Border Guards in hostilities as blocking units standing behind Ukrainian defenders (Case 3).



*Case 3. Photo informing the public about the activities of the SBGS of Ukraine for the protection of Ukraine*

The SBGS of Ukraine disseminated information about the heroes and heroines – the military servicemen who were the first to fight the occupiers; covered the events when the Border Guards, together with the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Guard of Ukraine, and the

National Police of Ukraine, repel attacks by enemy assault groups, participate in the defence of Ukrainian cities, the deoccupation of Ukrainian territories, and inflict losses on the enemy during fierce battles.

## **COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGY AS A WEAPON (Examples of Cooperation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine with Civil Society under the Conditions of War)**

*Viktoriia Pyvovarova,  
Anastasiia Bohdanova*

The large-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into our country posed a new challenge to security and state institutions – to adapt the activity to the wartime needs. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine also accumulated all its efforts and demonstrated how an effective communication strategy can be decisive under the war conditions in building trust, ensuring cooperation with society in order to preserve internal stability and ensure national security. The communicative strategy of our institution was built in several stages.

At **the first stage**, we carried out preparatory measures in case of the probable invasion of Russia. Since the fall of 2022, the degree of tension in society has been increasing, discussions about the probable invasion of Russia have become increasingly active, so it was important for us to prevent panic among the population, and therefore we saw the main task in preparing citizens in case of a full-scale war. For this purpose, a wide information and educational campaign was carried out:

- content was created based on current requests from the public. For example, the peculiarities of the state of emergency and martial law were explained, the population was informed about safety measures in case of detection of explosive objects and the rules of behaviour in case of war;
- a series of films “*We Protect, do not Panic*” was prepared, which discussed the preparation by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine bodies and units for a possible full-scale armed aggression by Russia (Block 1);

- provided informational support for all tactical and special trainings of the employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, so that the population felt that the situation was under control, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine bodies and units were ready to give a fitting rebuff in case of an open offensive by the aggressor.

**Block 1.**

**Films “*We Protect, do not Panic,*”**

**prepared by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine  
Russian invasion of Ukraine**



*QR-link 1. Police Regiment*



*QR-link 2. State  
Emergency Service  
of Ukraine*



*QR-link 3. Police  
of Zhytomyr region*

At the **second stage**, thanks to the preparatory measures from the very first hours of the full-scale invasion of Russia, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine managed to provide prompt and high-quality information to the population about the situation in hot spots and the danger of shelling in the regions. The official website and social networks of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine began to work around the clock as the main sources of verified information.

In the first days of the war, the Ministry itself became the ‘unified voice’ of all subordinate structures: it coordinated the communications of the NOEPs, which are part of the internal affairs system of Ukraine; promptly covered information about the course of the war through both institutional communication channels and mass media.

It was important to demonstrate that despite the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, the entire leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine remains at their workplaces, keeps the

situation under control and cooperates fruitfully with international partners. In order to achieve this goal, the Minister and his deputies regularly participated in live broadcasts of the *Yedyni Novyni* telethon, where they reported on the situation at the frontlines and demonstrated that the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine was maintained.

At that time, the situational centre began its work, where operational data from the frontlines was received. In order to obtain information about all events in the state, communicators of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine actively joined the working group, which contributed to the effective coordination of the communication units of the Ministry.

For the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, outreach work with the population has become especially important, since along with open armed aggression, the enemy has intensified attacks in the information space and intensified disinformation campaigns. Specialists of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine carried out a number of campaigns:

- an information campaign was developed and carried out to counter fakes and the informational and psychological influence of Russia;
- as part of the communication campaign “*Silence is a Reliable Support for the Defenders,*” explanatory work was carried out regarding restrictions on photo and video recording during the war, the ban on dissemination of information on the hitting of enemy missiles in social networks, as well as on the work of air defence (Case 1);
- the communication campaign “*Keeping Informational Silence – Do not Inform about the Movement of Troops*” was implemented, within which citizens were explained the need to prohibit the distribution of data on the location and movement of Ukrainian equipment and military personnel.



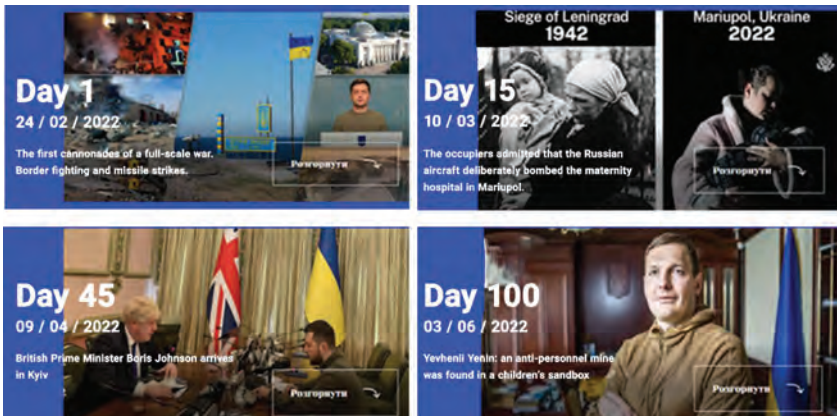
*Case 1.  
Communication campaign of the Ministry of Internal Affairs  
of Ukraine Silence is a reliable support for defenders*

At **the third stage** of implementation of the communication strategy, we focused on disseminating information regarding:

- the situation in the deoccupied territories and the danger of returning to Ukrainian settlements recently liberated from the Russians;
- crimes committed by the army of the Russian Federation;
- identification of subversive reconnaissance groups and collaborators;
- stabilisation measures, demining, evacuation, search for missing persons;
- safety rules and behaviour in case of detection of explosive objects.

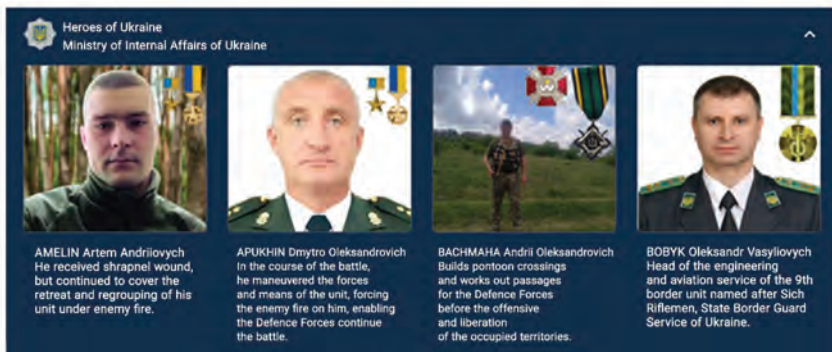
Communication measures include briefings of the officials in the liberated territories, press visits of journalists to hot spots, informing the population through the communication channels of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine.

In the summer of 2022, we passed the mark of 100 days of heroic resistance of the Ukrainian people. Therefore, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine launched a project called “100 Days of War” to record the chronology of events and demonstrate the importance of the heroic days of resistance to Russian aggression (Case 2).



*Case 2. The project of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine  
“100 Days of War”*

We also implemented online project the “*Heroes of the Ministry of Internal Affairs: 200 Days of War*” designed to commemorate the contribution to our future victory of guardsmen, border guards, police and rescuers, employees of the migration service and service centres of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (Case 3).



*Case 3. Project of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine  
“Heroes of the Ministry of Internal Affairs: 200 Days of War”*

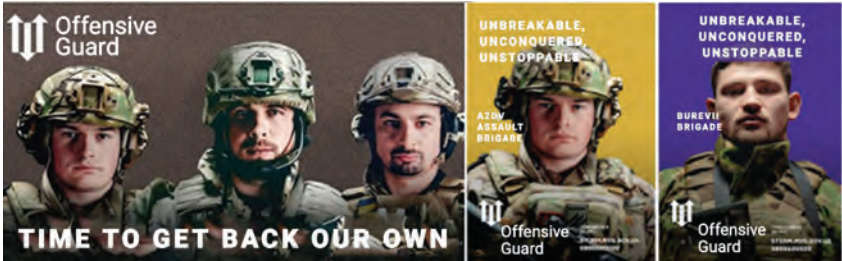
During the autumn-winter period, when Russia tried to plunge Ukrainians into cold and darkness, massively attacking critical infrastructure objects with missiles and drones, we ensured the fastest and highest quality clarification of the situation to society. We conducted an information campaign on safety rules when using electric heating devices, portable gas stoves and burners (or gas appliances), how to behave in the house during a power outage, etc. We disseminated information not only in social networks and through mass media, but also in the form of printed products.

Separately, we focused on the creation of mascots of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine: they are Patron the dog and the border guard who “told the Russian warship to f ... off.” The image of a bomb-wielding dog carries a positive message, *Good defeats evil*. Patron – the hero of many media materials, the purpose of which is to provide informational support to citizens and increase their awareness of their own security. The border guard became a generalised symbol of the indomitability of the Ukrainian people, the will to victory and loyalty to the Motherland. Legendary postage stamps with the image of Patron and the border guard appeared, the special edition of which was sold out in a matter of hours (Case 4).



Case 4. Mascots of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine on postage stamps

In 2023, an information recruiting campaign “*Offensive Guard – Time to Get Back Our Own*” was implemented. Information about it is posted on billboards and city lights, motivational videos have been created that are distributed on all media channels (Case 5).



Offensive Guard. Join us

*Case 5. Information recruiting campaign of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine “Offensive Guard – Time to Get Back Our Own”*

Because of Russia’s armed aggression, many Ukrainians lost their documents or could not get them because of the war. Therefore, we told people about what can be done if certain problems with documents arise. We used social media and other communication channels to spread the word and help people. In particular, it was important to tell that the Main Service Centre of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and the State Migration Service of Ukraine have resumed their services in the deoccupied territories and opened offices abroad where documents can be obtained.

**The fourth stage of strategy implementation** involves communication of measures that will be implemented after Ukraine’s victory in the war with Russia. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine is already working on the development of a new safety and security space concept, which the Ukrainians were deprived of due to the Russian aggression. We highlight these ideas on the departmental resources of the Ministry so that our citizens know exactly how Ukraine is preparing for the implementation of relevant projects in the post-war period.

**PRACTICAL DIMENSION  
OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS  
UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF WAR**  
**(The Best Cases of StratCom Fundamental and Applied Research  
School of the National Academy of the Security Service of Ukraine)**

*Larysa Kompantseva,  
Victoriia Lehkokonets,  
Larysa Snihur*

Russia's full-scale military aggression against our country became an impetus for the practical application of theoretical achievements in the field of strategic communications. The proactivity and asymmetry of the responses to the aggressor were determined, in particular, by the previous work of strategic communications specialists. For example, in the National Academy of the Security Service of Ukraine since 2015, when the Partnership Roadmap in the field of strategic communications was signed between the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine and the International Secretariat of NATO, [1] a StratCom fundamental and applied research platform has been created: the first in Ukraine training courses in strategic communications have been launched, a distinctive feature of which is the engagement of Ukrainian practitioners to teach the Ukrainian experience of countering Russian hybrid aggression; a number of methodologies for countering hybrid effects have been developed and implemented; a pool of academicians and practitioners working in various institutions of the security sector, educational and scientific institutions, as well as volunteers, representatives of non-governmental organisations, and journalists has been created.

With the beginning of the military aggression of the Russian Federation, this platform turned into a platform for proactive information countermeasures and the implementation of social and humanitarian projects. One of them is "*Help Us Save People*" – developed jointly with volunteer organisations in the first months of the war. It provided for the collection of funds for the purchase of digital radio stations for the unit of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which assisted residents of the liberated territories of Kyiv region, and the distribution of visual and verbal information to the world community

about the crimes of the Russian military in Ukraine against non-combatants. The European crowdfunding platform “*Crowdify*” was chosen for its implementation, and the target audience – potential donors – were mainly residents of Great Britain, Canada, China, Germany, the United States of America, Thailand, and Switzerland<sup>3</sup>. Information and appeals to potential donors were posted in English, children’s drawings for the military, Ukrainian symbols were offered as a reward.

The project broadcasted a strategic narrative – “the Russian Federation commits criminal acts against the civilian population, that is, non-combatants, violating all norms of international law” and was implemented in a humanitarian dimension:

- provided information about the criminal actions of the Russian military against non-combatants;
- offered a system of links to video and photo materials regarding Russian crimes against peaceful residents of Ukraine;
- provided communication and feedback with donors;
- demonstrated the scale of crimes of the Russian Federation through constant updating of visual information.

Gradually, the project transformed into a communication platform: donors used the possibility of electronic correspondence with the project organisers to discuss events in Ukraine. The authors of the project identified relevant narratives of the Russian Federation, which influenced the opinion of the world community, and debunked them. At that time, photos of the criminal actions of the Russian military in Irpin and Bucha had already circulated around the world, but representatives of, for example, Asian countries were still under the influence of Russian propaganda and talked about green corridors for non-combatants, shelling of exclusively military infrastructure, and demonstrated a complete lack of understanding of the resistance of Ukrainians to the aggressor. These were long and difficult conversations about the need to verify information from various sources. The authors of the project provided reports from bomb shelters, stories about the evacuation of families from Hostomel, Irpin, and Chernihiv, in which they themselves participated. The opportunity was used to add news to the project platform, to demonstrate the systematic nature of Russian

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<sup>3</sup> We are grateful Stephanie Fluri, Minju Yen, Philipp Fluri and the Foundation Fagus Lucida and Ms. Monique Regenass for assistance and support in project implementation.

crimes against the civilian population. For example, photos and videos from Mariupol about the shelling of the maternity hospital were uploaded to the platform, which caused a certain resonance among the target audience of the platform.



QR-link 1. Materials of the project “*Help Us Save People*”

Another case is the international campaign “*Ukrainian Style Coffee*” proposed by the youth of the National Academy of the Security Service of Ukraine in the first weeks of the war. The goal of the project is to start a powerful Ukrainian brand-symbol and demonstrate the resilience of the Ukrainian people, their love of life, and the ability to ironically perceive any crisis events. The satisfaction from the Ukrainians’ favourite drink should have been associated in the world community with the indomitable Ukrainian people. “Strong coffee, strong country!” was chosen as the campaign slogan.

Specialists of the Centre for Strategic Communications of the National Academy of the Security Service of Ukraine together with the students developed the strategy and design of the campaign. The implementation began with the visualisation of the narrative “Strong coffee, strong country!” The proposals were different: from an image of a strawberry (Ukr. *полуниця*, pronounced *polunytzia*) with the signature ‘*палянниця*’ (type of traditional white bread, pronounced *palyanytzia*); (both words are very difficult to say for non-Ukrainians so they were used to find subversives) to a catchphrase about a Russian warship. While working on the leaflet, it was suggested to add a portrait of Putin to the reverse side, so that having tasted the coffee, one could confidently pour the spent coffee grounds on his face (Case 1). In this way, people had the opportunity to vent all their emotions and show even greater contempt for the enemy! (See QR link 2).



Case 1. “Ukrainian Style Coffee” campaign leaflet

The initiative was supported by the well-known chef Yevhen Klopotenko and Vadym Granovskyi, the champion of making coffee in a cezve. Granovskyi developed a recipe for Ukrainian style coffee, which has many semantic highlights: “We prepare coffee in a cezve, mix it with double espresso, drink it to the bottom with pleasure, think about Ukraine and our victory, with a confident movement we throw the spent coffee grounds out of the mug on the portrait of Putin). Well, then we take pictures and share them! Because everyone should see this disrespect for the world criminal-terrorist!” [2]

The action started in Chernivtsi, [3] it was supported by the Regional Department of the Security Service of Ukraine in Chernivtsi region, Chernivtsi city council, volunteers, and journalists. “The ability to connect and stick together and support each other is a key one now. A few days ago, Vadym Granovskyi and I went to Chernivtsi to support people and present Ukrainian style coffee. We spoke about its ideology. Vadim taught people how to make coffee, I introduced people to *palianytsia*. It turned out to be two strengths in terms of meaning: strong coffee and hot coffee. There were many residents of Chernivtsi and Ukrainians who left their cities,” Yevhen Klopotenko wrote on his Facebook page. [4] The action was repeated at the farmer’s fair in Lviv, [5] various military units on the territory of Ukraine (Photograph 1).



Photos 1. “Ukrainian Style Coffee” campaign in Lviv and Chernivtsi

With the assistance of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the project went beyond the borders of Ukraine (Case 2). Ukrainian style coffee is presented at the Consulate General of Ukraine in Istanbul, the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Turkey, the coffee festival in Ankara; industry event Caffè Culture in London; at the company’s stand at the World of Coffee in Milan and within the closed event at the Victoria production Arduino in Belforte del Chiente. [6]



Case 2. Presentation of “Ukrainian Style Coffee” in the world

Therefore, coffee diplomacy went around the world. This is the evidence of the effectiveness of strategic communications and a systematic approach to creating events.



*QR-link 2. Materials of the “Ukrainian Style Coffee” campaign*

The authors of the described projects came to the conclusion that activities in the field of strategic communications should be based on previous scientific developments, provide for communication and cooperation of representatives of security and state institutions with mass media and volunteer organisations, be systematic and proactive.

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## KEY MESSAGES OF THE CHAPTER

1. Interaction between the SDSI and civil society, in particular volunteers, journalists, scientists, NGOs, is crucial for the success of strategic communications in wartime.

2. Successful communications in the first year of the war were ensured by the principle of transparency and openness. The public constantly received and receives the necessary information about the most sensitive issues: events at the frontlines, the possibility of returning to the territory under the control of the Ukrainian authorities for citizens who were forced to move to the territory of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus due to hostilities, or whom Russia forcibly deported from Ukraine; changes in border crossings regulations, congestion at checkpoints, etc.

3. One of the main tasks of the communication strategy in the first days of the war was the prevention of panic among the population. SDSI achieved this by conducting large-scale information and educational campaigns on the eve of the invasion of the Russian Federation; a demonstration that despite the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation the heads of the security and state institutions of Ukraine remain at work, keep the situation under control and cooperate fruitfully with international partners.

4. Explanatory work with the public was constantly conducted and is being conducted, video films are being prepared regarding the situation in the deoccupied territories and the danger of returning to the settlements of Ukraine recently liberated from the Russians; crimes committed by the army of the Russian Federation; identification of subversive and reconnaissance groups and collaborators; stabilisation measures, demining, evacuation, searching for missing persons; safety rules and behaviour in case of detection of explosive objects.

5. Ensuring the transparency and openness of communications is also achieved by informing the Ukrainian and Western target audience, decision-makers, about the facts of the enemy's use of weapons, military and special equipment and ammunition against civilian objects, as well as their use of prohibited means of warfare; proving the facts of the presence of foreign components in modern models of Russian weapons in order to stop their supply to the territory of the Russian Federation; debunking myths about the so-called 'second army of the world' and its advanced weapons.

6. A single strategic narrative, shared goals, objectives, and desired result is a conceptual framework that allows integrating and synchronising strategic communications with military operations to liberate the state from the aggressor. Narratives are formed on the basis of both historical and contemporary contexts and are developed taking into account the norms and values of key target audiences.

7. Creation within the SDSI of working groups / situational centres for response, coordination of work of regional divisions, preparation of key messages, media monitoring, etc. ensures efficiency and coordination of strategic communication activities.

8. The proactivity of the strategic communications of the SDSI in the first year of the war was ensured by a system of actions: infospace monitoring and analysis; strategic communication campaigns developed jointly by the bodies of various SDS institutes for broad target audiences; creation of innovative content for the official Internet resources of the SDS institutes, all-Ukrainian telethon *Edyni Novyni*; production of films and cartoons related to the Russian-Ukrainian war; positioning of images of heroes and heroines – defenders of Ukraine; conducting emotionally positive information campaigns that support the resilience of Ukrainians and build respect for the fight against Russian aggression in foreign target audiences; professional expert consultations for leading Ukrainian and foreign mass media; documenting combat operations and interaction with the first persons and key participants of the events; inter-departmental interaction with strategic communications and cyber protection units.

# CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES FOR THE COMBAT OF DISINFORMATION

## HOW TO ORGANISE INTERACTION WITH THE SECURITY SECTOR AND STATE INSTITUTIONS

*Yurii Karin,  
Oleksandr Kovalenko,  
Oleksii Kopytko*

“Some advocates encourage more active involvement of civil society in support of strategic communication and public diplomacy,” noted C. Paul. [2] This provision has an explanation – most of the knowledge needed for effective public diplomacy lies outside the government, as evidenced by the events of the hybrid Russian aggression in Ukraine.

The beginning of 2014 proved the absence of a state system for countering informational aggression. The ministers of the security institutions fled, and the trust in the domestic media was destroyed by a powerful multi-year information operation to discredit them, in which they themselves took an active part. From that time until the full-scale invasion, some of these media, mimicking Ukrainian ones, openly acted as mouthpieces for Russian propaganda. Therefore, since 2014, alternative sources of information have become in demand, including non-governmental initiatives of civil society, such as *Euromaidan*, *Informnapalm*, *Information Resistance* and others.

Under the conditions of complete paralysis of state information structures, the experts of the Centre for Military and Political Studies, within which the non-governmental initiative Information Resistance was created, took a number of steps:

1. An informational and analytical note was sent to the new leadership of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine. It emphasises the need to intensify counter-propaganda, to create a coordination and information body under the auspices of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine. The initiative was not supported; the answer was given that there are state mass media that will take care of this work.

2. A non-governmental network of informants was created in problematic and occupied territories. The received information was carefully checked through 2-3 unrelated sources, a certain part of it was not subject to publication and was passed on to the counterintelligence bodies.

3. Prompt delivery of information to society through all possible channels – own accounts in social networks, blogs in Ukrainian media, participation in TV and radio broadcasts. This strategy turned out to be fruitful – in the segment of the Ukrainian Facebook Dmytro Tymchuk entered the top five bloggers of Ukraine, and the number of citations of posts and messages of the Information Resistance group reached 400.

4. Contacts with all interested security sector and state institutions have been established. These communications had no obstacles, since the backbone of the Information Resistance group was made up of reserve officers who had experience of working in military conflict zones and corresponding service contacts.

5. The coordinators of the Information Resistance group were included in the working group under the Administration of the President of Ukraine, which included representatives of the security institutions of Ukraine. That happened in March 2014, after meetings with Acting President of Ukraine O. Turchynov and acting Head of the Presidential Administration S. Pashynskyi.

6. On the initiative of the coordinators of the Information Resistance group and with the support of the Presidential Administration, an order on the creation of the ATO press centre and the media centre of the NSDC of Ukraine was issued. From September to December 2014 (before the creation of the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine), the Media Centre of the National Security Council of Ukraine was headed by the coordinator of the Information Resistance group Oleksiy Kopytko.

7. The Internet resource *Information Resistance* was created in May 2014. During the period of active hostilities in Donbas, the daily attendance of the resource reached 130-170 thousand exclusive consumers of information, which amounted to about half a million views.

In December 2014, there was a change in the leadership of the media centre of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine and our cooperation stopped. In this way, the situational StratCom of the

Information Resistance group with the Government was partially interrupted.

However, cooperation with the intelligence community and counterintelligence services continued. We focused on the day-to-day activities of countering Russian informational aggression and creating new formats and platforms for this purpose.

Before the beginning of the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the structure of Information Resistance [1] consisted of 3 sites with a reach of 6 to 10 million readers every month, more than 20 blogs and social media accounts of our leaders of public opinion Kostyantyn Mashovets, Oleksandr Kovalenko, Elena Stepova and others, several Telegram channels, including those aimed at implementing soft power.

In 2014-2015, the “*Svitlofor*” project was implemented, the purpose of which was to monitor the political, socio-economic, criminogenic situation in the south and east of Ukraine and determine the level of terrorist and other threats to state and public security. The conclusions of our experts are presented to concerned state bodies and partially covered in the mass media.

Two large studies were conducted on the attitude of local residents of all districts of Kharkiv and Kherson regions to immigrants from Donbas and Crimea in 2015 and 2017. The purpose of these projects – measuring the level of social and civil tensions among residents of the districts of these regions.

In the period 2017-2019, the project “*History without censorship. Chronicle of Russian Aggression – Invasion into Ukraine*” was realised. During this time, more than 1,500 sets of books debunking the myths of Russian propaganda were produced and distributed. They were distributed in 9 of the most vulnerable regions of Ukraine at that time.

In the period 2018-2020, the experts of the group carried out constant monitoring of the activities of radical groups on the territory of Ukraine, measuring the degree of its threat to the national security of Ukraine and forecasting the further activity of these groups.

In addition to the daily response to Russian propaganda, a weekly review of fakes was launched in 2018, and recently the daily format of the review of world media about the war in Ukraine. The authentic translation of the publications is divided into blocks: Assessment of the situation, Economic and political aspects, Help to Ukraine and

Identification of spreads of the Russian information and psychological operations in the Western press.

Our experts have repeatedly noted the adaptability of Russian intelligence agencies to new information conditions. In particular, they infiltrate the information environment with controlled actors in controlled organisations in order to implement information and psychological special operations. The main danger lies in the use of organisations with greater pro-European, democratic background.

Thus, in the period 2014-2022, the Russian special services created in our country organisations that allegedly fought corruption or debunked fakes. But their real goal was to spread information of a manipulative nature to discredit the authorities, as well as socio-political destabilisation of the country.

Today, trends have changed. Thus, during 2022, the agents of Russia's influence – false peacekeepers – became more active. These are organisations and actors who constantly call for a cease-fire without any preconditions. Such agents operate both in Ukraine and in Europe and the USA. Since Soviet times, the KGB has used pacifism as a tool to influence Western countries, today it is a tool of Russia.

**Recommendations on the interaction of the security sector and state institutions with non-governmental organisations:**

1. Cooperation between security sector institutions and NGOs is the most promising.

2. State and security institutions are interested in using the resources of NGOs, but they are not always able or willing to support their activities. It is necessary to create favourable conditions for such interaction.

3. The inclusion of NGO representatives in working groups on urgent issues of national security will contribute to coordination of communications and promotion of a positive image of the security sector and state institutions.

4. NGOs are more mobile and open in collecting and presenting information. Security sector and government institutions should use this resource.

5. Up-to-date information provided by NGOs and confirmed by official resources of security and state institutions inspires public confidence.

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## FACT-CHECKING IN THE STRUCTURE OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

*Victoriia Romaniuk*

Fact-checking and professional verification of information – the process of checking facts for truthfulness and manipulability – is an effective tool for countering disinformation.

### **Recommendations on strengthening the effectiveness of fact-checking organisations (communicative aspect)**

1. Building the trust of the audience – establishing systematic, effective communication with various target groups.
2. The development of accessible, transparent and interactive communication and publication formats of the results of fact-checking activities on various platforms is an important factor that affects the audience's understanding and perception of certain information and resistance against alternative, hostile informational influences.
3. Development and updating of rebuttals distribution network, which would include a diverse range of platforms and channels, social networks. This will help widen the audience.
4. Establishing relations with media and social networks that can act as agents for the broadcast of rebuttals, as well as actively use fact-checking investigations in their activities.
5. Development of a network of partners and agents of fact-checking activities in an international format, which will make it possible to form a comprehensive understanding of disinformation dynamics and approaches in relation to various audiences, as well as to create a system of quick information delivery and countermeasures against these threats.
6. Joining the circle of partners of state and non-state stakeholders, using the experience and communication capabilities of media, NGOs and civil society.

7. Collection and analysis of databases in the context of fact-checking activities. This will allow identification of the logic, tools, technologies used in relation to different target audiences and the narrative structure of disinformation. Analytical work with the available results of fact-checking activities.

### **Case Analysis**

#### **Communicative model of the fact-checking organisation StopFake**

According to the annual USAID-Internews study *Attitudes of the population towards the media and consumption of different types of media 2022*, StopFake has become the most popular fact-checking resource among Ukrainian users. 16 % of respondents said that they use this site to find verified messages. [1]

The communicative model of the organisation involves the following actions:

Stage 1. Work with the internal audience:

- analysis and profiling of various types of internal audience: professional community, academic environment, public sector, wide audience of citizens. From the beginning of the project, the team clearly segmented different types of audience and developed approaches to communication;

- establishment of cooperation with media organisations. The StopFake team regularly cooperated with the *Suspilne* TV channel, *Suspilne Radio*, regional broadcasters, etc.;

- creating its own network of distribution of refutations. The StopFake team is preparing three video programmes about Russian disinformation (in Ukrainian, Russian and English), 14 language services and pages in social networks (Facebook , Twitter , Telegram, etc.) are working;

- establishment of close cooperation with state bodies and ministries. Our team established cooperation with the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Centre for Strategic Communications and Information Security under the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, the Centre for Countering Disinformation of the NSDC of Ukraine, the National Council of Ukraine on Television and Radio Broadcasting;

- establishment of cooperation with Ukrainian non-governmental organisations in the field of media, the focus of which is the analysis of the information environment and the fight against disinformation.

Stage 2. Building a network of external stakeholders:

- integration of the project into the international professional / fact-checking environment. In 2020, StopFake joined the international fact-checking community IFCN. Starting from February 24, 2022, at the level of consulting and content exchange, it supported foreign initiatives that verified the facts surrounding Russia's war against Ukraine; also, the StopFake team has established cooperation with the Meta company, joining their international third-party fact-checking programme;

- initiation of cooperation with foreign TV and radio companies. Thus, the StopFake team interacts with English- and Spanish-speaking broadcasters to promote refutations of fakes about the military situation in Ukraine in the regions of the Global South, in particular Latin America;

- development of academic cooperation with universities and academic programmes that study the problems of disinformation in Europe and the USA;

- regular analysis of requests from all interested parties.

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## **UKRAINIAN ANALYTICAL PRODUCT. ATTACK INDEX SERVICE OF MONITORING AND AUTOMATED DETECTION OF INFORMATION THREATS: RECORDING, TRACKING, ANALYSIS, FORECAST**

*Ellina Shnurko-Tabakova*

The Attack Index service for monitoring and automated identification of information threats ([attackindex.com](http://attackindex.com)) was created by a team of experts in technical and computer sciences, applied mathematics, media, sociology, IT and information security. That is why all modern scientific and research findings are instantly implemented in

the Attack Index service. For example, the service uses such elements of artificial intelligence as machine learning, neural networks and pattern recognition:

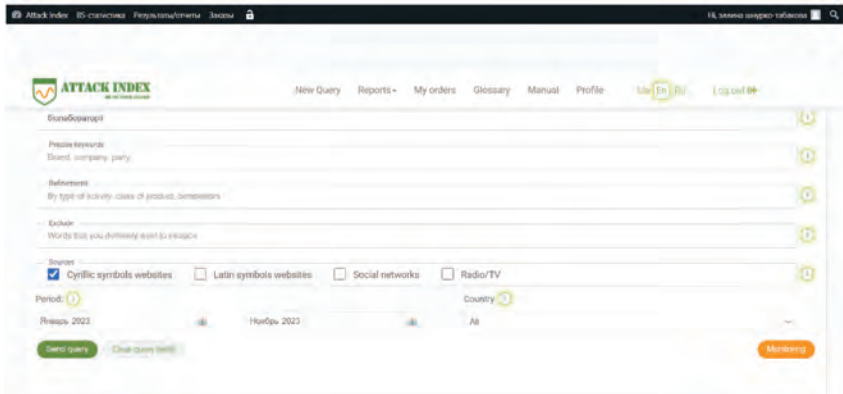
- machine learning: tonality of messages, rating of sources, forecasting the development of information dynamics;
- cluster analysis: automated grouping of text messages, identification of story lines, formation of story chains;
- computer linguistics: identification of idiomatic phrases and narratives;
- formation, clustering and visualisation of semantic networks: identification of connections and nodes, development of cognitive maps;
- correlation and wavelet analysis: detection of information operations.

These technologies enable the Attack Index service to monitor information processes, form a system of analytical indicators, calculate the probability of information operations, specify the stability of information situations and forecast their development. The automated Attack Index report saves time and increases the efficiency of analysts' work, in particular, in the process of generating data to counter propaganda and informational aggression of the Russian Federation.

### **Recording and tracking the information dynamics**

The sources for monitoring include more than 20,000 Cyrillic and English-language sites from over 60 countries, as well as such social networks as Facebook, Instagram, LiveJournal, LiveInternet, Vkontakte, Odnoklassniki, Telegram, Twitter, YouTube, Reddit, Weibo, RuTube, Medium, ArXiv, Academia. Besides, monitoring of TV and radio companies, their websites and YouTube channels is also provided separately. The databases store textual transcripts of each programme which is monitored. The retrospective spans over 20 years.

The Attack Index service provides information dynamics regarding the user's request and allows you to configure its daily tracking (see Screenshot 1).



*Screenshot 1. Setup and daily information tracking by the Attack Index service*

## Analytical Indicators

The interface of the Attack Index service makes it possible to receive a report on the current information situation by keywords in an automated mode based on a set of analytical indicators. Attack Index Version 3.0 provides the user with an automated report consisting of 12 sections (Screenshot 2).



*Screenshot 2. Sections of the Attack Index report*

1. Index Attack Score (or information resonance) and analysis of characteristics of sources which describe the topic, owners, editorial policy, affiliation and content quality.

2. Dynamics of publications (number and tonality of publications), Top 30 stories of the day, the amount of distributions of the story, original source and full text of relevant publications.

3. Sentiment analysis of the request materials and examples of publications classified as either positive or negative.

4. The activity of the object of research presented graphically, trends under smoothing conditions of 7 and 30 days, as well as daily deviation from the average.

5. Moderated waves of information with the start, duration and fading dates of the detected artificial waves of information operations, Top 5 main stories, original source and Top 10 distributors of each.

6. Connections between sources on the date of the maximum information burst or operation.

7. Stability of information activity, based on its value  $H > 0.6$  forecasting. This allows further development of algorithms for forecasting information activity.

8. Citation containing fragments of direct speech on request (more than 1 thousand citations on request within the last week of querying the system).

9. Top tags which can be found in publications and messages (most relevant when choosing databases of social networks), their rating.

10. Portraits, a list of individuals and organisations found on request, their rating and a cognitive map of their connections.

11. Geolocations with an interactive geographical map specifying geographical names and frequency of mentioning them.

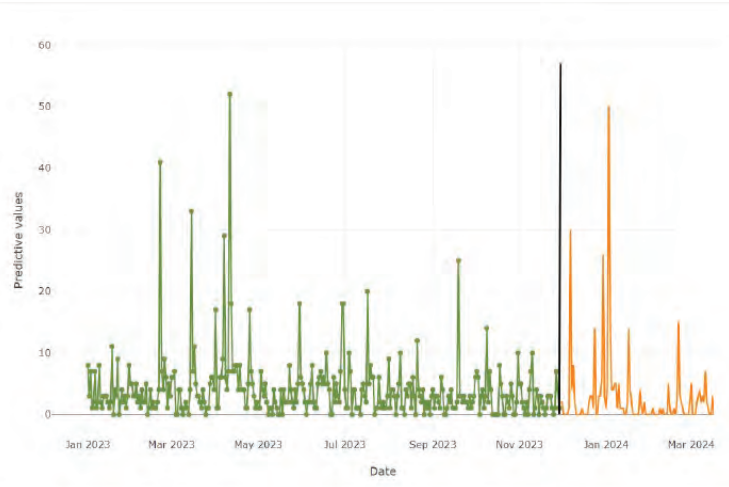
12. Characteristics of sources and their ratings in the texts of publications on request.

All these innovations came as a result of continuous research, preparation of analytical reports for clients and consultations with the system users. The Index Attack Report is now presented as either a single document or a separate part of it. The user has the opportunity to sort those parts of the report which he operates more often.



### ***Linguo-Correlation Method***

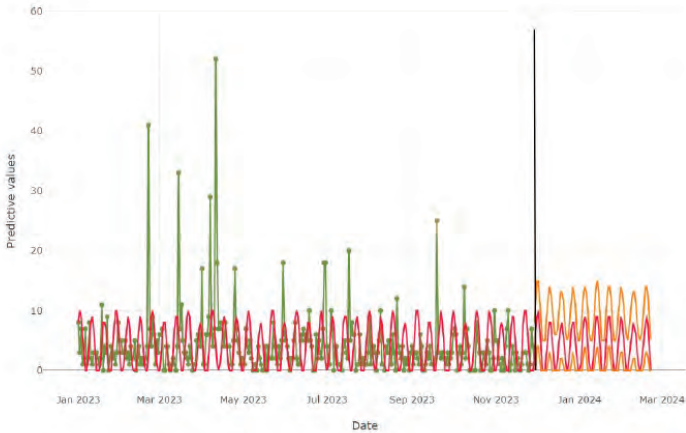
The forecast is made by means of the linguistic prediction method used for natural language processing, in particular to predict the upcoming words in an utterance when all the previous ones are known. In this case, it is considered that the conditional probability of every upcoming word depends on the previous words and their sequences. To forecast a time series, as it is known, the assumption that the probability and its value are determined by previous values is also used (Screenshot 4).



*Screenshot 4. Linguo-correlation analysis in forecasting*

### ***Method of Determining a Crisis Situation***

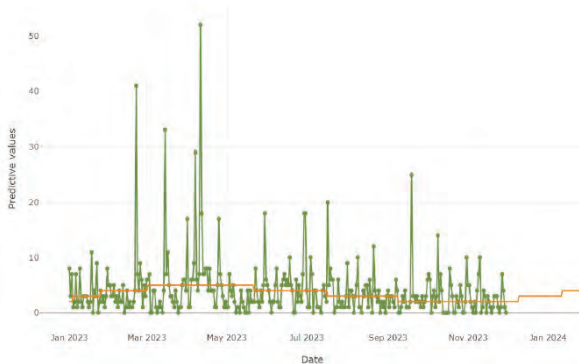
The method proposed by D. Sornette is based on the analysis of the regularity of market prices on commodity and stock markets before the crisis. The main idea of this method derives from the analysis of financial time series on the eve of the crisis and suggests that before the crisis, these values are characterised by growth under the power law, complicated by periodic fluctuations that converge to a critical point, when the probability of collapse reaches its maximum value (Screenshot 5).



*Screenshot 5. Method of identifying a crisis situation in forecasting*

### ***Method of Determining the Trend of the Situation Development***

Polynomial regression models only the trend development of the time series component. The historical series of data is decomposed by the method of least squares in accordance with the given degree of the polynome. Polynomial regression can be used in mathematical statistics when modelling trend components processes developing over time (Screenshot 6).



*Screenshot 6. The method of determining the trend of situation development in forecasting*

### ***Method of Determining Periodic Processes***

The method of decomposition into Fourier series enables to find periodic forms of processes, for example, the display of editorial policies of sources in time according to the applied request. Based on the obtained approximate formula, further forecasting takes place. This method is currently at the stage of final programming.

For the available 200-day publication dynamics time series, we can talk about a 20-day forward forecast with 90 % accuracy.

### **Conclusions**

Version 3.0 of the Attack Index service for monitoring and automated identification of information threats has expanded functionality and completely covers all levels of work with communications: recording of the information situation, its tracking, analysis, forecasting of development. Employees of analytical units receive an effective tool that shortens time of initial processing of information and decomposes the information situation into analytical components in an automated form. The use of mathematical methods of forecasting along with understanding of the context enables to obtain quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the scenarios deployment in the information environment.

### **KEY MESSAGES OF THE CHAPTER**

1. It is of paramount importance to support civil society initiatives to counter disinformation. This will ensure communication according to the principle of 'one voice'.

2. Using analytical products developed by NGOs is a proactive step. As an example: the Ukrainian product Attack Index, an analytical service using Big Data, saves time and increases the efficiency of analysts work at security institutions, in particular, in the formation of data to counter propaganda and information aggression of the Russian Federation; an example of effective fact-checking activity can be the Ukrainian organisation StopFake, whose website has become the most popular fact-checking resource among Ukrainian users.

3. Interaction with the NGOs should be focused on the following directions: interaction with internal audiences and development of a network of external stakeholders.

**RECOMMENDATIONS  
REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS  
IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE WAR**

## STATE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE WAR

The first year of the full-scale war against Russia proved the effectiveness of the strategic communications toolkit in confronting the enemy and at the same time set the task of creating a state StratCom system at all levels, namely strategic, operational, tactical. Consolidated recommendations of StratCom practitioners are represented by the following **key messages**:

1. The mission of StratCom in Ukraine nowadays is the coordinated use of all communication capabilities of the state for the implementation of its information policy aimed at achieving victory over the enemy and reliable security guarantees for the peaceful development of Ukraine after the war.

2. In the conditions of the war, the strategic communications of the state are subject to increased requirements regarding: communication proactivity, primacy in the communication of particularly important information; clear compliance of all communication activities with the strategic narrative of the state; efficiency of detection and neutralisation of threats to information security; efficiency and quality of crisis communications; coordination and synchronisation of communication activities of various StratCom subjects; prevention of ‘information fratricide’; guaranteed delivery of information to all audiences.

3. The time has come to combine science and practice: to create an international pool of scientists (experts); to introduce scientific substantiation and development of regulatory and legal acts in the field of strategic communications; to create a single national electronic StratCom resource; to develop the “*White Book of Strategic Communications in Ukraine*.”

4. The analytical community should provide assistance to the leadership of Ukraine in all phases of countering Russian aggression: assess the context / interests of stakeholders; participate in the development and implementation of StratCom strategy; produce communication tools; use the possibilities provided by the ‘war of images’; communicate with grass-roots communities, explain the nature of the state’s communication strategy and strategic communications.

5. It is of paramount importance to support civil society initiatives to counter disinformation. This will ensure communication based on the principle of 'one voice'.

Specific recommendations for the development of StartCom system at the state level are offered by practitioners in this field.

## **STATE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM MODEL IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE WAR**

*Taras Dziuba*

With the outbreak of full-scale Russian armed aggression against Ukraine, our national security model is being tested for strength. The mission of strategic communications in Ukraine today is coordinated use of all the possibilities of the information space for the implementation of the state's information policy aimed at defeating the enemy and obtaining reliable security guarantees of the peaceful development of Ukraine after the war.

The main tasks of strategic communications in the conditions of the war are:

- informing the Ukrainian society and the international community about the course and results of hostilities;
- consolidation of the population of Ukraine around the defence of Ukraine, increasing citizens' trust and support for the state policy, ensuring unconditional trust in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other components of the security and defence forces of Ukraine;
- creation and maintenance of effective communications with partner states and allies of Ukraine, with the UN, NATO, OSCE, and other international organisations, promoting the expansion of the circle of partner states;
- organisation and implementation of communications aimed at creating anti-war sentiments and refusal from the continued aggression within the society and personnel of the armed forces of the aggressor country;
- creation of the most favorable conditions for the defence of Ukraine and its victory in the war through carrying out activities in the information space.

In the conditions of the war, the state's strategic communications are subject to increased demands regarding:

- proactivity of communication activities, emphasis on reporting the essential information in the first place;
- clear compliance of all communication activities with the strategic narrative of the state;
- efficiency of detection and neutralisation of threats to information security;
- efficiency and quality of crisis communications;
- coordination and synchronisation of communication activities of various subjects of strategic communications, deconfliction of information which is made available to the public by various subjects;
- expansion of the network of communication channels for guaranteed delivery of information to all audiences;
- quality and creativity of information materials, their appeal for consumers. It is expedient to define the following as the main audiences of strategic communications in the conditions of the war:
  - the population of Ukraine;
  - the personnel of the Security and Defence Forces of Ukraine;
  - the leaders of public opinion in Ukraine and the world;
  - the Ukrainian diaspora in foreign countries;
  - the international security organisations;
  - the leaders and populations of foreign countries (the EU, the USA, Great Britain, Turkey, Canada, other partner countries and allies, China, India and other neutral countries, allies and supporters of the aggressor country);
  - the population of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus;
  - the personnel of the armed forces of the Russian Federation and Russian illegal paramilitary units;
  - the personnel of the armed forces and other security and defence agencies of the Republic of Belarus.

The implementation of strategic communications of the state in the conditions of the war requires use of a significant arsenal of communication tools, the most important of them are:

- Ukrainian and foreign mass media, whose activities must be in line with the national and international legislation (prohibition of censorship, protection of journalists' activity along with the increased

requirements for information protection and restrictions under the legal regime of martial law);

- communications during official and public diplomacy activities;
- involvement of the public opinion leaders;
- cooperation and interaction with the institutions of civil society;
- information and psychological operations;
- blocking the information space of Ukraine from hostile influences;

- countering the enemy propaganda;
- preventing the enemy from exerting influence on the global information space. Mandatory for each subject of strategic communications are:

- analytical units responsible for monitoring the information space, identifying, analysing and forecasting the consequences of threats to information security, assessing TA, analysing the effectiveness of communication measures;

- units responsible for planning communication activities and adjusting plans in accordance with the development of the situation;

- units responsible for the organisation and implementation of communication activities in various areas of strategic communications. For example, in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, communication activities are carried out, among others, in the following areas: relations with the public and mass media, military cooperation with foreign countries, information and psychological operations, civil-military cooperation, internal communications aimed at the personnel of the Armed Forces.

Coordination of the state's strategic communications (in this case) consists in detailing the strategic narrative while taking into account the situation (for example: "It's difficult, but worth it") and defining the clear content of communications for each of these subjects:

for the Office of the President of Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine: strengthening of cooperation with allies and partners to increase the supply of air defence, energy saving and energy generation means for Ukraine;

for the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine: explaining to the population of Ukraine how to survive in blackouts, demonstrating the results of the state's actions aimed at preventing a critical situation, preventing panic, etc.;

for the Armed Forces of Ukraine: demonstration of the results of the air defence system work, exerting continuous influence on the enemy in order to reduce its activity, expressing gratitude to the allies and partners for the provided weapons and military equipment, which prompts the enemy to abandon the chosen strategy.

When implementing the chosen approach, the entire arsenal of strategic communication tools was used.

The indicators of effectiveness of the state's strategic communications in the conditions of the war should be defined as:

- level of the state's policy support by the citizens;
- level of trust in various institutions of the state;
- level of support for Ukraine in the world;
- level of condemnation of the Russian Federation (the aggressor country) in the world;
- level of condemnation by the citizens of the Russian Federation of the aggressive policy of their own government;
- number of refusals to participate in the war against Ukraine.

It is obvious that the maximum values of the given indicators will reflect the level of implementation of Ukraine's StratCom mission in the conditions of the war.

## **NATIONAL SYSTEM OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS**

*Oleksii Akulshyn*

Creation of the National System of Strategic Communications is an urgent task for Ukraine. It will enable:

- to prevent information influence aimed at destroying interaction between the government authorities and the institutes of the security and defence sector;
- to achieve mutual understanding between the state and the civil society;
- to prevent the destabilisation of the social, political and economic situation as well as the discrediting of the country's leadership and government authorities, including in the international arena;
- to develop an effective information and analytical system for the prevention of internal conflicts of any origin, in particular, divisions within

the country and mass riots initiated by the enemy against the background of national, religious, linguistic, international issues, etc.;

- to attract the best foreign and domestic researchers to solve the problems of ensuring the national security;
- to counteract the destruction of self-identification and self-recognition of the nation and an individual citizen;
- to develop methods of proactive prevention of destructive hostile influences in the information sphere;
- to create a nationwide system for recognising existing and potential 'hybrid' information terrorists;
- to create a positive image of Ukraine, its leaders, government authorities and institutions of the security and defence sector in the international and domestic information space;
- to train highly qualified military and civilian specialists in the field of strategic planning and countering disinformation.

At the same time, the procrastination of the process of creating the National System of Strategic Communications and lack of coordinated action at the national level to counter disinformation can provoke the following negative phenomena:

- demoralisation of the society, as well as the public officials and the personnel of the institutions of the security and defence sector;
- growth of anti-national propaganda and information terrorism;
- destruction of self-identification and self-determination of the representatives of civil society, which leads to the loss of national identity;
- disrupting the interaction and destruction of the system of long-term formal and informal ties between various structures, institutions, and the public;
- the enemy gaining advantage in the hybrid war and increasing its scale;
- discrediting the political leadership and national strategic initiatives, including at the international and national levels, etc.

**We believe that the action plan for the creation of the National System of Strategic Communications in Ukraine should contain the following steps:**

1. Standardisation and unification of the terminology, namely the compilation of an English-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-English dictionary of strategic communications terms (taking into account the best international experience).
2. Creation of an international educational and scientific hub on the issues of strategic communications, including: the development of thematic

plans for training courses for the representatives of government authorities and institutions of the security and defence sector in the field of strategic communications in cooperation with the international organisations accredited in Ukraine; international forums, round tables and conferences in the field of strategic communications.

3. Ongoing practice of creating the strategic communications units or positions of StratCom experts within the government authorities and institutions of the security and defence sector.

4. Preparation of international thematic publications (handbooks) covering the issues of strategic communications, countering disinformation and enemy's special information operations, as well as media literacy and media culture.

5. Formation of an international pool of scientists (experts) in the field of strategic communications.

6. Scientific substantiation and development of the drafts of regulatory and legal acts in the field of strategic communications, including international ones.

7. Development and distribution of nation-wide content on the international arena regarding the coverage of the activities of the state leadership, institutions of the security and defence sector of Ukraine, as well as the exposure of crimes committed by the Russian military personnel on the territory of Ukraine, debunking the myths and countering the enemy disinformation.

8. Development and approval in the prescribed manner of the Concept of the National System of Strategic Communications.

9. Creation of a single international (national) electronic resource in the field of strategic communications.

10. Development of the White Book of Strategic Communications in Ukraine.

11. Creation of the national (international) centre for strategic communications and countering hybrid threats.

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## **ASYMMETRIC OPPOSITION TO INFORMATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS OF THE ENEMY**

Since 2014, the citizens of Ukraine have been feeling the effect of information and psychological operations of the Russian Federation. These operations are based on the Soviet propaganda of the Second World War period as well as on the ideological notion of the ‘three-ones Slavic nation’, which allows Russia to justify any of its actions, at least on the territory of Ukraine and Belarus, and systematically promote the idea of dehumanising of the Ukrainians.

Over the years, specialists from the security institutions and government agencies have developed a methodology for countering information and psychological influences of the enemy, based on the following key provisions:

1. The post-truth discourse, in which Russian propagandists work, is becoming less and less trustworthy with both Ukrainian and Western target audiences. The only tools available for Russian propagandists in the current conditions are accusations of fake staging and attempts to shift the responsibility to the Ukrainian military.

2. Russian propaganda failed to develop an effective method of information countermeasures against the reports of war crimes by the Russian military.

3. Effective methods of countering information and psychological operations of the enemy are fact-checking activities, ‘inoculation’, which is simulation of situations for training citizens’ critical thinking, improving media literacy skills, as well as including media literacy lessons in the basic school education.

4. A comprehensive analysis of the operational situation is the basis for planning an information operation. The information situation must be constantly reassessed and refined, since the detection of the enemy’s critical vulnerabilities may change during the entire information operation.

5. Ukraine needs a clear narrative both inside the country and outside its borders, which will consolidate its citizens and provide effective support from the outside. Such a narrative can be: “Ukraine is a point in the confrontation between the Good and the Evil,” “Ukraine is the shield of Europe.”

6. It is necessary to implement and clarify the strategic narrative of the Victory: “Ukraine’s victory is a return to the borders of 2014 and defining the peoples of the Russian Federation by their language, ethnicity and religion.”

7. Proactivity is the best weapon against information and psychological operations of the enemy: promotion of narratives supporting the liberation movements in the Russian Federation and the right of the peoples living in Russia to self-determination; formation of the post-Soviet image; organisation of online courses for learning the native languages by national minorities in the Russian Federation; research in the field of history, ethnography, folklore, languages and literatures of the minor peoples of the Russian Federation, etc.

Below are recommendations for countering information and psychological operations of the enemy which have been tested by the Ukrainians in practice since February, 24, 2022 when the confrontation began.

## **HOW TO COUNTER RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA IN THE CONTEXT OF FULL-SCALE AGGRESSION**

*Yevhen Mahda*

Propaganda traditionally accompanies hostilities. Although the Russian-Ukrainian war is not global in its scope, its course demonstrated new approaches to the use of propaganda.

There is no doubt about the extensive use of propaganda in the Russian-Ukrainian war, which is the most large-scale war of the 21st century. First of all, we are talking about the aggressor, since Russia was not only preparing for a large-scale invasion.

Russian propaganda trends after February 24, 2022:

1. There has been a transition from a hybrid war against Ukraine to a conventional war which the Russian propaganda and officials dubbed a ‘special military operation’. Such a definition initially allowed the use of the strategy ‘with little blood and one strike’, but the course of hostilities forced the Russian Federation to enhance the participation of its own population in the war against Ukraine. The partial mobilisation decree

issued by Putin in September 2022 [3] effectively marked the end of the ‘special military operation’ phase, although no corresponding developments occurred.

2. The Kremlin relies on a long experience of using the ideological notion of the ‘three-ones Slavic nation’. It allows attempts to justify almost any actions of Russia due to the presence of its interests at least on the territory of Ukraine and Belarus. At the official level, Ukraine is marked by the Russian political leadership as ‘historical Russia’, [2] and this marker is an attempt to justify the seizure of the territory of Ukraine.

At the same time, it is worth paying attention to a certain tenacity of the Kremlin’s propaganda structures regarding Ukraine. The process of dehumanisation of the population of Ukraine, which started with the fake story about the ‘crucified boy’ in Sloviansk in the summer of 2014, continues and takes new forms at the federal level of the Russian Federation. There are reasons to talk about the systemic nature of the above-mentioned propaganda efforts.

3. The Kremlin is using the accumulated experience of Soviet propaganda during the Second World War in its war against Ukraine. First, it is the use of such definitions as ‘Nazis’, ‘neo-Nazis’, ‘militants’ in relation to the Defence Forces of Ukraine. Thus, the Russian leadership is trying to appeal to the subconscious of the Russian citizens. Secondly, they use paraphernalia of the Second World War period, in particular, copies of the ‘Victory flag’ during hostilities. Thirdly, it is the consistent dehumanisation of the population of Ukraine by making analogies with the struggle against the UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) after the end of the Second World War. Fourthly, they rely on the so-called ‘war correspondents’ – representatives of the federal media, who cover the course of hostilities not only in those media, but also in their own telegram channels. Fifth, it is the desire to hold trials of Ukrainian servicemen, which evoke analogies with the trials of the German occupiers during and after the end of the Second World War.

4. Due to the active opposition of the EU and NATO countries to the functioning of the already familiar tools of Russian propaganda (TV channel Russia Today, news agency Sputnik Media), which worked in most European countries until February 24, 2022, Russian propaganda uses other tools of information dissemination. In particular, anonymous and heavily propagandistic telegram channels among the population of the Russian Federation and the Russian diaspora abroad, the use of

Western media to spread assumptions, rumors, and fake news. The news agencies TASS and RIA Novosti have become tools for the spread of fakes, with a noticeable emphasis in their activities on the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, in which the attitude towards Russia's actions in Ukraine is often viewed through the prism of anti-Americanism.

5. Russian propaganda failed to develop an effective method of information countermeasures against reports of war crimes committed by the Russian military. The only tools available for Russian propagandists in the current conditions are accusations of fake staging and attempts to shift the responsibility to the Ukrainian military. Almost a year has passed since the first exposure of the crimes committed by the occupiers in the suburbs of Kyiv, but the Kremlin information strategy has not changed fundamentally.

6. An important priority for the functioning of Russian propaganda is to create an illusion of the war between Russia and NATO on the territory of Ukraine. Ukraine's military-technical cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance has become a serious test for Russian propaganda, and the HIMARS anti-aircraft missile defence system is a very significant irritant. The thesis "We are fighting against NATO" should become a justification for the ongoing military confrontation on the territory of Ukraine. The Kremlin is also focused on disrupting the supply of equipment and weapons to the Defence Forces of Ukraine, so it conducts active information operations on the territory of NATO countries, using existing contradictions and economic problems.

7. Illegal pseudo-referendums on the occupied territory of Ukraine were covered by the federal media in the style of coverages about the limited contingent of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan in the 1980s. [1] This only confirms that the Russian propaganda machine relies on old principles, formed as early as the 19th century, somewhat improved by the totalitarian Soviet state, and now adopted and broadcast more intensively.

### **Recommendations for countering Russian propaganda:**

1. 'It is forbidden to forbid', since the effect of the 'forbidden fruit' in the conservative Ukrainian society, which has not completely gotten rid of the vestiges of the authoritarian system, can be extremely negative. I think that this is the narrative of the War of Independence of Ukraine;

2. In order to ensure the ongoing effective support of Ukraine by the West, it is advisable to emphasize on the role of our state as a point in the confrontation between the Good and the Evil, which is an understandable ideological construct for the representatives of the Western civilisation;

3. It seems appropriate to intensify Ukraine's participation in shaping the narrative of the Baltic-Black Sea region as an anti-imperial alternative to the 'Russian world';

4. State's information policy should be based on the revolver principle of prompt response by the official representatives of relevant government authorities capable of providing adequate information within a short period of time;

5. The existing format of the *Edyni Novyni* television marathon should be revised by segmenting it: representatives of government agencies may further take an active part in the preparation of the news block;

6. The development of critical thinking and the basics of media literacy affects the perception of the Ukrainian media information. However, the spread of relevant educational courses among teenage schoolchildren seems to be a guarantee of the increasing national resilience in the conditions of Russian aggression;

7. Excessive virtualisation of the information space and educational process cannot substitute positive wartime storytelling (stories about heroes, stories about successful and socially responsible business, stories about the 'little man');

8. Ukraine made decision about its own political survival in the first weeks after the large-scale Russian invasion, so it needs to form a 'light at the end of the tunnel' narrative for its citizens, which includes the prospects of ending the war, the return of refugees who have settled in other countries, and defining the prospects for Ukraine's recovery.

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## **INTERVENTIONS TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF DISINFORMATION ON THE POLITICAL BELIEFS OF CITIZENS: FOREIGN EXPERIENCE FOR UKRAINE**

*Serhii Shapovalov*

The main indicator of the effectiveness of disinformation is its effect on people’s views. Knowing why people believe disinformation is valuable not just in itself, but for the design of measures (interventions) aimed at reducing citizens’ vulnerability to disinformation. Such interventions can take different forms.

1. *Fact-checking activities of journalists, public organisations and authorities*. But it has certain limitations. Among the biggest problems is that making fakes is ‘cheaper’ than disproving them. Refutation of certain material and its application takes time, so it often happens that the refutation appears after the disinformation message has spread in the information space, which reduces its effectiveness. In addition, refutation is a specific information product that requires distribution, so fact-checkers’ messages do not always reach audiences who have already become consumers of disinformation.

2. *The ‘inoculation’ approach*. Its essence, by analogy with vaccination in medicine, is that a person who is exposed to disinformation and its operating mechanisms in artificial conditions will be more resistant to disinformation messages in real situations. For example, an interactive online game *Bad News Game* was developed, in which the player creates his / her own news agency, which increases its audience by spreading disinformation and using manipulation techniques in its publications. [2, p. 3-4]

Studies have shown that people, who played the game, were better at distinguishing disinformation from true news reports, because apparently from the game, they learned to recognise manipulation

techniques in the materials of real media and to question the reports in which these techniques were revealed. [2, p. 7-8]

*3. Improving media literacy skills.* In particular, one of the examples of high-quality educational content in the field of media education in Ukraine is the Very Verified online course. [3] But the problem is that participation in such courses is voluntary. Therefore, a significant share of citizens who really need to improve their media literacy skills may not know about the existence of such courses or may not have sufficient motivation to participate in them.

*4. Scalable interventions* reach larger audiences. Such interventions include centralised government policy measures or information platforms measures which are applied regardless of the wishes of individual users, or initiatives to include media literacy lessons in basic school education.

*5. Improving media literacy of senior citizens.* A good example is Facebook's 2017 Tips to Spot False News campaign. [1] Users in several countries were shown a 10-step guide at the top of their news feed to help spot false information or disinformation. Subsequently, comparative studies of groups of respondents who were given and who were not given such instructions on media literacy proved the effectiveness of such an intervention. The representatives of the group who received a list of recommendations for improving media literacy indeed recognised fake news more often. However, they also identified unbiased news as fake more often, which indicates an increase in the general skepticism of citizens towards information after improving their media literacy. Nevertheless, the effect primarily concerns fake news, because skepticism towards true news increases much less.

The main requirement for this type of advice is unobtrusiveness. Nevertheless, as a result of the intervention, many people who would not have taken up improving their media literacy skills on their own received advice and paid attention to it.

*6. Use of national television as an information source* to improve citizens' media skills. Although the specific forms of implementation of such interventions remain debatable, current research shows their potential effectiveness in countering destructive propaganda and disinformation.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING PROACTIVE REPORTING OF INFORMATION ON EVENTS IN UKRAINE TO WORLD TARGET AUDIENCES

*Oleksandr Bondarenko*

1. Support of national liberation movements in the Russian Federation, in particular:
  - the ‘Tatar government in exile’;
  - the government of Ichkeria in exile;
  - the battalion of Turk peoples *Turan* Almaz Kudabek.
2. Promotion in the communication and media spaces of Ukraine, Europe, the USA and Russia of narratives which support the liberation movements of the Russian Federation and the right of peoples living in Russia to self-determination. The ‘post-Russia’ narrative should become dominant in the global information space.
3. To support the initiative of Iniazor Erzian Bolaenia Syren, who proposed “the creation of full-fledged news broadcast in the format of Internet TV for the key national groups of the North Caucasus, Idel-Urals and Siberia, of course, in their national languages.” [1]
4. The Verkhovna Rada Resolution No. 8105 “The Rada supports the inalienable right of the peoples of the Russian Federation to self-determination” [2] is insufficient. The following things are necessary:
  - the involvement of organisational state resources for the stimulation of national liberation movements in the Russian Federation;
  - the organisation of online courses for learning native languages by the national minorities in the Russian Federation;

- the research in the field of history, ethnography, folklore, languages and literatures of the minor peoples of the Russian Federation;
- the organisation and financing of folklore and ethnographic festivals of the peoples who live on the territory of the Russian Federation and have genetic connections with the peoples of Europe (Erzia-Estonia, Karelia-Finland, Khanty-Hungary).

5. Virtual space should be used to promote Ukraine's position in the world, for this it is necessary:

- to open official representative offices of Google, Facebook, and Apple in Ukraine with the involvement of Ukrainian citizens in the management of regional offices and editing;
- to promote the Ukrainian position, truthful information about the war waged by the Russian Federation against our state in the Internet space of the Russian Federation, in particular in social networks (Odnoklasnyki, Vkontakte etc).

At the state level, it is necessary to implement and clarify the narrative 'Victory'. The strategic narrative should be as follows: "Ukraine's victory is a return to the borders of 2014 and the definition of the peoples of the Russian Federation on the basis of language, ethnicity and religion."

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## **PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE MILITARY AGGRESSION**

The psychological dimension of strategic communications gained special importance with the beginning of a full-fledged war. Security and state institutions, the media and the society face urgent questions, such as: How to communicate with the residents of the deoccupied territories? What communications should be established with the people affected by Russian terror? How to prepare the military for the operations in hot spots psychologically? Recommendations on these issues will be offered by practicing military psychologists. The psychological dimension of strategic communications in the conditions of the war, in their opinion, should take into account a number of priorities, namely:

- a differentiated individual approach and flexible conflict-free communication as the main principle of interaction with the population in the deoccupied territories;
- actualisation of protective reactions of the psyche, such as: denial, displacement of thoughts, isolation from sensations, regression, reactivity;
- focus on empathy, trust and removal of barriers in communication which can hinder productive communication;
- avoiding retraumatisation which can be provoked by unsuccessful communication;
- the productivity of communication with a person who suffered or witnessed the crimes committed by the Russian invaders on the territory of Ukraine is determined by a set of factors: defined needs and goals, available analysed information about the interlocutor, conditions and features of communication, motives and predictive models of effective interaction.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMATIC SPACE WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

*Oleh Pokalchuk*

1. *Demographic catastrophe.* The basis for taking decisions in the field of mass communication should be the new demographic reality, which can be described in three words: “Demography. Migration. Depopulation.” As of today, there is no accurate data on the number of the population of Ukraine or its composition. According to the assumptions of the Institute of Demography, the population of Ukraine is approximately 34-35 million people now. Only the population aged 60+, approximately 9 million people, is at a stable quantitative level. According to the UN data, 4.7 million of Ukrainian citizens gained a refugee status in Europe. If the situation worsens, another 6 million people are expected to leave the country. IDPs make up about 14 million people.

It means that pre-war communicative algorithms and protocols can no longer be considered effective, since social groups in their classical form either do not exist any longer or function unpredictably. Completely new groups are being formed on other grounds (migrants, IDPs), ‘old’ ones (territorial communities) are revising and optimising the norms of interaction.

2. *Profound ongoing neuroticism.* Ukrainians have experienced and are still experiencing three large-scale stressful episodes:

- 2014 (Russian occupation of Crimea and Donbas);
- 2019 (COVID stress syndrome, CSS);
- 2022 (full-fledged Russian military intervention).

This causes a cumulative effect of deep neuroticism of the population accompanied by the ongoing retraumatisation (losses of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the battlefield, destruction of the infrastructure). Cognitive consequences are unstable mental activity, emotional lability with a shift to low mood (inhibition, depression, apathy replaced for a short time by euphoria / irritability).

Electricity shortages (uneven lighting and heating of apartments) cause problems with concentration of attention, productivity of thinking and the ability to extrapolate (life planning). In the genesis of

these pathogenic phenomena (sensory deprivation and desynchronosis) there is increased vulnerability to suggestion (development of hypnotic phases). It is difficult to maintain the cause-and-effect relationship of events ('mosaic consciousness'). The event planning horizon is reduced to a few days.

Due to the global nature of the phenomenon, personal cognitive distortions are not mutually noticed. But the inconsistency of the new mental state with the pre-war patterns of behavior creates cognitive dissonance. Its interpretation is subjectively shifted from external causes to internal ones (internal locus of control) and leads to underestimation of self-esteem.

The destruction of old 'cognitive maps' and systems of orientation in public space leads to the clustering of the society according to new, situational protocols.

3. *Social identity. Dynamics of risks.* Identity is a dynamic construct that consists of the ability to construct / position oneself in the past and a vision of oneself in the future. Social identity is an individual's knowledge of belonging to a particular social group, along with the emotional and value-based significance of their membership.

Due to chronic psychological traumatisations, personal and group behavior patterns enter into a systemic conflict. It manifests itself as a conflict between everyday morality and social ethics. The role of social ethics (which is in the process of formation) is performed by patriotism, as a definitely growing marker of self-identification. But its generalising function of unifying the nation at the stage of stagnation of hostilities tends to be conflictogenic (whose patriotism is more correct).

Sociological studies (Rating group) show simultaneously (48 % / 46 %) the level of anomie (loss of values) and a similar level of cynicism (49 % / 61 %). Conclusions based on values: a) the larger the settlement, the lower the anomie; b) the older the age, the greater the anomie; c) women have greater anomie than men. Only women aged 18-35 deny the growth of cynicism in Ukraine.

4. *Behavioral consequences.* Personal survival / resilience needs are in the process of choosing between protecting the group's social identity and values (active action) ignoring (fading) and leaving the

group (escape). In the society, there is an active selection of models of individual and / or group motivation to strengthen the resilience.

Social identity needs influence strategic and tactical choices in favor of group interaction. But in the worldview of potential objects of influence there is a demand for new, less speculative, but more pragmatic narratives and models of social sustainability.

At the same time, the rational component of the message without highly emotional accompaniment will no longer be perceived as before. Examples of effective communication of a new type are the speeches of the President of Ukraine Zelenskyi. But this is rather an exception, than a rule.

If the war continues into the next year, given the demographics and psychological trauma in the society, it is highly likely that the strategy of ‘fading’ will dominate at the behavioral level and passionarity – at the verbal level.

This gap can be critical while taking strategic decisions as sociology will show the mood, not the readiness to change behavior.

*What should be paid attention to.* The ‘hot phase’ of the war will inevitably turn into a lengthy ‘cold war’. The phase transition will be the intensification of the enemy’s sabotage-terrorist and information-psychological operations. Although Ukraine lives under the conditions of martial law, its political life continues to actively develop. Its nearer prospects are:

- conflict between the ruling majority and the opposition, the latter relying on the so-called ‘case of Churchill’ who lost the general elections in the aftermath of the war;
- conflict between inflated public expectations of future peace, the electoral process (six months after peace) and economic reality.

Early recognition of the signs of the enemy’s intervention in these conflicts with the aim of creating a ‘controlled chaos’ can be one of the primary tasks of the strategic communication.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION IN THE PROCESS OF INVESTIGATING THE CRIMES COMMITTED BY RUSSIAN INVADERS IN UKRAINE**

*Natalia Ivanova,  
Olha Palyvoda*

During the full-scale Russian aggression on the territory of Ukraine, the problem of gathering information for the unbiased investigation of the crimes committed by the Russian invaders in Ukraine becomes more urgent. This problem can be solved, among other things, by means of effective communication of law enforcement officers with various categories of persons.

In the process of such communication, it should be taken into account that its important components are not only the exchange of information, but also the interaction and mutual understanding between the communicating parties. In addition, a law enforcement officer must also take into account the state of a person who was under the influence of psycho-traumatic factors, such as:

- state of fear, guilt, shame, frustration;
- lack of motivation to communicate (reluctance to communicate or to talk about the events which he/she has experienced or witnessed, desire to avoid actualisation of the experience);
- lack of trust in the interlocutor;
- feeling of insecurity;
- anxiety about the consequences of the communication (may be actualised even after the communication).

Unsuccessful communication with such persons can actualise re-traumatisation (increased anxiety, depression, feeling of loneliness, frustration, suicidal thoughts, etc.). Therefore, in the process of such communication, one should show flexibility, endurance, moderation and understand the current psycho-emotional state of the interlocutor. The latter can be caused by both stressful and traumatic events, which, in turn, provoke psychotrauma.

As for stressful events, their markers are:

- situations which cause mental tension;

- effect of external stimuli on a change in a person's psycho-emotional state and behavior;

- specific manifestations of emotions and body reactions.

Traumatic events are characterised by the fact that they:

- go beyond the feeling and awareness of real human experience;

- pose a danger to the life, physical or mental health of a person or his loved ones.

Thus, for example, stressful events can include: air raids, explosions, destruction of buildings, evacuation, etc. While traumatic events are: immediate threat to life, violence, torture, death, mutilation, missing the loved ones etc.

A range of traumatic events leads to the occurrence of mental trauma in a person, which is defined as a corresponding reaction (physiological, emotional, cognitive), which can lead to certain mental disorders. Signs of psychological trauma can be observed immediately after the beginning of the traumatic event as well as after its completion. Thus, while investigating the crimes, law enforcement officers usually encounter delayed reactions of a person. The presence of psychological trauma can be identified by the following groups of reactions:

- physiological (sleep and appetite disturbances; somatisation (for example, focusing on pain); reduced resistance to infectious diseases; constant fatigue);

- emotional (irritability and / or hostility; depression; mood swings; fear of re-injury; shame; feelings of vulnerability; emotional detachment);

- cognitive (difficulties with concentration and switching of attention; difficulty with memorising things; reduced speed and relevance of decision-making).

Also, in the process of communication, it is important to consider the fact that a person who has experienced a traumatic event may have problems remembering certain information. Therefore, it will be urgent for a law enforcement officer to focus on some features of human memory. In particular, the following memory characteristics should be considered:

- in a person's memory, a set of images associated with a certain event form a single complex;

- the average number of unstructured information memorisation units is:  $7 \pm 2$ ;
- in the process of mechanical memorisation, 45-50 % of information is lost after 30 minutes;
- edge effect – information at the beginning and at the end (of a sentence, text, etc.) is remembered better;
- reproduction of what is seen or heard is carried out through the psychological mechanisms of recognition, remembering and recalling of certain images, specific actions, phenomena, events.

At the same time, for the communication to be effective, some psychological aspects of communication relating to gender should be taken into account, namely:

- *for women:*

- to demonstrate maximum understanding of the complexity of the situation and support;
- to actualise the available resource (strength, resilience, endurance, etc.);
- to talk calmly so as not to provoke a strong emotional reaction;
- not to provoke aggression;
- to avoid conflict communication;

- *for men:*

- to be specific, unemotional and focused on solving the problem while communicating;
- not to demonstrate unnecessary pity and sympathy (it is enough to express support and understanding so as not to provoke aggression);
- it is necessary to give them the opportunity to express themselves and respect their opinion (men usually have their own point of view and vision of how to solve problems);
- one should encourage their constructive initiative and provide emotional support for their intentions in the conversation (if necessary);
- to demonstrate understanding of their strength, endurance and certain actions.

So, taking into account the above mentioned, the following **practical advice can be suggested:**

1. ***Preparation for effective communication*** between a law enforcement officer and a person who suffered or witnessed the crimes committed by the Russian invaders on the territory of Ukraine should include:

- identifying the need and specific purpose of communication;
- collecting and analysing the information about the interlocutor;
- planning the content and conditions of communication;
- identifying the specifics of communication with a person;
- predicting possible resistance or manipulations on the part of the interlocutor;
- premeditation on how to end the conversation.

2. ***The algorithm for effective communication*** should include the following components:

- the introductory part (establishing psychological contact and clarifying the rules of interaction; producing a positive first impression; persuading the interlocutor that he / she can trust you and feel secure);
- the main part (use of specific and understandable questions, simple expressions and formulations without elements of pressure / condemnation / disgust; attention to the content of the answers (to clearly understand the essence of the event, its chronology, correctly record and analyse what happened); taking into account the consequences of physical and psychological impact of traumatic events on the person (forgetfulness, repetition, stupor); assessment of the interlocutor's reaction, behaviour and mental state);
- the final part (logical completion of the communication with a topic not related to the traumatic event; orientation on further communication (if necessary); at the end of the communication, it is absolutely necessary to evaluate the received information regarding its completeness, logic and sequence; it is possible to analyse problems and shortcomings in order to avoid them in the future).

## **SOME PREREQUISITES FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION WITH THE POPULATION ON THE DEOCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF UKRAINE**

*Nataliia Krapivina,  
Iryna Abakina*

The difficult conditions of survival on the territories of Ukraine temporarily occupied by the Russian invaders led to a number of very painful problems which affected the psycho-emotional state of the people living there. In order to restore peaceful life and stable functioning of society on the deoccupied territories, it is necessary, first of all, to form strategies for conflict-free communication between those people and various categories of specialists, such as: social workers, law enforcement officers, doctors, teachers, etc.

For appropriate successful communication, they need to take into account the prevailing psycho-emotional state of a particular person.

Usually, a person perceives only what corresponds to his / her dominant psycho-emotional state, in particular:

- in a state of deep concern, possible problems are actualised, which start to worry a person even more;
- when one is feeling offended, imaginary new reasons appear and provoke increased resentment;
- if the feeling of guilt is actualised, this destructive state is deepened due to the search for the root causes which could have led to the guilt.

In addition, one must understand that a person who was under stressful conditions of occupation for a period of time can demonstrate a certain specificity in the process of communication. For example, he / she will not be able to recall certain events or demonstrate an emotional response to them. Therefore, attention should also be paid to the factors affecting the reproduction of specific events:

- person's age and psycho-emotional state;
- difficult conditions of stay;
- duration of information retention;

- orientation at reproduction (a person usually tries to push unpleasant events out of his / her mind and not to store them in his / her memory, he / she just wants to forget them);

- amount and degree of comprehension of information, etc.

Each of the factors can have a unique effect on the communication process, taking into account its level of emotionality and significance for a specific person. In addition, taking into account the difficult and unbearable conditions of being under the occupation, defensive reactions of the psyche may become actualised, such as:

- denial;
- suppression of thoughts;
- isolation from senses;
- regression;
- reactivity.

Besides, under such circumstances, there is also a shift in values and person's motives. Thus, a person reassesses:

- values and motives;
- attitude towards others;
- rules of behavior (which may be subconscious and socially unacceptable);
- intensity and emotionality of communication;
- actions, social contacts.

These aspects should be taken into account when establishing psychological contact and organising effective interaction with people living on the deoccupied territories.

In the process of communication, it is worth paying attention to the factors which form the first impression of a person who was under extreme conditions of occupation, in particular:

- physical appearance (*changed*);
- posture (*gloomy*);
- design of appearance, clothes;
- expressiveness (*gestures, facial expressions, posture, way of walking*);
- psychoemotional state;
- peculiarities of behavior and actions (*corresponding to the psycho-emotional state*);
- manner of communication.

As for psychological contact, it is usually understood as a process of mutual evaluation, mutual interest, establishment and maintenance of relationships of trust between people in the process of communication.

Thus, in order to establish an effective relationship, it is necessary, first of all, to follow the following **tips**:

- to eliminate communication barriers (physical, psycho-social, communicative, etc.) which may hinder effective communication;

- to demonstrate empathy, trust and understanding (have a personal barrier to the information which caused a person's psychotrauma);

- to actualise motives for communication (pursuit of justice; desire to find the guilty so that they will not commit crimes in the future; belief in justice and need to punish the guilty, etc.);

- it will be appropriate to use the following communication techniques: *neutralisation of negativity* (neutral topic, satisfaction with the beginning of the conversation, satisfying the desire to 'be significant and to be heard', neutralisation of negative factors); *understanding the interlocutor's motivation* (appropriate questions, neutralisation of the motives of fear); *consideration of individual characteristics and states* (appeal to social status and professionalism, appeal to positive aspects, control of psycho-emotional state).

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF COMMUNICATION WITH PEOPLE LIVING ON THE DEOCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF UKRAINE**

*Iryna Radkovych*

Before starting communication with people who survived the occupation, it is necessary to diagnose their psycho-emotional state. Using methods of observation and conversation, you can understand how psychologically traumatised a person is and, depending on this, build interaction with him / her.

It is advisable to choose the best methods of communication taking into account the characteristics of the target audience. In particular, the communication with senior citizens who are retired will differ from the communication with people of working age.

### **Recommendations regarding communication with various representatives of target audiences who survived the occupation:**

- *with senior citizens* who are retired. In the first minutes of interaction, it is expedient to find out their attitude towards Russian aggression and life under the occupying forces. Also, it is recommended to give them an opportunity to talk about all their problems and difficult life situations which they experienced. Be patient. Any practical help (fetching some water, fixing something, delivering groceries, etc.) will contribute to a positive perception of you as an interlocutor. Words of support and demonstration of understanding (especially, of the horrors they have faced in their life) will never be superfluous. Communication should be positive. Maximum support and help with all they need;

- *with women of working age*. Women were subjected to excessive psychological stress, as they had to take care of their children and parents thinking not only of how to protect them from explosions and occupation troops, but also how to feed them. It can also be assumed that they worried about their husbands who were perceived by the occupying forces as their greatest threat. With this category of persons, it is also advisable to form interaction from the position of maximum understanding of the complexity of the situation and support. It should be noted that the words of support should be aimed at stimulating the available resource (*“Good for you! You held on well and keep on holding on,” “In many ways, it was thanks to you that your family and friends got out of this situation with minimal losses. You need to keep holding on, the situation has already improved significantly, but this is not the end, it’s too early to relax, we will help with everything we can ...”*). It is necessary to establish interaction with this group of persons very carefully, so as not to provoke a pronounced (sharp) emotional reaction. If such a situation has arisen, it is advisable to avoid doing any harm to the person and her surrounding. It should be taken into account that even open aggression is caused to a large extent by the situation of distress itself, and not by the personality of the interlocutor;

- *with men of working age*. This group of people is able to get out of distress more effectively. It is appropriate to express support and involve them in providing help to others. It is the active participation in providing support and assistance to local residents which will help a lot of people from this very category to gradually go out of a difficult psycho-emotional state and will enable them to realise their desire to be

useful in difficult times. Involvement of men from this group in socially beneficial and public activities will also be useful and contribute to their self-realisation.

Of course, it is possible to categorise more target audiences among the residents of the deoccupied territories according to various criteria; **the general tips for communication with such audiences** are as follows:

- all the people living on the deoccupied territories need attention, understanding and support from the state. One should not only demonstrate his / her understanding, but understand the condition and pain of these people indeed;

- in unity is our strength; it is the unity and mutual assistance which should differ us from the immoral propaganda machine of the Russian Federation;

- only concrete actions, not words, can destroy the myth about confrontation between Ukrainians living in different regions, only through human relations and sincere communication is the unity and strength of our people formed;

- sincere, 'live' interaction and communication on a daily basis provide the best psycho-emotional support; the formation of such interaction can unite residents of the same region, and in the future – promote mutual support without outside help.

## **COMMUNICATION IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE WAR: CONSIDERING CONSEQUENCES OF PSYCHO-TRAUMATIC FACTORS INFLUENCE ON A PERSON**

*Iryna Neduzha*

The traumatic experience of a person, their thoughts, emotions and physiology beyond the influence of the trauma is unique. Psychotrauma is defined as events or circumstances associated with negative changes or their consequences, which have significantly depleted person's psychological resources. Psychotrauma can be caused by certain factors, such as:

- being under the direct influence of psycho-traumatic factors;

- receiving information about the details of a traumatic event that happened to a family member or close friend;
- repeated experience of the extreme impact of a traumatic event relating to the professional activities.

Psychotrauma has various forms of manifestation. If a person has not recovered after a stressful event within a month, it may indicate that he / she is developing post-traumatic stress disorder.

While communicating with such people, one can observe certain changes depending on their current psycho-emotional state, previous traumatic experience, availability of means of support and rehabilitation. After recovery, a person will not be the same as before the trauma. Psycho-social support and/or psychotherapy can make the way to recovery easier and help a person to find resources to overcome life's challenges.

In the process of communication, manifestations of natural reactions for survival can also be observed: confusion; physical or emotional excitement; anxiety; exhaustion; sorrow; stupor; dissociation; blunting of the reaction to external stimuli, etc.

Most of the above mentioned reactions are socially acceptable and expected, as they appear in the vast majority of victims. An indicator of more serious changes is the fact that such long-term reactions remain with a person when the threat is no longer there and the external circumstances are completely safe.

Clinical signs of traumatic experience in the delayed perspective are:

- feeling of constant fatigue;
- sleep disturbances and nightmares;
- fear of repetition or anxious anticipation due to constant fixation on memories;
- persistent depressed mood;
- avoidance of trauma-related emotions, sensations, or activities.

Emotional reactions during a traumatic event are most likely to be accompanied by anger, fear, depressed mood (sadness), feelings of shame. Symptoms of emotional numbness can lead to a false perception of reality.

February 24, 2022 is the starting point of the total psychological trauma of Ukrainian citizens. For these reasons, courses in tactical medicine conducted by our team include classes on self-psychoregulation.

## **Tips for optimising your own psycho-emotional state**

In order to recover better and faster from trauma, one should first acquire skills to manage triggers, memories, and emotions without avoidance or other harmful behaviors. What is important is not so much what happens to us at the moment of the crisis itself, but how we survived this event or how it was imprinted in our experience. First of all, in order to learn to confront traumatic events effectively, one should be aware of the following basics:

- traumatic experience is a unique experience of a person, namely his / her thoughts, emotions and body outside the influence of the circumstances of a trauma;
- the experience of trauma includes not only the threat of actual death, serious injury, or sexual violence through direct experience of the traumatic event(s), but also the experience of personally witnessing the traumatic event(s) as it occurs to others;
- psychological trauma and related experiences have many forms of manifestation;
  - ways of surviving a traumatic experience relate to the reaction of the nervous system, which depends on the emotional state and psychological problems;
  - manifestations and emotional reactions during a traumatic event may differ depending on the social, cultural characteristics and experience of the individual;
  - key symptoms and manifestations of distress relating to a traumatic experience include emotional dysregulation, increased reactivity and excitability, cognitive responses, and decreased concentration and memory;
  - the basis of pathophysiology is a violation of neural connections;
  - understanding the disruption of neurogenesis and neuroplasticity processes under the influence of persistent psychophysiological changes in response to a threat can contribute to the justification of changes in the process of psychological and psychotherapeutic interventions.

## ORGANISATION OF DISCOURSE PRACTICES OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Self-identification of the Ukrainian people is defended not only in the battlefield, but also in the information space. The experience in counteracting the enemy in the discursive dimension proved that proactivity is ensured by studying the enemy's communications and asymmetric responses to them. Such an approach can be ensured by the systematic work of a team of specialists in various fields: linguists, historians, lawyers, information specialists, etc. The experts, whose practical advice is presented in this subsection, formulated the general **key messages** of discursive counteraction to destructive communications of the Russian Federation:

1. The discourse of the Russian Federation regarding Ukraine is typologically similar to the criminal discourse and is focused on destruction of communication and distracting function of the demands made to the addressee. Therefore, the demands set by the Russian Federation to Ukraine (neutral status, the Russian language, negotiations, etc.) play a masking role.

2. Historical factors are extremely important for assessing the impact of the Russian factor on the security environment of both the world community and individual states. They should be directly applied when designing and implementing measures to deter the aggressor state.

3. It is necessary to constantly monitor Russian historical scientific publications and media content, which largely reflect tendencies of Russia's state expansionist policy. It is necessary to exploit the representatives of Ukrainian historical science, who will be able to identify the alarming themes in such publications and bring them to the attention of relevant government authorities for immediate response measures. Under such conditions, it is possible to achieve an anticipatory effect in deterring Russian aggression.

4. Narrative communications should develop in three directions: (1) promotion of the narrative of identity, which describes the fundamental features and values of the Ukrainian nation, who won and defends its statehood; (2) clarification and leveling of Russian aggressive narratives; (3) elimination of the narratives of doubts about Ukraine's victory.

5. Wartime requires specific texts: small in size, with balanced factual and emotional parts and a certain personal message (“Address the people and each of them!”), with a high degree of suggestivity. These texts should be broadcast both by traditional and new media and combine multi-coded information (verbal, visual, musical). It is important to use a variety of art projects in public space, which, in addition to the aesthetic, should also give people a positive, life-affirming signal and a sense of freedom.

## **POLITICAL DISCOURSE OF THE ADVERSARY (Practical Advice on Countermeasures)**

*Halyna Yavorska*

The political discourse of our adversary is characterised by all sorts of threats – from ultimatum demands to stop the NATO expansion in December-January 2021-2022 and dotted nuclear blackmail, which increases and then subsides, to constant attempts to intimidate Ukraine in order to force it to surrender. Unrealised or partially realised threats remain a factor of malicious informational influences and create security risks regardless of whether they were implemented or not.

In order to counter threats, their linguistic and pragmatic features should be taken into account:

1. Focus on destruction of communication and distracting function of the demands made to the addressee. The discourse of the Russian Federation has a typological similarity to the criminal one, and therefore, demands set by the Russian Federation to Ukraine (neutral status, the Russian language, negotiations, etc.) play a masking role. The purpose of the threats is not to meet the demands, but to intimidate and force to take actions which are beneficial to the blackmailer and extortionist.

2. Threats as linguistic actions are aimed at destroying the communication: voicing the intentions to destroy Ukraine which Russia hopes to implement, interpreting the Ukrainian leadership as ‘illegitimate’, etc., clearly demonstrate Russian intention to completely refuse from the communicative interaction. Therefore, Russian declarations about their ‘readiness’ for negotiations play a purely masking function.

3. The space for diplomatic dialogue is rapidly narrowing. For Ukraine, negotiations with the Russian Federation have no sense in the context of threats. Attempts by the Western allies to maintain contact with the Russian Federation in order to facilitate negotiations, to consider negotiations as a tool for ending hostilities, are doomed to failure.

4. The rhetoric of violence and its escalation in the Russian Federation demonstrate that a significant part of the population in the Russian Federation reproduces and develops the theses of its political leaders and propagandists while official propaganda relies on the collective intentions of the citizens, which, again, contributes to further escalation of militant violent rhetoric. The spiral of increasing rhetorical aggressiveness of the Russian Federation in relation to Ukraine and the conventional 'West' does not always correlate with the intensification of hostilities, just the opposite, it sometimes acts as compensation for the failure of the Russian Federation to achieve its military goals.

5. During the war, the goal of Ukrainian military actions is synchronised with the goals of strategic communications. With the disappearance or radical change of the Russian state, Russian political discourse will lose its agentivity and cease to exist as a whole.

## **'BATTLE OF NARRATIVES' IN THE MEDIA SPACE OF PRE-WAR AND WARTIME UKRAINE**

*Olena Snytko*

1. When carrying out strategic communications with the public, one should be aware that the main goal of the aggressor is destruction of Ukraine's statehood, devaluation of the democratic principles of Ukrainians and their pro-European and pro-Western orientation. Accordingly, the basis of the ideological matrix of strategic communications in Ukraine is **the identity narrative**, which describes the fundamental features and values of the original and unique Ukrainian nation, which has won and defends its statehood. Accordingly, all other pro-Ukrainian narratives should comply with these grand narrative.

2. Ukrainian strategic narratives should be based on the idea of victory, which “cannot be won without a decisive battle” (D. Zolotukhin).

3. Wartime period in Ukraine is associated with the use of crisis communications, which involve the use of technologies aimed at diagnosing, forecasting and **managing** crisis situations and (if possible) neutralising negative consequences of crisis situations. It is necessary to constantly monitor feedback from the recipients. It is recommended to build crisis communications following the rule: Concern – 1 %, Action – 5 %, Perspective – 94 %.

4. Special attention should be paid to the implementation of crisis communications between the government and the public. The authorities must take responsibility for resolving the situation, not conceal real difficulties, constantly monitor the situation, pay attention to comments in social networks and respond to them in a timely manner (i.e. ensure two-way communication). However, while not concealing the real state of events, it is necessary to focus people’s attention on interpreting the crisis situation in a positive way (negative examples include the situation with the blackout in Ukraine when the authorities tried to ‘face the truth’ and to avoid responsibility for the fate of citizens giving them recommendations to evacuate ‘to nowhere’). It is necessary to observe the ethics and empathy of communication, to choose speakers who possess the appropriate communication technologies.

5. It is recommended to look out for texts in which strategic narratives are implemented. Wartime requires specific texts: small in size, with balanced factual and emotional parts and a certain personal message (“Address the people and each of them!”).

6. The situation of crisis experienced by people during the wartime brings to the fore specific texts in which the most important strategic narratives supporting the moral spirit of citizens are realised; these are creolised (multimodal) texts with a high degree of suggestivity, which are broadcast by traditional and new media as well as by social networks and combine multi-coded information (verbal, visual and musical texts). These texts provide an effective suggestive influence on society and broadcast narratives emotionally saturated with description.

7. High degree of uncertainty during the wartime period activates the influence of so-called ‘predictors’ in the information space (tarologists, astrologers, extrasensory individuals). This is a traditional

form of exerting a suggestive influence on a person, however, in situations of crisis communications, it helps to produce a quick effect of positivising a person's emotional and psychological state and neutralising a state of uncertainty which is unbearable for the psyche. Texts of the so-called 'predictions' broadcast important strategic narratives, but the position of the authors of such texts should remain in focus of StratCom.

## **HOW TO APPLY HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE TO BUILD EFFECTIVE STRATCOM IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE WAR**

*Oleksandr Ivanov*

Historical factors mediate the essence of the Russian state reality, archaize it, while the historical science of the Russian Federation is a full-fledged tool for realising its expansionist goals. In this regard, it is obvious that historical factors are extremely important for assessing the impact of the Russian factor on the security environment of both the world community and individual states (primarily, Ukraine). Also, they should be directly applied when designing and implementing measures to deter Russia as an aggressor state. The main directions of using historical material for these purposes are as follows:

- carrying out analogies for assessing the security situation and forecasting its further development;
- clarifying the essence of the Russian Federation state-power system with the aim of influencing its individual components;
- implementation of counter-propaganda activities among target audiences to reduce the level of susceptibility to Russian mythology;
- informational assistance to the centrifugal movements of Russian national groups by conveying to them the historical truth about Russian expansion;
- developing strategies for deoccupation of certain territories of Ukraine;
- popularisation of the image of Russia as an aggressor state within the international community.

Along with this, constant monitoring of Russian historical scientific publications and media content is vital as they largely reflect tendencies of the Russian state policy, including expansionist ones. For this, it is necessary to involve representatives of Ukrainian historical science, who will be able to identify threatening motives in such publications and bring them to the attention of relevant government bodies for immediate response measures. Under such conditions, it is possible to achieve an anticipatory effect in deterring Russian aggression.

Summarising the historical experience of Russian expansion in various countries allows us to highlight the following main aspects, which must be taken into account while deterring the Russian factor in domestic realities:

- using positive and negative historical experience, in particular, taking into account the archaic nature of the state-power system of Russia and, accordingly, methods of its expansionist activity;
- coverage of the manifestations of Russian expansion towards Ukraine in mass media as well anticipated ones, so that the Kremlin authorities see the readiness of the Ukrainian side to oppose its destructive measures;
- identifying potential allies who can contribute to the implementation of Russian invasion plans and shifting their intentions by highlighting the Kremlin's historical practice of eliminating unnecessary satellites;
- formation of a 'proper' attitude of the Ukrainian public towards Russia and its place in history;
- when covering the processes of strengthening Ukraine's Defence potential in mass media, focus attention not only on foreign support, but also on the Ukrainian government's own contribution;
- in the speeches of the top political leadership, especially in the international arena and in mass media, avoid appeals which can probably provoke Russia to openly position itself as an aggressor (for example, as the heir of the Mongol-Tatar state);
- representatives of the Ukrainian government and civil society should become partners, not competitors, in their struggle for influence on the formation of public opinion regarding Russian aggression;

- effective use of the existing potential of domestic military formations and law enforcement agencies towards building of military-civilian cooperation;
- switching the attention of the Russian authorities to real and potential internal threats to their own statehood (in particular, ‘depressed regions’);
- inciting the population of the temporarily occupied territories to systematic resistance to the occupation authorities (in particular, through the image of M. Gandhi, the leader of the Indian opposition to the British colonial administration);
- regular strengthening of cyber protection systems, in particular in the country’s government agencies and at critical infrastructure enterprises;
- contributing to the final establishment of Russia’s image as an aggressor state in the international arena in the context of manifestation of historical patterns.

Cases of open invasion of Russians into the countries of their expansionist interest prove the need to provide the countries of the world with unlimited access to information about the facts of Russian aggression so that they have an opportunity to respond to them in a proper way. The resource of activities to ensure such access should be in the following main aspects:

- hindering Russian information attacks by drawing the attention of the world community to other alternative facts;
- coordinated efforts of the world mass media in communicating information about the facts of Russian aggression to the international community by publishing such information on the front pages as urgent;
- using the opportunities of civil society to obtain information about the real policy of the Russian Federation regarding potentially vulnerable territories;
- revealing the true content of speeches by Russian officials regarding the concealment of the facts of the occupation or preparation for it;
- sending official monitoring missions by international organisations to places of potential or ‘creeping’ Russian occupation (Moldova, Georgia, etc.), wide media coverage of their activities, as well as the facts of their obstruction by pro-Russian forces;

- systematic detection of the facts of Russia’s development of potential scenarios for concealing the fact of aggression or carrying out provocations against a country of expansionist interest, so that the attack could be disguised as ‘defence’.

## **PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING NARRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE RUSSIAN AGGRESSION**

*Nataliia Slukhai*

**1. Recommendations concerning the promotion of Ukrainian patriotic narratives:** popularisation of the victories of Ukrainian soldiers (popularisation of successful military operations by Ukrainian commanders, heroes’ feats, photos illustrating cases of resistance in the occupied territories, demonstration of the destroyed military vehicles in Khreschatyk Street – these are good examples). It is also a good idea to discuss the heroic history of Ukraine, the historical context of the Ukrainian battalions’ names as well as to hold contests for the best mottoes, signs, songs; it is possible to provide more extensive information about effective volunteer movements (such as “*Ridnyi Krai*” (*Native Land*) in the village of Trypillya, Obukhiv district); it is good that thanksgiving billboards “*World of Brave People*” have appeared, for example, a billboard in Irpen with thanks to Boris Johnson; it is recommended to create similar billboards for the popularisation of war heroes, as well as volunteers (ordinary people-patriots) and sponsors of victory. Besides, we note that correct codes of Ukrainianism are widely used, in particular:

- ongoing positive self-presentation: we are cool, the Ukrainians are incredible, the nation of the invincible;
- use of sacred entities (Mavka, witches);
- creation of various art forms: patriotic murals, such as *The Time of Change* by Volodymyr Madzhos in Nizhnii Val Street in Kyiv or installations like *Zastrelys!* – in Shevchenko Boulevard in Kyiv;
- implementation of art projects, for example: Media Library of Arts – a project of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine;

- promotion of urban art: icons in bomb shelters (such as Lana Ovchinnikova's), painted *Train to the Victory*, prayers, letters, music journalism published in the media, as well as professional and amateur small forms of poetry and prose works (like stand-up comedians from Rivne).

Special attention should be paid to memes as a means of activating socio-psychic dominants fuelling root instincts (such as: “*And you were told: – Not **on** Ukraine, but **in** Ukraine*” (into the Ukrainian land), memes of the group “*They walked on the dugout*” and the like). Further development is needed for the memes dominated by love for the native land, patriotism of a farmer, humanism of a Ukrainian (memes of the group “*A drone shot down by a jar of cucumbers*”), dignity, bravery, frugality, prospective thinking.

The set of tools for neurolinguistic genesis needs development: segmental identification: *whoever does not share the video is not Ukrainian* (provided there is really valuable content, such as therapeutic multimedia content *A Ukrainian Woman Came to God*), thought viruses: *not the second, but the twenty-second army of the world*; *truisms: the good will overcome the evil like the light will overcome the darkness*; *slogans–ideologues: never shall we be brothers*; *Russia is a sponsor of terrorism*; *Russia is a terrorist country*; *Russia is an aggressor country*.

Public must be encouraged to make their personal contributions to the victory in different spheres, such as: participating in cyber troops, sponsorship activities, informing about the direction of movement of drones and missiles.

We consider the discourse of self-presentation to be fundamental for the implementation: “*Ukraine is a democratic European country which defends its identity, land, ethnocode and gene pool, as well as world values, with weapons in hand.*”

## **2. Recommendations for explaining and leveling Russian aggressive narratives:**

- to comment widely in mass media on Russian falsified linguistic and cognitive products: the concepts of the ‘Russian world’, ‘deep state’, ‘USSR-2’, ‘SVO’ (special military operation), ‘the second army of the world’, ‘humiliated Russia’, ‘indecent world’, ‘Russian geopolitical code’ and the like. Through the content of the concepts, to explain and level alien discourses of self-presentation: Russia is supposed to be “a player of the first echelon on the world stage, which,

by the law of the strongest, insists on a revision of the world order and geopolitical redistribution, in particular, the destruction of Ukraine and the annexation of the captured lands by the empire;”

- to continue introducing speech tools of neurolinguistic genesis, such as writing some words with a lowercase letter instead of a capital letter: *putin, russia*;

- use of ethnophilisms, (*Rashists, Muscovites, Muscolots*) as a means of getting rid of negative emotions; the use of non-referential colloquial names and colloquialisms: *the Crimean bridge is over* and the like; circling around denotation, denomination of the event: *there was a 'bavovna', a 'khlopok', a stab fell, someone hit the ships*; phonographic and grammatical distortions: *chmobiki, on Russia*; at the same time, one should take into account O. Danilov's fair remark regarding the inexpediency of the widespread use of fantasy paraphrases-ethnophobes (*pig dogs, orcs*) which do not imprint the image of an aggressor in the historical memory of the people, but only a temporarily relevant image;

- not to use too often the technique of breaking the modal-time continuum (*we have already won*), because then the public will rightly demand the explanations;

- it is necessary to widely inform about the chronic-sacred dominant of Russian aggression, to critically comment on it (the involvement of the elements of shamanism, the use of the chronic-sacred potential of symbols and numbers, sacred dates), to compare it with the Russian folklore which is alien to the Ukrainians;

- to continue commenting on the post-colonial legacy in Ukraine and to take actions (such as renaming objects) aimed at getting rid of this legacy;

- to comment on and mock fakes, to inform more widely about the liquidation of bot farms and about the content of narratives promoted by the bot farms.

**3. Recommendations regarding the elimination of narratives of doubts about the victory, the positioning of weakening of Ukraine's position** (in confrontation, on the world stage, etc.). We should ensure proper publication and comments on the positions of the leaders of Hungary, Serbia, as well as the Asian countries of the Russian bloc; isolated acts of protest or acts of vandalism, such as painting a mural of Lesia Ukrainka in Serbia with Z symbol; giving proper assessment ('overly cynical'), to the fact that the drawing by Khokhlova, a

representative of Russia, on the topic of the Ukrainian refugee's post-traumatic reaction to loud sounds was recognised as the best drawing of the year by the British Association of Illustrators. The above mentioned facts correctly look sporadic in relation to the information about the broad front of support for Ukraine by the international community.

**Therefore, the main task of these narratives** is to reduce the level of anxiety and fear, to promote the idea of an imminent victory and that this opinion is widely shared by the Ukrainian community (to emphasise on the permanent stay of embassies in the capital as well as the leaders of many countries and artists (such artists as Canadian Ivanka Sjolowska (Bucha), Sander Kelly from California (Irpin), British underground artist Banksy, who created 7 graffiti works in Kyiv, Irpin and Borodyantka, Swiss artist Gerry Hofstetter, who created New Year's light shows in Kyiv, and others).

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks represent one of the most influential areas of strategic communications. Each social network puts forward specific requirements for the creation of proactive content. It is necessary to develop algorithms for its creation and take into account constant discursive changes and innovations. The authors of this section consider the following to be the **key provisions** of this activity:

1. Russian information campaigns in social networks, based on false information and fakes, are characterised by the active involvement of public figures, the automatic creation of fake accounts in social networks, and the creation of Telegram channels to spread disinformation.

2. Countering disinformation in social networks should be provided on both short- and long-term basis and should include a number of steps: a systematic analysis of the impact of disinformation on citizens and their level of trust in the authorities; ensuring media quality by regulating political advertising, correcting media errors and creating effective regulatory institutions; creation of new agencies and development of new cooperation; fact-checking and journalistic investigations in cooperation with international organizations; increasing media literacy of the people.

3. To create proactive content it is worth using the diffusion of innovations, which involves the gradual perception of Ukrainian narratives and messages, the consolidation of citizens in social systems.

4. The issue of criminal law protection against intentional outside influence on Internet representations, websites, portals, etc., through which authorities carry out strategic communications with citizens, is considered urgent. It is necessary to identify the website of a government agency to be the subject of so-called computer-based crimes.

5. Analytical studies of the information space using Big Data enable to monitor information processes, form a system of analytical indicators, calculate the probability of information operations, determine the stability of information situations and forecast their development. An example of analytical services using Big Data is the Ukrainian product Attack Index, which saves time and increases the efficiency of analysts'

work, in particular, to create data to counter propaganda and information aggression of the Russian Federation.

In this section, Ukrainian specialists share their own experience of implementing strategic communications in social networks and present the Ukrainian analytical product – Attack Index, which is actively used by Ukrainian specialists and foreign partners for monitoring the Internet space.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS DURING RUSSIA’S ARMED AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE**

*Oleksandr Leonov*

The full-fledged aggression by the Russian Federation is characterised by the resort to special information influence measures while using social Internet networks and other modern means of communication. Spreading fake news in cyberspace aims to manipulate audience sentiments, undermining any potential for collective action. This kind of information jeopardises the democratic process and is aimed at a counterproductive outcome. Russian information campaigns developed within the framework of the special military operation include informational threats and narratives. The spread of false information and fakes is characterised by:

- active involvement of public figures;
- automatic creation of fake accounts in social Internet networks;
- creation of telegram channels to spread disinformation.

Currently, information weapons are used as an effective means of information political warfare to achieve the goals of an individual nation with or without direct military invasion. The purpose of spreading disinformation in the information space is:

- misleading a specific person or group of people (even a whole nation);
- manipulation of consciousness;
- creating the desired public opinion;

- shattering people's trust in security and government institutions;

- undermining the morale of the citizens.

To effectively counter disinformation, the following measures must be taken, which will ensure short- and long-term effect:

1) systematic analysis of the impact of disinformation on citizens and the level of their trust in the authorities together with the use of tools for tracking content and news in different countries and comparing them. Such analysis will enable to identify disinformation campaigns and sources of information supplied to the public. It should include monitoring social internet networks and identifying trends and personalities popular among polarised social groups which can be tapped to build trust;

2) ensuring media quality by regulating political advertising, correcting media errors and creating effective regulatory institutions;

3) new agencies and new forms of collaboration. A practical example of countering propaganda is setting up the Centre for Countering Disinformation at the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine;

4) investigating propaganda in collaboration with international organisations (Global Witness, Transparency International) and dispelling myths for the critical-thinking audience receptive to arguments which are based on reliable facts. It is recommended to use technologies to automate fact-checking, search for automated chat bots, and train media specialists;

5) increasing media literacy of the people, which involves teaching consumers of information how to detect fake news. In Ukraine, there are pilot projects, in particular IREX, [1] which uses new methods to expose disinformation outside the academic environment.

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# HOW TO ENSURE DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS IN THE PROCESS OF SPREADING INFORMATION (NARRATIVES) IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

*Oleksandr Voitko,  
Volodymyr Rakhimov*

Diffusion of innovation theory provides a framework for understanding how new ideas, technologies, or practices spread through a social system. This theory recognises the role of communication channels, social networks and individual characteristics of users in shaping the diffusion process. However, the emergence of social media platforms has added new dynamics to the phenomenon of diffusion.

To model the processes of information (narratives) dissemination in social networks using the diffusion of innovations, it is necessary to solve a number of tasks, namely:

- to study factors affecting the diffusion of innovations on social media platforms;
- to determine the role of social networks in accelerating or slowing down the processes of information dissemination;
- to investigate the regularities and dynamics of introduction of innovations in social networks for the effective implementation of the state narrative;
- to analyse the spread of innovations for individuals, organisations and society as a whole, that is, to determine the main target audiences.

We offer **recommendations** for the development of strategies for the promotion of the strategic state narrative and decision-making activities regarding the adjustment of state information policy measures:

1. Take a number of steps to implement the strategic state narrative:

- identify pioneers (innovators) and opinion leaders (early followers) in social networks. Their influence on the target audience (TA) will enable to build trust in the innovation and accelerate its spread;

- create interesting content that resonates with the interests of the TA;
  - analyse the content of social networks. This will allow you to get valuable information about audience preferences, popular topics and key messages, which will help to adapt your communication strategy and give you the opportunity to join relevant discussions;
    - actively interact with the audience, in particular, respond to the comments and questions, participate in discussions. This encourages users to become advocates of the information you provide and to share it;
    - build trust by providing accurate and verified information. This will ensure long-term success in spreading the information.
2. Carry out regular monitoring and analysis of key indicators of the effectiveness of your communications (reach, engagement, distribution), which provides valuable data on how to streamline information distribution strategies and improve content quality.
3. Use visual and interactive elements (info-graphics, videos, interactive features) to promote your innovation on social media. This will facilitate the perception of information and its dissemination.

**HOW TO CREATE CONTENT FOR SOCIAL NETWORKS:  
PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR THE SECURITY AND STATE INSTITUTIONS  
SPECIALISTS**

*Nataliia Kudriavtseva*

Official pages in social networks are an important dimension of security and state institutions information activities. Content analysis proved that Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and Telegram are the most popular media for the publications by the security and Defence sector agencies.

We offer the following *recommendations* for more effective communications between the security and state institutions with the public:

- links to social media pages should be placed on the institution's official website alongside with the page's language settings or contact details. This will speed up the search for information and minimise the number of visits to fake pages of state and security institutions entities that have a similar name and were created by criminals with the aim of misleading the public;

- it is necessary to highlight only those events which are of significant importance for the activities of the institution or are resonant for the society;

- readiness of the subjects of security and state institutions to communicate with the public 24/7 is important;

- to provide information to the population constantly (for example, even on February 24, 2022, the Telegram channel of the Security Service of Ukraine provided information about the detention of Russian servicemen, debunked enemy fakes, broadcast the recommendations on the course of actions during the shelling and the operation of the alarm siren; the Telegram channel of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine provided information on the liquidation of fires, the system of alerting and evacuation of the population, as well as on the liquidation of the consequences of shellings);

- to ensure the operation of alternative sources of information which are available to citizens and can be used to cover official information of the institution;

- to ensure that the information on various information platforms of the agency is identical; it is recommended to assign an authorised person responsible for posting the same information in social networks and on the institution's official website;

- to respond in a timely manner to citizens' comments or questions in social networks under official publications of the agency; in the case of positive comments, lack of feedback is not a favourable factor for further communications, in the case of negative comments, it leads to a devaluation of the positive image of the subjects of security and state institutions.

## METHODOLOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WRITING A TEXT MESSAGE ADDRESSED TO THE FACEBOOK USERS

*Yurii Mikhieiev,  
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Olha Hryshchuk,  
Iryna Latko,  
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Taking into account the possibilities of social networks and their accessibility to a larger number of users, the Facebook social network has been determined as appropriate for informing the people living in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine.

In order to create a publication in a social network, it is first of all necessary to understand the purpose of informing, after which the characteristics of the TA are studied. If the purpose includes actions which the TA must perform, then the text message must encourage the TA to take these actions.

Based on the results of investigating the characteristics of the TA, additional information is obtained about age, level of education, mental characteristics, area of residence, preferences, and others. The information obtained will help to choose the right words, phrases, expressions when writing the text to achieve the established goal of informing.

The text of the message should usually contain information about the event. Stylistically, it should look like a story and have the following structure: *introduction, main part, concluding part*. The introduction should attract attention of the TA and make it interested. The introduction to the text should be written in the style which is familiar to the TA. At the same time, the following is to be taken into account:

- the language spoken by the TA;
- expressions specific to the region where the TA lives;
- educational and cultural level of the TA, other information obtained from the results of the analysis of the TA.

To attract attention of the social network users, you can use:

- marker words which are commonly used in various spheres of life. For example: “We got to know about a good startup.” However, you should not abuse marker words and overload the text with unnecessary information in the introduction;

- verbs that associatively evoke emotions in the TA. For example, verbs which cause negative emotions: destroy, defeat, hide. Verbs which cause positive emotions: give birth, win, get. The results of observing the reactions of the TA in social networks indicate that words which have negative tone are of more interest to the TAs;

- set expressions, statements that further characterise the event in the required tonality. For example, the saying: “In order not to be disappointed, one should not be fascinated.” The expression should indirectly lead the TA to the event that will be indicated in the main part of the text.

As an exception, attracting the attention of the TA can also be carried out without using additional techniques (words) on condition that the reported event is already sensational. Examples of such events: use of weapons of mass destruction, threat of an epidemic, heroic deeds, the death or deeds of famous people, etc. In this case, the text can begin with the event itself using words that enhance emotions. The length of the introduction should be one or two sentences.

The main part is a logical continuation of the introduction, it should reveal the content of the event, indicating the main details about it. The classic scheme of presenting an event should include elements which answer the following questions: when did the event occur? who is the main object in the event? what action does the verb indicate? who is the subject of the message? where did the event happen? For example: *“Yesterday, the occupiers fired at the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in Slovyansk,”* or *“Yesterday, in Slovyansk, the occupiers fired at the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.”*

The degree of interest of the TA in the message will depend on how relevant the news is. That is, the message should contain information about an event that happened today or yesterday. Then the interest of the TA is lost. If the news is relevant, for example, the event happened yesterday or a few hours ago, but has not yet become widespread, then it is not necessary to indicate the time when it

happened. If the event occurs periodically, then to write the main part, you can use the verb *continues*, which is placed after specifying the object. For example: “In Melitopol and the region, the occupiers continue to take the stocks from the agrarians.”

It is necessary to clearly indicate who is the main object in the text of the message. To present the object in a negative or positive tonality, you should use words that strengthen the TA’s attitude to the object.

The verb used in the text should clearly describe the event for the TA. If the main object is presented in a negative tonality, then the verb can be strengthened with an adverb. For example: “In Melitopol and the region, the occupiers continue to take the stocks from the agrarians like *fascists (arbitrarily)*.”

When writing the text, due attention should be paid to indicating the place where the event took place. If there is no information from the original sources about the exact place of the event, then you can use the method of generalisation. For example, the town of Nova Kakhovka can be replaced with Kherson region. If the event happened in a city (town), but the name of the street is not known, you can specify the district (borough). The accuracy of indicating the place of the event affects the degree of the TA confidence in all the information which will be provided in the text. This is due to the fact that the TA, who lives in the area where the event took place, will immediately discover that the author is not oriented in the area and may present the rest of the information as false. Therefore, to increase the degree of trust in the message, you should use locally accepted names of the city districts.

The final part should contain information about what the TA should direct its actions or attitudes at. That is, the last paragraph of the text should encourage the TA to reach the goal. At the same time, it is desirable to use words which have a positive tone and make the TA believe that the action to be taken is achievable and safe for the TA itself.

The total size of the text message depends on the situation and the event being described. When composing the text, it should be taken into account that the attention of the social networks users is quickly lost due to the constant updating (presentation) of information.

# **THE WEB PORTAL OF A GOVERNMENT BODY AS AN OBJECT OF CYBER ATTACK: LEGAL ASPECTS**

*Stanislav Sheptukhovskiy*

In the age of Internet, the state increasingly represents itself through a set of websites, web portals, and online representations of government bodies.

Hackers, including those controlled by intelligence services, see government websites as targets for cyber attacks. Given the devastating consequences of cyber attacks, some experts use the term *cyberwar*. For example, cases of interference with the work of the CEC *Elections* system during the 2014 presidential elections in Ukraine, disruptions to the operation of critical infrastructure facilities (*Prykarpattiaoblenergo, Kyivoblenergo, Chornivtsioblenergo, 2015*), the *Pivnichna* substation in Kyiv, 2016, the Blackenergy virus, 2016, the attack on the Treasury of Ukraine by the Killdisk virus, blocking the work of the Ministry of Finance, 2016. The cyber attacks which were conducted on the night of February 14, 2022, immediately after the diplomatic failures of the Russian Federation to get guarantees of Ukraine not joining the NATO, disrupted the functioning of 70 state websites. Therefore, the public danger of cyber attacks is undeniable. In order to protect the people, the state and the public from such attacks, it is necessary to determine that they are illegal and therefore punishable. Only in this case, the legal mechanism of protection will operate fully.

## **Legal instruments which may be applied in case of cyber attacks on government**

### **Internet resources:**

1. What exactly happens, from a legal perspective, during a cyber attack? Depending on the specific circumstances, it is possible to talk about “fraud by means of conducting illegal operations using electronic computing equipment” (part 3 of Article 190 of the Criminal Code), [4] terrorism (even if it belongs to the conditional category of ‘cyber terrorism’), or one of the criminal offenses defined by Chapter XVI *Criminal offenses in the sphere of use of electronic computing machines*

(computers), systems and computer networks and telecommunications networks of the Special Part of the Criminal Code of Ukraine. [4] Indeed, all the known cyber attacks were carried out by means of using malicious software and/or through unauthorised interference in the operation of communication systems and communication networks. And they are supposedly to be 'easy' to qualify. But the trick is to make sure that the intrusion is unauthorised and that the site belongs to the information systems, communication systems and networks. However, for example, Ddos attacks use the public availability of a web resource, so each of the multimillion influx of requests is, strictly speaking, authorised from the point of view of the access policy.

2. In matters of prosecution, it is important to determine the website of a government body. And we do NOT find such a definition in the specialised legislative act – the Law of Ukraine *On Electronic Communications*. [2] Under such legal circumstances, there is a certain doubt as to whether acts of cyber attack – so-called 'hacking' of a website, blocking it, distorting the information posted on it – can be considered computer crimes?

3. In addition, the application of Art. 176 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine as a tool for protection and prosecution of persons who commit a cyber attack on the website of a government body is hindered by the fact that phrases 'state's ownership of information', or 'information that is the property of the state' are no longer a relevant. In other words, information is not an object of state property. It should be noted that the Law of Ukraine *On Protection of Information in Telecommunication Systems* [1] uses the category 'state information resources' in relation to which (as well as in relation to the restricted information) complex protection and a special access procedure must be applied in information and telecommunication systems. However, again, a website and a telecommunications system are not identical categories.

4. Since the website is a collection of information and software, the relevant computer programs are subject to state registration as copyright objects, but not the website as a whole.

Thus, parts of the categorical pair *cyber attack* – *cyber crime*<sup>4</sup>, which is applied in the Law of Ukraine *On the Basic Principles of Ensuring Cyber Security in Ukraine*, [3] are not from the same set. Some cyber attacks may not be cyber crimes.

I believe that, taking into account the obvious public danger of cyber attacks, the fact that they are becoming ubiquitous and the fundamental ability of the law enforcement system to expose and stop such acts, there are all grounds for the criminalisation of ‘cyberattacks’. Besides, the website of a government body must be clearly defined as a subject of criminal encroachment in the law on criminal responsibility. The implementation of this goal requires improvement of the definition of a website in specialised legislative acts.

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<sup>4</sup> See clause 4, clause 8 of Art. 1 of the aforementioned Law of Ukraine: “Cyber attacks are intentional actions in cyberspace, which are carried out with the help of electronic communications (including information and communication technologies, software and hardware, other technical and technological means and equipment) and are aimed at achieving one of the following goals: breach of confidentiality, integrity, availability of digital information resources processed (transmitted, stored) in communication and / or technological systems, obtaining unauthorised access to such resources; breach of secure, stable, reliable and regular mode of operation of communication and / or technological systems; use of the communication system, its resources and means of electronic communications to carry out cyber attacks on other cyber protection objects,” “cybercrime (computer crime) – a socially dangerous criminal act in cyberspace and / or with its use, responsibility for which is provided by the law of Ukraine on criminal responsibility and / r which is recognised as a crime by international treaties of Ukraine.”

## UKRAINIAN STRATCOM: LESSONS AND CHALLENGES OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR

The modern trend in military education – ‘life-long learning’ – received a tragic and at the same time proactive dimension in Ukraine – ‘war-time learning’. Starting from 2015, when the Partnership Road map in the field of strategic communications was signed between the National Security Council of Ukraine and the International Secretariat of NATO<sup>5</sup>, StratCom has gradually turned into an effective tool for comprehensive protection of the civilisational values of our country from the encroachments of the aggressor.

Over the years, the Ukrainian StratCom has made a significant step forward – from the formation of theory to practical and scientific application to ensure state security. Today, the understanding of its essence coincides with the definition proposed in the latest NATO documents – “the command group function responsible for understanding the information environment across all relevant audiences and, based on that understanding, using all means of communication – comprising actions, images and words – to appropriately inform and influence an audience’s attitudes and behaviours through a narrative-led approach in pursuit of the desired end state.”<sup>6</sup> **Therefore, communication is recognised as a field of security action planning, a necessary element of the SDSI management and a tool of influence.**

The distinction between peace and war, crisis and conflict has blurred in our country, which determined the *proactivity* of the Ukrainian StratCom, which had to respond promptly to all the changes in the information environment. One learns quickly under the conditions of the crisis, so after the first year of the war, we can analyse the lessons learned by the Ukrainian StratCom.

*Lesson 1. The Ukrainian StratCom was successful.* The main conclusion is that the war demonstrated that StratCom is important, that the efforts made after 2014, during ATO / JFO, were necessary, even if not always effective. However, the experience gained after Russia’s

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<sup>5</sup> Strategic Communication Partnership Roadmap between the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine and the NATO International Secretariat (2016) . URL: [http://mfa.gov.ua/mediafiles/sites/nato/files/Roadmap\\_Ukr.pdf](http://mfa.gov.ua/mediafiles/sites/nato/files/Roadmap_Ukr.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Allied Joint Doctrine for Strategic Communications (AJP-10). Edition A. Version 1. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO Standardization Office, 2023.

occupation of Crimea and its instigation of the war in Donbas still played a positive role. New thematic directions of strategic communications were formed: work with residents of deoccupied territories, communications with the key individuals, decision-making institutions and citizens of foreign countries regarding the situation in Ukraine, ratification of the Istanbul Convention, etc.

*Lesson 2. Interoperability<sup>7</sup> and innovativeness<sup>8</sup>* ensured a quick reorientation of the StratCom units of the security and government institutions and their specialists in the conditions of a new reality – a large-scale invasion by the Russian Federation. Interaction between the security and government institutions, joint planning and conducting of information and psychological operations, development of non-standard solutions ensured synchronisation of actions by all the actors, prevented total ‘informational fratricide’ and led to a joint effect – creation of a strong image of the Security and Defence Forces of Ukraine.

*Lesson 3. Reliability, veracity and proactivity.* Ukrainian StratCom specialists, media representatives, and communication specialists respond quickly and adequately to information challenges. The information transmitted by the government and security institutions sources is reliable and therefore both internal and external audiences can trust it: we thank the defenders of Ukraine, volunteers, international partners, at the same time we speak honestly about failures in the battlefield, shortcomings in the leadership and about those who refuse to support our state.

*Lesson 4. Mobility and Empowerment.* StratCom in wartime must take into account all the features of crisis communications, namely: the speed and effectiveness of response to the events taking place; the use of technologies aimed at diagnosing, forecasting and managing crisis situations and (if possible) neutralising the negative consequences of crisis situations. It is necessary to constantly monitor the feedback from

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<sup>7</sup> The ability of the security and government institutions and the civil society to cooperate in order to achieve the desired result.

<sup>8</sup> “Innovation questions the routines and systems that underpin core competencies, which can deteriorate quickly without rigorous training, exercises and experience on operations. Innovation may be viewed as threatening existing capabilities in which militaries have made heavy investment and around which sub-community interests and cultures have developed. However, organisational innovation is crucial if we are to develop the capacity to anticipate and prepare for the future characteristics of conflict.” (Joint Concept Note I /17 Future Force Concept, 2017. URL : <https://www.gov.uk/.../future-force-conceptjcn-117>)

the TA. Thus, during the first year of the war, a number of algorithms were developed to communicate with the population in deoccupied territories, citizens affected by Russian aggression (sexual crimes, bombings, loss of loved ones, etc.). These algorithms take into account the effects of psycho-traumatic factors on the communication process and focus on returning people to a peaceful life. Communication should take place at all levels and with different TAs.

*Lesson 5. Recognition of the proactivity of the StratCom gender dimension.* The Ukrainian StratCom won the advocacy campaign for the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. This campaign lasted several years and successfully ended in June 2022 with the vote in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. The implementation of state policy aimed at ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men continues today in the following directions: inclusion of the Istanbul Convention in the general Eurointegration communication framework;

- recognition of the guarantee of equal rights and opportunities for women and men and combat against gender-based violence as priorities of state policy, even during the active phase of the war;

- mainstreaming of new communication topics, in particular: implementation of the agenda ‘Women, Peace, Security’; provision of comprehensive assistance to victims of sexual violence committed by the Russian military; observance of the principles of gender equality and inclusion in the reconstruction processes in Ukraine;

- as a result of improved interaction, strategic partnership and communication between government bodies, primarily SDSI, and NGOs a number of high-quality communication products have been prepared. Among them, *Guidelines for the Treatment of Victims of Sexual Violence who Suffered as a Result of Military Aggression of the Russian Federation in Ukraine* (Kyiv, 2023, Women’s Information and Consultative Centre and the National Academy of the Security Service of Ukraine). Another example is the preparation by the Youth Centre of the Atlantic Council of Ukraine, together with the National Academy of the Security Service of Ukraine and the Command of the Land Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, with the support of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy of Ukraine, of the series of films *Sexual Crimes of the Russian Army in Ukraine*, based on the testimonies

of individuals, who suffered from sexual violence by the Russian military, eyewitnesses of these crimes, as well as the data of non-governmental public organisations (Association of Women Lawyers of Ukraine YurFem, Women's Information and Consultative Centre, NGO *La Strada-Ukraine*, Ukrainian Helsinki Union for Human Rights, Centre of Civil Liberties, the *Women's Perspective* Centre), state and security institutions of Ukraine (the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, the Main Department of the National Police in Kyiv Region, Buchansk District Military Administration of Kyiv Region).

*Lesson 6. Awareness, integration.* Understanding the information environment, cultural, national, and historical contexts provides an opportunity to produce effective narratives, images, and words. For this, the integration of the efforts of scientists and government officials in the public space, the importance of the availability of reliable knowledge about the historical past, and the uniformity of coverage of all the target audiences are relevant.

*Lesson 7. Coherence and concept-centricity.* Actions, narratives, images and words must be aligned. Before 2018 there were some deficiencies in information warfare which were compensated for, most notably with the onset of a full-scale invasion. This happened due to the introduction of correct intentions which stimulated defensive and offensive narratives, such as 'defending Ukraine's national, cultural and linguistic identity', 'faith in the Security and Defence Forces, faith in the victory, expectation of positive changes', 'glorification of heroes and full support of defenders', 'retribution and punishment', 'contempt for the enemy and his humiliation' and the like. Accordingly, these narratives must be promoted further.

The StratCom in Ukraine has correctly implemented a number of symmetrical and asymmetrical forms of suggestive promotion of information. Many of them turned out to be effective (such as lowercase instead of uppercase (*russia*), the use of pronouns indicating the local instead of the whole (*on russia*), circling around the denotation (*bavovna* (cotton), negation of the obvious (*ichtamnets* (they-are-not-there) and others). But there are sensitive information areas: the present / past tense

of the real modality contributes to the perception of information as correct, but one should not ‘overuse’ this technique: one cannot talk about victory many times when it is not close, so as not to cause disappointment in the society. As for counteroffensive, you can speak about it, but in the information sources aimed at the enemy (for causing intimidation and chaos).

We must popularize and promote a system of concepts and slogans which will clearly show the differences between the cognitive spaces of Ukrainians and Russians (*humanity of Ukrainians – dehumanization of Russians, civility – incivility*) and our goals (*derashization, derussification, deoccupation, decolonization*). It is necessary to note the positive effect of self-correction of the information flow managers, for example, the calls of O. Danilov to avoid the constant use of hate speech when using ethnophobisms (such as *rusnia*) or the popularization of comments in social networks that disapprove of malevolence regarding the incident with a shark and a Russian in Hurghada. Humanity, civility and democracy are features of the Ukrainian society, the postulation of which allows progress in solving current problems.

The Ukrainian StratCom departed from the Soviet tradition of ‘solving problems’ and changed it to the optimistic pragmatism of ‘accepting a challenge’. This involves understanding the situation, taking into account the shortcomings, developing new technologies and the way forward – to the Victory.

*Challenge 1. Promptness in assessing the situation and responding.* The first year of the war demonstrated that the information warfare is a full-fledged war. It develops at lightning speed and requires the same instant response. Every second of delay can be very costly. If a bullet, rocket or projectile can kill or injure a person instantly, then a well-crafted information and psychological special operation of the enemy – Russia – can ‘kill’ or cause significant reputational damage to Ukraine, as well as negatively affect the course of military operations in the battlefield. Therefore, our quick reaction, ability to analyse and calculate the enemy’s next steps in the information field is a serious challenge for all of us. The enemy outnumbers us, including in social networks, so it is worth involving patriotic citizens of Ukraine in broadcasting important information. To do this, it is necessary to provide media literacy and information security training on a large scale.

*Challenge 2. Creating a policy of ‘one voice’ for the state and security institutions and the public.* The first steps in this direction have already been taken. But the institutionalization of the national StratCom system, the development of a unified terminology and a scientific-theoretical methodological basis is gaining relevance. The Ukraine-NATO Strategic Communications Road Map also needs to be updated in accordance with the new conditions – a full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into our country, as well as the creation of a Strategic Communications Doctrine with a clear ranking of participants and a specific definition of their tasks.

Discussions are needed around many issues of the future. Discussions need to be developed and supported.

*Challenge 3. Creation of methodology for the implementation of strategic communications in various directions.* Individual tactical successes on the information front do not always lead to strategic victories, if a strategic plan and appropriate methodologies for its implementation are not developed. Today, SDSI specialists and researchers have developed a number of effective methods of countering the destructive effects of the Russian Federation, but this process must be systemic in nature, defined as one of the primary tasks of StratCom research and practical schools, which involves the transition from methods to methodology. The development of methodologies in the following areas is considered an urgent task:

- communications with the residents of deoccupied territories, victims of violence by the Russian army, persons who returned from captivity, etc.;
- constructive protection of the information space of Ukraine;
- narrative communications. It is necessary to always choose narratives of the first order (We must first of all ensure, then – properly provide information about readiness of the society to protect the interests of soldiers and their families: contrast the attitude towards soldiers in Russia; popularize the successes of independent states after the collapse of the USSR, thereby creating an incentive for subjects of the Russian Federation; to demonstrate the shameful dependence of satellites of Russia, such as Belarus, lack of subjectivity in the country).

*Challenge 4. StratCom must not turn into authoritarian propaganda.* The Soviet era practices must finally go into the past. An effective information policy should be formed in accordance with

democratic European standards. One of the steps towards this is the following: in the presentation of information, it is necessary to avoid simplification and uniformity in informing the society, on the contrary, it is necessary to strengthen the analytical vector of informing, to involve authoritative speakers-analysts in the coverage of events.

*Challenge 5. Communication inefficiency, getting used to information, stereotyping.* Challenges to our strategic communication are the same as those faced by the public: continuing war, destruction, losses, which are converted into increased suffering, grief, emotional devastation, psychological problems, stress. In such a situation, either getting used to any information or not reacting to it increases. Certain destructive stereotypes can also be established, for example: stereotyping the role of women as ‘victims of war’ without taking into account the active participation of women in the Defence of Ukraine and economic activities. As a result – communication inefficiency.

Training during the war gives results – we are proactive, we develop, we can train. The StratCom experience was gained the hard way – in the conditions of our state’s violent confrontation with the aggressor, and therefore it is invaluable. This is both the main lesson and the main challenge.

Glory to Ukraine!

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Довідкове видання

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RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST CASES**

*Practical guide*

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