UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

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EXPLORING COMMUNICATION IN INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA:

PUBLIC INFORMATION IN THE UNITED NATIONS STABILISATION MISSION IN THE DEMOCRACTIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

By

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This Thesis is submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Studies.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby solemnly declare that this thesis is my original work. It is a product of my field study of public information in the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). It has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than the University of Ghana Graduate School for the award of this degree. All material obtained from other sources is herein duly acknowledged. The work has been produced under the supervision of Prof Audrey Gadzekpo and Dr. Philip Attuquayefio, both of the University of Ghana, and Major General Emmanuel Wekem Kotia, of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre.

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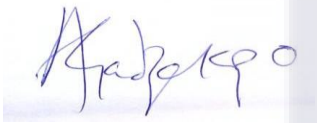

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ABSTRACT

This thesis unpacks the importance of public information as a powerful conflict management tool in the hands of peacekeepers. Public information plays a crucial role in how these peace operations carry out these functions and activities. The UN acknowledges it as a political and operational necessity. Even though PI contributes to the attainment of peacekeeping mandates, it does not seem to attract the required attention. Both military and civilian peacekeepers, however, seem to have a different understanding of what PI entails and how it should be viewed and practised. The broad purpose of this study was to interrogate the role of PI in international peace operations, by exploring the information practices at the UN Stabilisation Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO) and whether this could contribute towards the management of the conflict in the DR Congo. The thesis is a qualitative study of public information in MONUSCO. As a case study, multiple qualitative methods were used to gather data, with in-depth interviewing being the primary data collection tool. The Maatic Model of Communication and Public Information Model underpinned the study. Understanding the concept of public information is mixed. While appreciating its multiple functionalities to support a variety of interests, if it must play that crucial role in international conflict management, then it has to be recognised as conflict communication. The overarching objective of public information, as conflict communication, is not just to provide information to the public on what the peacekeepers are doing, but ultimately to restore calm and bring the conflict parties together in harmony and peace. The lack of clarity on the concept and practice of public information has therefore tended to paint it as a practice that is not delivering to the expectations of peacekeeping managers. In MONUSCO, this necessitated it to either be replaced with a somewhat less self-glorifying function or subsumed under other more aggressive

forms of public communication. But as the thesis argues, public information should be the preferred form of public communication in peace operations. It has not only been misunderstood, in practice it has rivals which seek to undermine its relevance and usability. The study reveals that in MONUSCO, the Strategic Communication and Public Information Division (SC-PID) was being undercut by its inadequate organisational structure, its inability to effectively coordinate the public information activities of the various substantive components of the mission and the overbearing influence of information operations which the Military Component, in particular, seemed to place more premium on in carrying out their peacekeeping activities. Furthermore, there seemed not to be a unified understanding of PI amongst senior leaders at MONUSCO. PI practitioners themselves had similar varied views. Additionally, the study reveals that there was a capacity-building gap that could affect the professional capacity of PI practitioners across MONUSCO. The thesis therefore takes the position that instead of divorcing public information of its strategic function to win hearts and minds and to entrust this critical responsibility to a separate entity, it is better to re-conceptualise public information in peace operations, incorporate this function as an essential part of public information and reorient public information practitioners towards taking it as their core function. There is need to relook at the concept and practice of Public Information in UN peace operations and reposition it as the most appropriate form of public communication that will contribute anything to conflict management. The public information model currently in practice in these field peace operations, as painted in literature and borne out by the findings of the study of MONUSCO, seems to focus on selling the peacekeeping mission rather than contributing directly to thawing hostile relations between the conflict actors and restoring peace to the conflict area. The most appropriate and relevant model of public information in peace operations ought therefore to consist of a forum for dialogue; a tool for enhancing

confidence in the peace process and managing the expectations of the mission, the population and the media; a bridge to close the information gap; an arena that brings the parties together but not as a battleground; and a strategic function that is central to implementing the mission's mandate. So, in MONUSCO, rather than discrediting public information as irrelevant and consigning it to the back burner, SC-PID should be remodelled into a Public Information and Strategic Communication Division (PICD) under an integrated organisational structure which incorporates all the major components and prioritises public information over strategic communication. The PICD should then be placed under the highest authority while creating a Joint Public Information Coordinating Centre (JPICC) to facilitate effective coordination of public information activities across the mission and intensify collaboration by all the actors. This should be reinforced with comprehensive and all-encompassing public information, not communication, strategy elaborate enough to capture the needs of all its components, their responsibility to communicate effectively and to ensure that all public information activities are consistent with it.

DEDICATION

To
My parents
(Atintande Aram Aduko and Madam Ndarugbila Ayisum Avoka)

To
My daughters
(Sahadatu Ayisum Atintande and Fawziya Aduko Atintande)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I testify that this is my original work. Nonetheless, it is not a singular effort as many people have contributed in several ways to help me complete it. I wish to acknowledge all these contributions and to state unreservedly that I whole-heartedly appreciate every little assistance.

This journey started over two decades ago when I served in my first United Nations peacekeeping mission as a military public information officer. That opportunity and several others that followed in succession over 20 years opened my eyes to the true value and relevance of this niche area. This was the motivation to add to knowledge; and we are grateful that, at last, we can say that our little efforts actually added up to something worthwhile. My first thanks therefore goes to the Ghana Armed Forces for offering me the rare opportunity to work in an area that has lent itself to scholarship.

My thanks also go to my children. They have been there for me, always. They have urged me on, even when the journey was threatened. They have actually been the inspiration to complete the journey.

My cherished supervisors, Prof Audrey Gadzekpo, PhD, Philip Attuquayefio, PhD, and Major General E. A. Kotia, PhD, have been my greatest cheerleaders along the journey. They deserve all the tonnes of gratitude they should have. Together with faculty, they have made all the effort at every little instance to check that the journey was still on course and I owe this project to their resilience and commitment.

Let me say that, in all this, I take full responsibility for my errors and assumptions.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACOS OPS	Assistant Chief of Staff (Operations)
AU	African Union
CACOM	Cellule d'Alerte Communications
CI	Command Information
CJICTF	Combined Joint Information and Communication Task Force
CM	Conflict management
CMAA	Conflict management and analysis
CMPIO	Chief Military Public Information Officer
CMO	Chief Military Observer
CMV	Civil-Military Visits
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
CPIO	Chief Public Information Officer
CPIS	Chief of Public Information Service
CR	Conflict resolution
C SC-PID	Chief, Strategic Communication and Public Information
DAPKOP	Director Army Peacekeeping Operations
DCMPIO	Deputy Chief Military Public Information Officer
DCOS OPS	Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations)
DCOS PET	Deputy Chief of Staff (Personnel, Evaluation and Training)
DC SC-PID	Deputy Chief, Strategic Communication and Public Information
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFC	Deputy Force Commander
DFS	Department of Field Service
DGC	Department of Global Communication
DIPSO	Department of International Peace Operations
DPI	Department of Public Information
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DPO	Department of Peace Operations
DPR	Department of Public Relations
DSPA	Department of Special Political Affairs
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FARDC	Force Armee Republique Democratique du Congo
FC	Force Commander
FCOS	Force Chief of Staff
FIB	Force Intervention Brigade
FOD	Field Operations Department
FRDC	Force Republique Democratique du Congo
GAF	Ghana Armed Forces
GOS	Government of Sudan

GOSS	Government of South Sudan
HIPPO	High-level Independent Panel of Peace Operations
HOM	Head of Mission
HOMC	Head of the Military Component
HOO	Head of Office
HQ	Headquarters
ICM	International Conflict Management
IFOR	International Force
IMPP	Integrated Mission Planning Programme
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JMAC	Joint Mission Analysis Cell/Centre
JOC	Joint Operations Cell/Centre
JPICC	Joint Public Information Coordinating Cell/Centre
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
MCOS	Mission Chief of Staff
MILAD	Military Advisor
MIST	Military Information Support Team
MISTF	Mission Information Support Task Force
MONUC	Mission de Organisation Nations Unies du Congo
MONUSCO	Mission de Organisation Nation Unies Stabilisation du Congo
MPIO	Military Public Information Office/Officer
MSO	Military Staff Officer
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OHR	Officer of the High Representative
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Service
OMA	Office of the Military Advisor
ONUC	Organisation Nations Unies du Congo
OOTW	Operations other than war
OSCE	Office of Security Cooperation Europe
OWI	Office of War Information
PCC	Police Contributing Country
PI	Public Information
PIO	Public Information Office/Officer
POC	Protection of Civilians
PPIO	Police Public Information Office/Officer
PSYOPS	Psychological Operations
RDC	Republique du Congo
RQ	Research question
RTLM	Radio Television Libres des Mille Collline
RTNC	Radio Television Nationaus du Congo
SADC	South African Development Community
SCPI	Strategic Communication and Public Information
SC-PID	Strategic Communication and Public Information Division
SFOR	Security Force
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General

TCC	Troop Contributing Country
UNAMID	United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNCG	United Nations Communication Group
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNEF	United Nations Emergency Force
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNHQ	United Nations Headquarters
UNJHRO	United Nations Joint Human Rights Office
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNMEE	United Nations Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea
UNMIBH	United Nations Mission in Bosnia Hercegovina
UNMIH	United Nations Mission in Haiti
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNPOL	United Nations Police
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNTAG	United Nations Transition Assistance Group for Namibia
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation
UNSMIH	United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti
USAID	United States Assistance for International Development
USPS	United States Postal Service
WWI/WWII/WWIII	Word War I, II, III

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This thesis explores how public information (PI) and its structured engagement reflect the operational successes of peace operations. It uses the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)[1] as a case study. The public's role in the success or failure of peace operations is not to be taken lightly. This is because public opinion is one of the major factors contributing to the success or failure of a peace operation (Lehmann, 1995; Bellamy & Williams, 2004). Opinions on the success of peace operations, however, differ (Kühne, 1999; Nilsson & Zetterlund, 2014; Kuzmina, 2016). But as Harbottle contends, the essence of peacekeeping is not only to separate the disputants and keep them apart but to bring them together. Therefore,

> Peacekeeping alone, operating in a vacuum, will eventually become counter-productive, however physically successful it may have been at the start. To be productive it must be closely linked to an overall peace effort… (Harbottle, 1974, p. 552).

If the Public Information Office (PIO) is less successful or if it cannot maintain the cooperation of the parties to the peace process, garner support for it among the local population and provide information about the operation to the international community (United Nations, 2006a), then positive peace may seem difficult to achieve without effective communication. This was amply demonstrated in the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) in

[1] In May 2010, Resolution 1925 was adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) which transformed United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) into MONUSCO. This change was necessary, as after the mission's close involvement in the presidential elections in 2008 and its efforts towards disarmament had distanced it from the militia groups, making peace negotiations harder for the mission.

1994. Dallaire (2004)[2] points out that, it was clear that the general public still did not know what all the blue berets running around in white vehicles meant. I cursed the DPKO and the FOD in my heart for not understanding the vital need the mission had for a radio station or a competent public information office so that we could build on the desire of the vast majority of Rwandans to reach out to both hands for peace (Dallaire, 2004, p. 172).

This emphasises that the public does not just have to accept and understand the peacekeeping forces; but also contribute in measurable terms to the realisation of peace in the conflict area. Hoffmann (2013) notes that communication is recognised as vital in times of conflict and potentially contributes to conflict transformation and peacebuilding. In conflict situations, communication therefore serves as an instrument of peace; acts as an intermediary which seeks to influence the parties towards accommodation, mobilises popular support for the peace process, and plays an integrative role by assuring the parties of a future beyond the conflict (Udeajah, 2004). The United Nations (UN) itself stresses the need for its field peace operations to develop strategic communications and operational-level PI activities to ensure continued support for the peace efforts and to better respond to public perceptions of the role and impact of peacekeeping (United Nations, 2016a). Public information therefore plays a very crucial role in successfully managing conflict during peace operations.

Despite the preponderance of scholarly and anecdotal evidence on the successes and/or failures of UN peace operations, some empirical studies seem not to recognise the obvious contribution of PI in these successes or failures (Pushkina, 2006; Fortna & Howard, 2008; Richey, 2011; Whalan, 2012). Scholarly literature and technical reports on lessons learnt have, for

[2] General Romeo Dallaire was UNAMIR's first Force Commander, under whose watch about 800,000 people were killed in cold blood within three months.

example, often downplayed its place in the successes or failures of peacekeeping (Lang, 2001; Lijn, 2009; Jacobson, 2012; Korson, 2015). Few yet have focused on the competence of the peace operation's PI office.

Public Information may be that low on priority because there seems to be some conceptual ambiguity surrounding it (Lehmann, 1999; United Nations, 2006a; Lindberg, 2008; Oksamytna, 2017). This clouds understanding and therefore affects its practice in the field. Mentes and Browne (2012), for example, say that the UN employs information operations which it chooses to call public information. Discussions on the concept of PI should therefore demonstrate the binding need for UN field peace operations to approach communication in a manner that contributes more effectively to meeting their stated objectives. In this thesis, the effort has been made to expand understanding of PI in peace operations: First, the concepts of conflict management and conflict communication in the light of the need to manage conflicts well to prevent their escalation and return the conflict area to peace, security and stability were looked at. Second, a firm understanding of PI by both policy actors and practitioners in the field that should inform a clearer picture of what is expected of PI was examined.

It may also be that, although scholars have sought to interrogate the practice of public information at various facets of peace operations, literature tends to focus more on Eurocentric contexts. This may seem to obscure a fuller understanding of PI and its practice in peace operations in Africa in particular. One example is Mentes and Browne's (2012) use of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in the study of PI in selected peace operations. Maslow's needs theory focuses on the needs of the individual more than that of society. The theory was propounded at a time in Europe when the individual was viewed as playing a central role in successful organisational management (Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2012), hence the reason to attend to employees' basic and esteemed

needs to motivate them to give of their best. Even though Maslow's theory must have also considered the success of the organisation as a whole, one nevertheless believes that its thrust was not to lead to the overall safety and stability of and peace in society.

Similarly, Lindberg's (2008) use of Tajfel and Turner's (1986) Social Identity Theory in her study on media use in post-conflict Liberia, while recognising that members of groups identify with themselves and may tend to behave in a more unified manner and this could affect their communication, rather emphasises the "Western" notion of "self" as a single "unified" identity (Hecht, 1993). Here, personal identity seems to align with social identity, meaning that group membership may therefore greatly affect the communication of members. In the manner of their communication, individuals may therefore not communicate as individuals but as representatives of the group that helps define who they are (Griffin, 2009, p. 391). Whilst groups may influence the thinking, conduct and behaviour of group members, one notes that when it comes to conflict management, the individual is as important as the group. Individuals, for example, may belong to more than one social group. They may even exercise their conscience in choosing right from wrong. So, media communication and use may therefore not have an absolute universal effect on the behaviour of individual members of groups who may think otherwise.

Eurocentric paradigms may fail to recognise the complex context and intricate dynamics of the peacekeeping environment and conflict populations in Africa (Achankeng, 2013) and place communication in its right context. Ansu-Kyeremeh (1997) points out that, in Africa, the society is as important as the individual. So, while the UN's information activities can connect with the motivations and needs of the local population, such as aligning with the humanitarian needs of the conflict-affected local people, these activities may not aim to contribute to resolving the societal conflict. The UN's approach towards information management in peace operations in Africa

should therefore aim to resolve societal conflict rather than just to satisfy the needs of the local people, or of the UN itself, even though that is also important.

In acknowledging the critical role of PI in the success of peace operations, the UN Secretariat in July 2006 published a watershed document titled *Policy and Guidance for Public Information in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.* This provided overarching guidance and direction for UN PI officers and staffers in the field. This followed on the heels of a new doctrine consequent to the outcome of two panels which sought to address the question of PI capacity in UN peace operations and which recognised the ultimate power of communication as critical for peace operations. The two panels were chaired by Lakdar Brahimi[3]. The first was the *Independent Inquiry into the Actions of the United Nations during the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda* (United Nations, 1999) and the second, was the *Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects* (United Nations, 2000). Both panels identified effective PI to be a key determinant of success in peace operations.

1.2 Brief on the case study area: DR Congo

Though the purpose of this study is far from uncovering the root causes of DR Congo's instability, it is still important, being an ethnographic study, to situate the discussion in a proper perspective to understand what the UN is doing in DR Congo and to what effect. It seems abundantly clear during the field data collection that many UN officials (military and civilian) lack knowledge of the undercurrents in the DR Congo conflict which should inform the way and manner they should approach their work. As in all cases, a peacekeeping mission's operational theatre and its complexities, the environmental context, should inform how the peacekeeping mission should communicate and also the mode and type of communication to be carried out. This section

[3] Lakdar Brahimi is a former Algerian Foreign Affairs Minister.

therefore provides a brief background to the case study area, DR Congo, as well as the UN's earlier presence in the country to provide that context.

The root of DR Congo's running conflict and instability lies in its past. Two decades after World War I saw colonialism buried in Africa with many countries winning their hard-won independence and forming their sovereign states. In the case of the DR Congo, independence in 1960 rather plunged the country into disunity, turmoil and instability (Woddis, 1960, p. 248). According to Nkrumah (1974), Independence has never been orderly and peaceful. In the view of Andrews (2017) independence did not bring the expected tranquillity. It was fractured along several fault lines, which have survived up to today.

The UN has had by far one of its longest-running peacekeeping missions in the DR Congo. From July 1960 to June 1964, it deployed its first-ever large-scale peacekeeping operation with a total force level of 20,000 troops and police (United Nations, 1985). Then known as the UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC), it was necessitated by the lawlessness accompanying independence and the attempted secession of certain portions of the country.

The Congolese dynamics of violence have erupted in many parts of the country in different historic moments. The clashes after independence were more ethnic; but also, in other different ways and contexts (Barrerra, 2015, p. 7). ONUC was mandated to, among other things, restore general law and order, maintain the territorial integrity of the country and ensure the withdrawal from the country of Belgian and other foreign military and paramilitary forces, which included mercenaries, and questionable political advisors (United Nations, 1985; United Nations, 1993). With the maintenance of law and order being ONUC's heaviest task, its troops carried out police duties[i] while containing the hostilities between the various warring factions (United Nations,

1985). They, however, found themselves in periodic combats against Congolese troops, in self-defence (Erskine, 2000).

Following the hostilities that led to the murder of the country's first elected Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba, in January 1961, ONUC's strength scaled down and it was now authorised by the Security Council to use force to prevent the spread of the civil war. It, however, had no authority to force any provincial government into a specific line of action about the internal political controversy (United Nations, 1985). Now grappling with its fundamental security and peace-related tasks, it additionally took on civil administration functions in the light of the new country having little or no professionals needed to take up the myriad roles of a civil administration (United Nations, 1985). With the internal situation worsening, the peacekeeping forces facing hostilities from the various fighting groups, and the assumption of its civilian responsibilities, ONUC had to devise means to communicate with the public, but with limited effort, through the mission's public information section (United Nations, 2006). ONUC lasted up to June 1964.

In 1999, the UN was back in DR Congo, this time, as the UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). MONUC started as an observer mission of barely 600 military observers and liaison officers and in February 2000 it was expanded to a peacekeeping force with an initial strength of 5,500 troops (Lindley, 2006). It deployed into a violent ongoing conflict with a mandate that included monitoring the ceasefire, establishing liaison with all parties, collecting information on the parties' forces, helping to disarm and demobilise those forces, supervising and verifying the disengagement of forces, monitoring the disengagement line, as well as assist with humanitarian activities and demining (ibid). As part of its public information activities, MONUC used information to encourage combatants to disarm and repatriate (Jacob, 2017). It employed forums and published posters, bumper stickers, a monthly magazine in French,

a weekly newsletter, and a bi-weekly bulletin and helped to run the most ambitious radio operation in the UN's history. Radio Okapi was developed by an innovative partnership between the UN and a Swiss NGO, Fondation Hirondelle. However as Lindley (2006) points out, recognition of the potential of information operations was uneven, and information resources were generally insufficient.

MONUC was replaced on 1 July 2010 by Security Council Resolution 1925 of 25 May 2010, with a new mission, the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The objectives of MONUSCO are to protect civilians, humanitarian personnel and human rights defenders, and to assist the DR Congo government in its efforts to stabilise the country and bring about peace. Since 2010, it has additionally been grappling with the high incidence of criminal sexual activities by peacekeepers, which threatens to erode any gains the mission could make in its mandate implementation.

Strategic priorities at the core of MONUSCO's mandate were to support the implementation of the December 2016 political agreement to pave the way for credible elections and the protection of civilians and human rights (United Nations, 2016). In 2017, the election was held under the watch of the peacekeeping mission leading to a new government headed by Etienne Tsikede taking over from President Joseph Kabila. In 2019, its mandate was modified to focus on the protection of civilians (POC). MONUSCO is a multidimensional fifth-generation peacekeeping operation. Its authorised strength as of 2018 was about 20,000 personnel.

Aside from these security, political and development issues, as the study focuses on information management, it is also necessary to highlight the information environment and media landscape in the DR Congo to place issues in the right context. As of the time of writing, there are 627 radio stations, 571 print media and scores of television networks, excluding online

media, listed across its 26 provinces (Mushizi, 2020). Many of these are privately run with owners of the leading outlets often politically connected. There is a general tendency for the media to operate against a backdrop of political power struggles and violent unrest, as demonstrated above. While freedom of information has constantly been violated, journalists themselves are often exposed to threats, physical violence, arrest, prolonged detention and even murder (BBC, 2017). Radio is the top medium but only a few stations, including the state-run Radio-Television Nationale Congolaise (RTNC), broadcast nationwide, with terrestrial TV mainly confined to the main towns. The printing houses of the most developed newspapers are located in the national capital, Kinshasa, with only four or five of the newspapers being dailies. The main international outlets operating in the country are the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Radio France International (RFI).

DR Congo's vastness, the diversity of its population and its tottering economy continue to negatively affect its media landscape (Mushizi, 2020). Since the 1990s political influence in the establishment of media outlets has been a constant feature, with all private commercial media belonging to politicians or close to political parties and interest groups, such as faith-based and civil society organisations. In fact, since the 1960s, public radio in particular has exclusively been in the hands of supporters of successive political regimes.in Kinshasa and for decades there was no national broadcaster (Bonde, 2006), until 2003 when the UN's Radio Okapi was set up. Radio Okapi, with national reach, could arguably be DR Congo's true national broadcaster.

The Internet has promoted the development of a new way of communicating and disseminating information. It has also fostered the creation of online or digital media, simply referred to as "E-influencers". These combine writing, audio and visual as well as traditional media. According to Mushizi (2020), as digital media and social networks are gaining more

importance, this has encouraged MONUSCO in 2017 to support a group of "E-Influencers" to create a new network called MONUSCO (BCNUDH). The network aims to promote citizen freedoms through online activity, thereby concretising the public's right to information. Social networks play a very important role in public debate and the rapid and widespread sharing of information. Information generated and shared by them, however, remains unreliable and their sources are often not very credible. They are generally restricted to only members of the constituted groups, and their effectiveness is further limited by the high cost of information technology gadgets and services, unreliable internet services, constant internet interruptions by the authorities, low electricity penetration and other economic challenges.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Even though Public Information (PI) contributes to the attainment of peacekeeping mandates, it does not seem to attract the required attention (Mentes & Browne, 2012; UN, 2016). This may be because peacekeeping, in its earliest years, was mainly a military undertaking underpinning political and diplomatic activity and information was carefully guarded, its release to the public controlled and there was little thought on how to use PI strategically (United Nations, 2006a). There was usually no need to engage other non-belligerent actors such as the general population as part of the management of the conflict, except where it was necessary to support vulnerable populations because of the breakdown of state-provided services arising from the conflict, and PI was not thought of as part of these engagements.

The peacekeeping architecture has since changed tremendously over the last seventy-odd years, with peace operations moving away from their earlier monitoring and military deterrence mandates to multidimensional ones (United Nations, 1985; Kühne, 1999; Kenkel, 2013; Smidt, 2016; Özev & Erdogan, 2019). From 2000 onwards, in particular, the dynamics of conflict changed

to a complex and multidimensional nature. This required peacekeepers on the ground to be more involved with multiple non-state actors and stakeholders and to include other non-kinetic activities, such as PI, in their operations. Additionally, as of the time of the study in May 2019, of the 85,448 peacekeepers in the seven UN peacekeeping missions in Africa, 65,144 were military. [4] The soldiers are often the first to arrive in a peacekeeping mission and mostly deploy to the frontline (Mentes & Browne, 2012). By their sheer numbers and their varied tasks, they often have direct contact with the belligerent parties, other stakeholders and the general public. Both military and civilian peacekeepers, however, seem to have a different understanding of what PI entails and how it should be viewed and practised (Mentes & Browne, 2012; Combelles-Siegel, 1998). This seems to have affected the needed attention that should be accorded to PI. A lot therefore remains to help illuminate the practice of PI in UN peace operations, especially where the bulk of the field missions are military-heavy.

Literature, however, seems silent on the public information practices of military contingents in the overall management of public expectations in UN peace operations in Africa (Avruch, Narel, & Siegel, 2000; Hunt, 2006). Much of the evidence does not fully explore the hierarchical nature of the military, its central command and control regime and how all this shapes PI practice in peace operations. The apparent silence in literature in this regard may perhaps suggest that there is an absence of recognised dedicated PI capabilities in the military components or that researchers have yet to interrogate the subject. Previous studies of PI in peace operations have largely been restricted to the civilian component (Lehmann, 1999; Lindberg, 2008), and even where the military is factored in such research (Siegel, 1998; Mentes & Browne, 2012), the attention has tended to focus on the macro strategic level. Also, notwithstanding several formal

[4] This was almost 75 per cent of the total strength, with the remaining comprising the civilian component and UN Police.

reviews of peacekeeping by high-level panels commissioned by the UN, PI is yet to be incorporated within the appropriate theoretical realm and a single theory underpinning PI in peacekeeping is yet to be determined. All these seem to undermine a clear-cut relationship between public information theory and practice and therefore could undermine its relevance and impact.

Peacekeeping is a by-product of conflict, and communication, as a critical tool for dousing conflict, helps to prevent further hostilities and restores the peace or maintains the peace already restored (Udeajah, 2004). With a mission that has been effectively running for over twenty years and the UN facing a conflict that defies any steps to stem it, public information seems a potent tool to change the dynamics of the conflict. It is left to be seen whether the public information component of MONUSCO is in a position to contribute to the successful, efficient and effective management of the long-standing conflict, considering the complex and daunting information environment in the DR Congo.

United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) was in its 20th year at the time of the study. PI was expected to play a crucial role in how it should and must communicate with its diverse stakeholders to successfully manage the running conflict. To what extent then has this requirement been met? And what benefit has MONUSCO derived from its PI? These questions need further examination.

While much has been written generally on communication and conflict, at the mission or force level in UN peace operations, not much, however, is available on the specific part that PI directly plays in conflict management (Adu-Amanfoh, 1997). It is therefore of scholarly interest to explore the presence or otherwise of MONUSCO's PI capabilities and to listen to the policy-makers and actors themselves to enhance a deeper understanding of the importance of PI in UN-led peace operations. Such an enquiry would generate insights into what happens on the ground

by both civilian and military PI components. The knowledge of how the various substantive components understand and carry out their public information could therefore not only shape understanding of how communication could effectively contribute to addressing international conflict but also enrich scholarship in the area.

By all accounts, MONUSCO is an exemplary UN peace operation. If the view is anything to go by that PI is imperative for peacekeeping success, then for it to be able to contribute to the success of the mission's mandate, it ought to be of certain characteristics – competent, capable, professional, efficient and effective. What is public information in MONUSCO and how has it fared? It was necessary therefore to determine the presence or lack of the above-mentioned characteristics in MONUSCO's PI component; to see what was there and what was happening in the DR Congo in public information terms (Yin, 1994).

1.4 Research Objective

The broad purpose of the study was to interrogate the role of PI in international peace operations, by exploring the information practices at MONUSCO and whether this could contribute anything to the management of the conflict in the DR Congo. This thesis departs from looking at communication in conflict management from the somewhat narrow objectives of the mandates crafted by UN Security Council Resolutions creating specific peacekeeping missions. It emphasizes how MONUSCO has combined and employed its PI assets and strategies to help address the complex conflict. This is against the backdrop of General Dallaire's telling assessment of the value of a PI component in UN peace operations (Dallaire, 2004). If this is so, does MONUSCO have the requisite PI capacity that could contribute to the successful management of the long-running conflict in the country? The task here is not just to list what is or is not there. The intent is to broaden thinking about what is involved in the work of a competent PI office in

multidimensional peace operations. This should inform what Dallaire (2004, p172) describes as the end-state of peacekeeping – built on the desire of the vast majority of the population to reach out with both hands for peace.

1.5 Research Questions

In this thesis, an attempt has been made to answer the following research questions:

RQ 1: What is the mission leadership's understanding of Public Information and to what extent is this understanding shaping the practice in MONUSCO?

RQ 2: In what ways, do the structure and organisation of the Public Information component of the Mission help to answer the Mission's needs?

RQ 3: Where and how are the Public Information activities of the Mission's substantive components situated within the context of the overall communication strategy?

RQ 4: To what extent are the activities of particularly the military's Public Information contributing to the management of the conflict?

RQ 5: How are the Mission's Public Information campaigns and activities reflecting the situational and audience expectations in the conflict area?

1.6 Rationale for the Study

The study helps to appropriately contextualise communication in international peace operations in Africa. It has also advanced conceptual and practical understanding of the role of public information in conflict management. It adds to the existing body of knowledge on Public Information (PI) as a key aspect of conflict management little appreciated by peacekeeping forces (Dallaire, 2004; Anyidoho, 1997), but which plays a critical role in facilitating the attainment of

the beneficial ends of not just order but also healing and lasting peace. This study is also significant considering the Brahimi Report, regarding the "thorough investigation of past and current peace operations, which question the conceptual assumptions behind them and suggest how the UN Secretariat and its decision-making bodies might improve their responses to political and human rights crises" (Bellamy & Williams, 2004, p. 1). [5] One of the recommendations from the report, which has to do with improvement in coordination of personnel and recruitment based on expertise speaks to this study in the area of PI.

The interest in this research has been inspired by two instances. First, the researcher's interest. As both a Public Information Officer (PIO) and someone who witnessed what unfolded in Rwanda at the time of the genocide in 1994, the researcher was attracted by General Dallaire's definite conclusion of the need for a competent PI office in UNAMIR which could probably have made a difference in the success of the mission. So, curiosity has driven this research, to find out whether a PI office was capable of tipping the balance in peacekeeping success.

Second, this researcher has served as a military PIO in several peace operations, most of them UN-led[6]. During the period, it was not clear what was being done, by whom, with whom and for what purpose. One was not sure if what they did had any particular impact on the peace process and whether this could contribute anything to the resolution or management of the conflict. Moreover, being a former senior Ghanaian military officer and one with wide experience in peace operations, and in particular in the area of PI practice it was easy to gain access to research participants in MONUSCO. Therefore, having worked for nearly two decades in these operations

[5] This report was commissioned by the then UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan.

[6] The researcher participated as a military public information officer at contingent, sector and force headquarters levels in the following peace operations: UNIFIL (4 times), UNAMSIL (2 times), ECOMOG (2 times), UNMEE (once).

in this niche area (Gordon & Loge, 2015), academic and professional interests are key motivators for my specific interest in the research topic.

1.7 Organisation of the Chapters

The thesis has six chapters. Chapter One provides an introduction to the study. It has specified the background to the study, problem statement, research objective and research questions as well as the rationale of the study.

Chapter Two which is the literature review, provides an overview of PI and UN peacekeeping. It discusses the general relationship between them in the field, against the background of the complex nature of the conflict in the DR Congo (Appendix I). It also discusses some related studies. Chapter Three is the conceptual and theoretical framework. It explains the concepts, theories, and models used for the study. It also articulates the relevant themes that have shaped the study.

Chapter Four presents the methodology of the study. It outlines the research philosophy and explains the research design and approach, study population, sample population and size, sources of data collection, data collection instruments and techniques, data collection procedure, method of data analyses, ethical considerations, and limitations and delimitations. In Chapter Five, the empirical findings are discussed and analysed. This is presented in five sections which discuss the findings thematically along the lines of the research questions.

Chapter Six is the conclusion. Here, the key issues from the study are summarised, conclusions drawn and recommendations made for both scholarship and UN field operations. The chapter also identifies the implications of the findings, both to the enrichment of knowledge in the area and its relevance to future policy research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The UN was established in 1945 out of the ashes of the First and Second World Wars. It has served a vastly changed world in its needs of security and peace while avoiding the many lapses of its precursor, the League of Nations. [7] Drawing from the experiences of the League of Nations, the UN has become a more enduring international organisation. It has over 170 countries, both large and small, strong and weak, including all African countries except Western Sahara[8]. At the time of writing, it was in its 75th year and still counting.

While it has not completely eradicated the scourge of war, it has great power unanimity in collective global security[9]. This is even though, for nearly 50 years the world was in principle divided into a polarised and largely antagonistic cold-war rivalry between the United States and the former Soviet Union. The world still bleeds from conflict (Palmer & Perkins, 2010; Andrews, 2017). But though it has not been able to end conflicts between states, in all probability, it has over the last seventy-odd years managed international conflicts in such a manner that the world is still largely at peace. So far, there has not been a World War III.

[7] These include the confusion of responsibility for peace and security between the Executive Council and the General Assembly, the rigid and legalistic approach to peace and security as well as the restrictions of all members having a veto (Theckanath, 2008).

[8] Western Sahara is yet to gain its independence as a sovereign state. Its status is disputed by Morocco which is unlawfully occupying the territory.

[9] It has all the major powers at the time of WW II as its members.

This chapter briefly discusses the evolution of UN peace operations as an instrument of international conflict management and the evolution of public information in UN peace operations. Both aim to give a foundation to the thesis.

2.2 Overview of UN Peace Operations and Public Information

2.2.1 The Evolution of UN Peace Operations

The UN was designed to maintain rather than create world peace. It therefore stresses accommodation and alternative peaceful means rather than war and coercion in the management of international conflict and international disputes, particularly political and security issues that could threaten world peace. One of the UN's most potent instruments for managing international conflict is peace support operations. This is the use of military forces under the authority of the Security Council to overcome war for the collective security interest of all states (Palmer and Perkins, 2010). There have been over 100 peacekeeping missions carried out worldwide under the UN since 1948. [10]

In deploying the first armed UN peacekeeping mission, the first UN Emergency Force (UNEF 1) [11] in 1956 in Egypt, Dag Hammarskjold, the second UN Secretary-General, defined the underlying principles and guidelines of the international force (Bildt, 2011). These were that the troops should be recruited from member states other than the permanent members of the Security Council. Its terms of reference were to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities by the terms of reference of the General Assembly's resolution on the matter. And that deploying such a military

[10] The UN operates two main types of peacekeeping missions. These are armed military contingents and unarmed military observers and staff officers. While the former follow the normal military formations, with officers and men carrying weapons, the latter carry no arms of any sort (Erskine, 1989, p143).

[11] UNEF 1 was set up following the outbreak of war between Egypt on the one hand and Israel, France and Britain, on the other, over the use of the Suez Canal, a strategic short-cut water way connecting Europe and much of the globe to the south. The UN's first peacekeeping operation was, however, a military observer mission, the UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO), deployed in 1948 when war broke out between the new State of Israel and its Arab neighbours --- Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

force was not intended to influence the military balance in the conflict. The troops were to use force only in self-defence[12]. The peacekeepers were not to infringe on the sovereignty of the host nation, nor would they remain when the consent of the host nation was withdrawn. Additionally, the military contingents remained part of their respective national armed forces but, during their assignment to the UN force, they owed international allegiance and were placed under the operational command of the UN. These principles aimed to establish the peacekeeping force as impartial, responsible and independent as far as possible in meeting the needs of the intervention. They have since worked out well to meet the challenges of peacekeeping.

Peacekeeping is only part of a larger machinery for the maintenance of international peace and security provided under Chapter VI and Chapter VII of the Charter. Normatively, it is usually associated with Chapter VI. However, it may be captured under Chapter VII which authorises the UN to take any "action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression" (United Nations, 1993, p22). [13] Peacekeeping missions are nevertheless provisional measures (Harbottle & Harbottle, 1997). The UN employs them to prevent aggravation of a conflict situation. While they can stop and contain hostilities, they, however, cannot resolve political problems often underlying the conflict (ibid).

Even though peacekeeping is not explicitly mentioned in the Charter, Chapter VII lays the framework for the use of military forces by the UN to assist in the restoration of law and order and the preservation of peace between conflicting parties. The immediate objective of a peace operation is often to stop the fighting/hostilities where these are still ongoing. It should also help

[12] This has since changed especially where a mission has been entrusted with a Chapter VII mandate which requires it to use force not in self-defence but to enforce peace, restore law and order or contain hostilities.

[13] Charter VII is not based on consent or impartiality; it is based on the need for the UN to take a position and enforce that position (against any member state or other international actor) if this is necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security (Bakradze, 2001, p24).

to prevent all movement of hostile forces, interpose between the fighting groups where this is the case, supervise the area of separation, and stabilise the situation where this is possible. Peace operations come with detailed terms of reference, more appropriately called mandates. These mandates are specific to the mission objectives and they vary depending on the current situation.

When they first started, peace operations were military undertakings that underpinned political and diplomatic activity (United Nations, 2006a). At that time, they were inter-positional at best, wedging between warring states. Over the years, they have transformed into robust mechanisms (Wilton Park Conference WP 973, 2009; Post, 2015) deploying between warring factions intra-state and assuming more direct human security mandates, when they were authorised to use force not only in self-defence but also to protect civilians and enforce the peace. Since 2013, they have been entangled in war-fighting with the introduction of a new intervention brigade concept (Cammaert, 2013; Barrera. 2015; Leimbach, 2018).

The peace operations environment is at best a crisis. Peace operations are therefore initiated when the conflict assumes the dimension of a crisis, when there is a general break down of law and order, disruption of essential services, destruction of properties, loss of lives and a lot more. They therefore require the right approach to make them work. The local population in the host country and adjoining states factor prominently in how peacekeeping missions can conduct their affairs while considering their effect on the civilian population. It is important at this stage to focus on the study area which is the DR Congo.

The DR Congo is one of Africa's largest countries. It covers a land mass of 24 million square kilometres. Half of it is forested. At the time of the study, its population was about 80 million. It is geographically, strategically and politically the most vital region of Africa, owing this importance to its central position on the continent and vast and tremendous natural resources which

continue to arouse foreign interests and powers. It is key to what has often been termed, in the 1970s, "the military control of Africa" (Nkrumah, 1974, p235).

The first five years after independence were troubling. The eruption of political turmoil, a power struggle between the country's political and military elite, threats of secession by some provinces and foreign military intervention by mercenaries and the colonial power, Belgium, aided by foreign interests, led to a civil war that lasted up to 1965 (Andrews, 2017). Since then, the DR Congo has seen no peace, notwithstanding the long periods of the reigns of Joseph Desire Mobutu (widely known as Mobutu Sese Seko), from 1965 to 1997, and the Kabilas (Laurent-Desire Kabila and his son, Joseph Kabila) from then on up to 2018. Most of DR Congo's troubles have been from inside, between its warring tribes and feuding interest groups, and from its nearest neighbours, especially Uganda and Rwanda, from where rebels and mercenaries have roamed its vast jungles.

Over the last two decades, in particular, DR Congo has witnessed repeated and persistent cycles of violence (Cammaert & Blyth, 2013). The raging conflict, tragic as its consequences are, is domestic in origin, international in impact and complex in nature (Cilliers & Hilding-Norberg, 2000). It has affected the country in several ways, especially to the east. There have also been several attempts to carve up the country. All these conflict situations have posed enormous challenges to stability in the Great Lakes region and generally world peace, necessitating international response (Daley, 2006)

The United Nations (UN) entered the territory of the DRC in 1999 with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), aiming to assist in the implementation of the Lusaka Peace Agreement, signed in the same year by Angola, the DRC, Namibia, Uganda, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe to end the hostilities in the Congo region. In May 2010,

Resolution 1925 was adopted by the UNSC, transforming MONUC into MONUSCO. This change was necessary, as after the mission's close involvement in the presidential elections in 2008 and its efforts towards disarmament had distanced it from the militia groups, making peace negotiations harder for the mission (Doss, 2021, p. 4). The prioritisation of the protection of civilians in the mandate had never been done before MONUC (Doss, 2021, p. 3), and the UNSC chose to maintain and expand this focus when transitioning to MONUSCO. Following the decision of the UNSC, MONUSCO had a priority order for its mandate, starting with the protection of civilians and ending with stabilisation and peace consolidation.

2.2.2 Other UN peace operations in the DR Congo

In 2013, the Security Council created the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), a specialised multinational military force, to carry out targeted offensive operations in a robust, highly mobile and versatile manner. This followed the capture of the eastern city of Goma in November 2012 by rebel fighters of the Tutsi-led March 23 Movement (M23)[ii] despite the presence in the city of 1500 UN peacekeeping troops and 7000 troops of the national armed forces, Forces armees de la republic democratique du congo (FARDC) (Cammaert & Blyth, 2013). The FIB's objective is to "neutralise" and disarm the rebels and to protect civilians. It is composed of fighting troops from the regional Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries - Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania - with the sole aim of engaging in offensive operations but under the UN flag. With DR Congo facing recurrent waves of conflict in the eastern parts threatening the country's overall stability and development and the wider Great Lakes region, the intervention brigade was expected to help reduce the threat posed by armed groups to state authority and civilian security in the east of the country and to make space for stabilisation activities by MONUSCO.

The complex nature of the armed conflict in the DR Congo is exacerbated by the numerous armed groups roaming the jungles and mostly to the east of the country. The major armed groups are the following **(**IPSTC-K, 2014)**:**

a. March 23 Movement. M23 takes its name from the 23 March 2009 peace treaty signed between the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) and the DR Congo government. Failed attempts to reintegrate the CNDP forces in the FARDC (the Congolese army) and poor living conditions and pay provoked hundreds of mainly mutinous ethnic Tutsi soldiers in the army in 2012 to break away to form the M23 Movement (Barrera, 2015; Andrews, 2017).

b. Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). The group was formed by Rwandan Hutu elements linked to the 1994 genocide. Routed following the genocide, they regrouped in the DR Congo. The elder Kabila's government allied with the FDLR to counter the influence of Rwanda in 1998 with some members of the group joining the DR Congo army.

c. Allied Democratic Forces/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF/NALU). This is a Ugandan Muslim rebel group formed in the early 1990s. It operates inside and outside Uganda. Under pressure from the Ugandan Army, the group crossed into the DR Congo and has remained in the North Kivu area.

d. Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). This group was formed in northern Uganda in 1987 by Joseph Kony with the objective of establishing a Christian-inspired theocracy in Uganda. The LRA operates mostly in the DR Congo's Garamba National Park. But smaller pockets of the group operate in the Uélés districts of

North-Eastern Congo, the east of the Central African Republic (CAR) and parts of southern Sudan.

e. Raia Mutomboki. The group is believed to be the largest in South Kivu. It was formed in 2005 in the province's Shabunda territory by Congolese Army Defector Pastor Jean Musumbu. It is made up of various groups headed by local leaders and Congolese national army deserters. It operates across large parts of North and South Kivu.

f. Mai-Mai Sheka (Nduma Defence of Congo-NDC). This group was formed in 2009 by a businessman, Ntabo Ntaberi Sheka, in North Kivu's Walikale Territory. It has 150-180 men, mainly army deserters and youths. It is allied with M23 and operates in parts of North Kivu's Masisi Territory.

g. Mai-Mai Kifuafua. The group consists of fighters drawn mainly from the Batembo, Bahunde and Bayanga communities. It claims to be protecting "*indigenous*" interests from "*foreign Rwandophone groups*". It is active in the southern Masisi Territory of North Kivu. During the 1998-2003 civil war, it fought the Rwandan-backed Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD) and its successor the pro-Tutsi Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP). The RCD-Goma ruled North Kivu as a proxy of the Rwandan government during the civil war period.

Members of these armed groups have linkages with actors both in and outside DR Congo, including government forces. Andrews (2017) argues that these warlords and rebel commanders have often been allowed to join the national army while still keeping their illegal money-making networks. They are often in civilian social networks and receive crucial inputs from elites and

communities necessary for their survival. Many officers in the national army, the FARDC, maintain close ties with these armed groups for various reasons.

In addition to all these, there is a great network of bilateral military and political forces which seem to exercise much influence in the country. To Andrews, "...the underlying truth is that the DR Congo is close to being a failed state, prone to constant conflict, especially in the five eastern provinces of Orientale, North Kivu, South Kivu, Maniema and Katanga…. Insurgents from neighbouring countries, such as Uganda's Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Rwanda's Democratiques de Liberation du Rwanda (FDLR) and Burundi's Forces Nationales de Liberation (FNL), use the DR Congo territory as a haven and prey on the local population. At the same time, Rwanda aids Congolese Tutsi groups rebelling against Kinshasa and confronting the FARDC. Most depressing of all, perhaps, is the simple fact that so many warlords…profit so handsomely from illegal logging, "conflict diamonds and other aspects of the war economy" (pp109-110).

2.2.3 The Evolution of Public Information in UN Peace Operations

Public Information has been part of the UN system since the beginning[14]. At the time of the UN's creation, there was experience of several public communication models prevailing. These were public information, war information, public relations, advertising, and mass communications, among others. Public relations in particular drew inspiration from PI (Creel, 1922). [15] Not designed to go to war, the UN's choice of public information to describe the model of its public communication is therefore demonstrative of its core objective – to bring peace to the world as a neutral party – and the fact that it may be less self-glorifying. To give perspective to PI in practice, some history will suffice.

[14] The Department of Public Information at the UN Secretariat was established in 1946.
[15] Edward L. Bernays, after the dissolution of the CPI, started the first public relations firm in America, drawing from the experience of the CPI's work (Creel, 1922).

The practice of PI as a specialised function probably originated during WWI. In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson of the United States created the Committee on Public Information (CPI) (Creel, 1920). Chaired by George Creel, a professional and reputable journalist, its mission was ostensibly to publicise America's objectives during WWI. It was, however, created against the backdrop of strong public opinion against America getting involved in the war; particularly in recognition of the singular importance of public opinion in how America could achieve its objectives in the war[16]. This seemed to be an attempt to distinguish the practice from propaganda which was rife during the period leading up to and during the war. The United States entered the war more as an umpire.

Creel (1920) and Creel (1922) both detail exhaustively the work of the CPI. This should be instrumental in our understanding of the strategic and operational nature and the myriad roles and functions of public information. The CPI maintained dozens of functional divisions which included Daily News, Pictorial Publicity, Official Bulletin, Syndicated Features, Pubic Speaking and Distribution (Brown, 2013) with its operations conducted both in the mainland United States and abroad. Its strategy was to give the American people and the world at large all the facts there were, and, as George Creel put it, its effort was educational and informative throughout. However, it did not only aim to inform the target populations about the activities of America in the war but most importantly changing both the opinion and behaviour of the target populations and meeting the strategic objectives of the United States, that is, to restore order and peace to the world (Creel, 1920, xvi). The CPI was placed at the highest strategic level of the government machinery. It drew its authority from the President, and had full control over its huge budget and operations. Its

[16] WWI started in 1914 but America joined in 1917.

strategic decision-making body was composed of the Secretary of State, as well as the Secretaries of the Army and the Navy, the two major armed services at the time.

During WWII, the United States entered the war, this time as a belligerent after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941. This time, President Franklin D. Roosevelt in June 1942 created a new organisation called the Office of War Information (OWI) for public information (Roston, 1983; Roholl, 2012). OWI was chaired by Elmer Davis, a highly respected journalist, radio commentator, anchor, and politician. Its objective, however, was to superintend government public communication during the war. One of its main tasks was to reduce conflict between existing government agencies engaged in propagating government information and consolidate the distribution of war-related publications. OWI therefore did not start from scratch, unlike the CPI. Many of its departments and activities were simply transferred virtually intact from various intelligence- and information-related agencies and consolidated into it (Roston, 1983). It was very much structured like its predecessor the CPI, nonetheless, and was also placed at a very high strategic level.

There are differences in the functions, duties, programmes and dispositions of both the CPI and the OWI. While the objectives of the OWI were not markedly different from those of the CPI in terms of growing global stability and peaceful coexistence, their motives were different. This is reflected in the nomenclature of the two organisations and their missions. The thrust of the CPI's function was public information; that of the OWI was war information. The latter suggests that OWI's thrust was using information as a weapon, with the United States "conducting propaganda and psychological warfare abroad" (Palmer & Perkins, 2010, p119). During WWI, the US military was used for and/or supported the public information campaigns of George Creel's CPI. This time

round the military was now actively involved in wartime public communication and had specialised units or sections active in this area.

Both Allied and Axis powers and many other nations around the world also communicated to the public during the war periods. By the time of WW II, many countries around the world were also colonial territories; with the information campaigns and programmes of the metropolitan countries often transferred to them. For example, in 1935 the government in Ghana, then a British colony known as Gold Coast, set up a public service radio broadcasting station (Station ZOY) in Accra (Ansu-Kyeremeh & Karikari, 1998). When the war broke out in 1939, the station provided the public with "accurate war information as well as (information on) the performance of Gold Coast soldiers at the frontlines of the war" (Asante, 1996, p8).

Communicating to the public did not start and end with the world wars. There have also been several conflicts of lesser proportion, such as the border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea from 1998-2000, the Liberian civil war from 1989-1997, the civil war in Sierra Leone from 1992-2002, and the armed insurrection in Mali in 2012, during which it was essential to engage in information campaigns. In many of these wars and violent conflicts, the contending and belligerent forces have used information actively as part of their war arsenal to shore up their effort to outplay their opponents. All these information attempts, Kok (1992) notes, rather added "fuel to the conflict" with the public not knowing what to believe.

Altogether, from the foregoing, it seems evident that in the war/conflict situations mentioned, both civilian and military information experts and practitioners worked together, in an integrated manner rather than separately, to more effectively reach out to the wider public with the relevant information. The military's understanding of the value of sensitive information being released to the public was certainly considered in communicating public information. As motive

dictates the form/style of communication (Palmer & Perkins, 2010, p110), whether propaganda or PI, in a conflict where the intervener is a neutral third party, the intent ought to be to create peace (Hoffman, 2013). Comparing the formats or models of America's public communication during the two world wars, it is instructive to note that, public information was preferred when the United States was entering WWI more as a neutral and impartial intervener while war information was used when it was entering WWII as a protagonist. From the American experience, it may seem that PI has two mainstream functions --- to propagate or project the organisation's information, while also coordinating the public communication of its substantive components.

The Department of Public Information at the UN Secretariat was set up in 1946 as one of the earliest departments. It was re-designated the Department of Global Communications (DGC) in 2018. It is responsible for PI and communications programmes of the UN. Its primary role is to manage and coordinate communications content in and from the UN HQ and within the Secretariat as well as the UN's field missions, including peace operations (United Nations, 1997a).

At the onset and up to the 1990s, the department by and large, however, had very little to do with UN field peacekeeping missions (United Nations, 2006a; Hoffman, 2013). This could be attributed to several factors. First, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), now the Department of Peace Operations (DPO)[17], mandated to generate and deploy peacekeeping missions, had the mandate to manage public information and media relations within field peacekeeping missions and communication between these missions and the public, particularly in the mission areas. This effectively meant that both the DPO and the DGC were at the same time overseeing public information activities in the same peacekeeping missions. Information in peace

[17] Also redesignated in 2018. DPO started as the Department of Special Political Affairs (DSPA) and was redesignated DPKO in 1992.

operations was said to "straddle the line" between the two departments. [18] With this, there seemed to be some institutional conflict between the two, with no clarity as to which department specifically dealt with what, when and how (Lehmann, 1999). In the initial stages, DPO was especially reluctant to open up to DGC as the latter must have been suspected of being "too close to the media", meaning it could likely leak sensitive information to the media (Oksamytna, 2017)[19]. Though both institutions have found some common ground to collaborate in the field, there remains significant institutional resistance to using information during peace operations in ways that may affect conflict (Lindberg, 2008).

Second, at its inception, peacekeeping tightly operated within the core principles of consent, impartiality and neutrality (Gordenker, 1968). Considering concerns over the use of propaganda or psychological operations (PsyOps) by military forces during the two world wars, it was thought that information campaigns by the peacekeeping missions, which were largely military in outlook and performance, could amount to public relations and/or propaganda. UN member states were therefore apprehensive of the UN engaging in what might be considered propaganda (NATO, 2001; Osakmytna, 2017) which could then erode the credibility and impartiality of the peacekeeping force and its legitimacy as a neutral third party (Avruch, Narel, & Siegel, 2000).

Third, press and information work initially was considered incidental to peace operations. [20] For example, spokespersons were usually attached to each peacekeeping mission from UN HQ. Their primary task, however, was to service journalists reporting from the mission areas and not

[18] Attributed to Fred Eckhard, former spokesperson to Secretary-General Kofi Annan.
[19] A. Walter Dorn seems to suggest the need for secrecy and confidentiality with some information generated in peacekeeping as probably one of the reasons for this distance by DPO (Dorn, 1999).
[20] Though public information practice has been with the UN from its inception, and the first peacekeeping mission was established in 1948, it was only in 1956 that the first field photographers deployed to UNEF 1 (United Nations, 2006a).

to conduct any systematic and strategic communication activities (Lehmann, 1999). [21] Fourth and lastly, the DGC had a limited budget (Lehmann, 1999); and unlike the DPO, it did not also have rapid deployment capabilities (United Nations, 2006a). However, as it had a responsibility to maintain credible information about these field missions in particular at the UN HQ and for dissemination as appropriate, the DGC's Peace and Security Section collaborated with responsible officers in the field missions for the relevant information[22], mainly to update the relevant information portals and for other purposes at the UN HQ (Atintande, 2019). With a limited budget, and unable to develop rapid deployment capability, DGC's performance in the field was negatively affected.

These factors underpinned the level of importance placed on public information in UN peace operations. Subsequently, the UN's first attempt to introduce public information into its field peace operations was in 1960 with the UN Operation in Congo (ONUC) where there was limited effort to communicate with the public. It was, however, in 1988 that the first comprehensive PI strategy was worked out for a UN peacekeeping mission – the UN Transitional Assistance Group in Namibia (UNTAG) (Oksamytna, 2017). The success of UNTAG's public information campaign demonstrated the need for a serious and systematic approach to PI planning and employment in peace operations. In 1992, the UN was to fully integrate PI specialists in the pre-operational assessment of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), upon which it was now convinced to include a full-scale PI component in peacekeeping (Lindley, 2004; United Nations, 2006a, p6; Cain, 2010).

[21] There were often differences between the two departments with regard to the appointment of spokespersons and other information officers, and these persons had to maintain good relations with both departments (Lehmann, 1999).
[22] As at 2000, this section was now officially responsible for communicating the work of UN peace operations. Source: A/55/305S/2 000/809 "Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations". The report recommended the establishment of a Peace and Security Information Service in the DGC reporting directly to the Under-Secretary-General for Communication and Public Information which will ensure operational planning and support of public information in peace operations. P57.

Over time there have been a series of reviews of peace operations which have affected many facets of peacekeeping activity, including leading to PI being intensified and systematically adopted and implemented (Lehmann, 1999). For example, in 2001, the UN Secretariat produced a document for the guidance of heads of mission of UN peace operations. Titled *Guidance to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on public information and media relations in United Nations peace operations,* the document admits that, by building confidence in the peacekeeping mission's work, PI could enhance the mission's credibility, increase its prospects for success and improve the security of its personnel (United Nations, 2001). It also considers that an effective PI strategy and healthy relations with the media are politically and operationally necessary. The PI office should therefore be a strategic component of the mission and be thoroughly integrated, with the Chief of Public Information and Spokesperson (where this is not the same person) kept fully informed of all developments in the mission, attending senior officials' meetings and given full access to sensitive information. In the same year, the UN General Assembly initiated steps to strengthen the PI capacity of the DGC for the establishment and day-to-day functioning of the information components of UN peacekeeping and other field operations (United Nations, 2002).

Part of the efforts at reform also included a series of joint meetings for the first time of senior information officers, spokespersons and other PI practitioners of both the DPO and DGC and field missions in 1997, 2000 and 2006 as well as workshops for PI practitioners in 2004 and 2005. These engagements culminated in the drafting and adoption of two critical papers on UN public information by the DPO and DGC (Oksamytna, 2017). These were: *Provisional Guidelines for Public Information Components in United Nations Peacekeeping and Other Field Missions* issued in 1997 and *Draft Standard Operating Procedures and Deployment Capabilities for Public*

Information Offices in the Field issued in 2002 (United Nations, 2006a). In 2003, the DPO published a very elaborate handbook on multidimensional peacekeeping which contained a section that further emphasised the roles and functions of PI in peace operations (United Nations, 2003a, p45). There is also the *eGuide to the United Nations Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support* published by the Integrated Training Service in 2015 which guides public communication by UN agencies and offices. All these documents set the standards for public information practice in UN peace operations.

The 2006 policy document, however, stands out as the most important as it details practical steps in PI practice in the field. It has been the document used by the UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to audit PI practice in peace operations. [23]

These reforms in PI sought to reposition DGC against the backdrop of it having suffered from a fragmentation of its efforts as a result of too many mandates and missions (UN Secretary-General Report, 2002, p2). The department was reviewed in 2003 in greater detail as part of measures to strengthen the UN and restructured to enable it to develop coherent communications strategies and take advantage of new media and communications technologies. Its goals and purposes were subsequently clarified to enhance its overall effectiveness and efficiency, and given a clear mission statement --- *"to help fulfil the substantive purposes of the United Nations by strategically communicating the activities and concerns of the Organization to achieve the greatest public impact*" (United Nations, 2003a, p5). Its restructuring in the years ahead led it to introduce a Strategic Communications Division into its structure, among other new creations in the department[24]. This division was tasked to ensure that communication was placed at the heart of

[23] Examples of the OIOS reports include the following: OIOS Audit Report - UNIFIL, July 2011; OIOS Audit Report – UNMIS, October 2011; OIOS Audit Report - UNMIL, December 2015; OIOS Audit Report – UNAMID, June 2016 and OIOS Audit Report - UNMISS, November 2017.
[24] Two other new divisions were created – News and Media Division and Outreach Division.

the strategic management of the UN and it was therefore to devise and disseminate the UN's messages centred around priority themes. It was also to be the secretariat of a new United Nations Communications Group[25], a new mechanism for inter-agency coordination in the field of public information and communications.

In 2016, the two departments as well as the Department of Field Support (DFS), all at the UN Secretariat, jointly approved and issued a new policy document titled *Strategic Communication and Public Information* (United Nations, 2016c). This was a review of, and the first amendment to, the 2006 policy. While confirming the strategic nature of PI, it clarified the role, purpose and objectives of strategic communications and public information within peace operations. It sets common standards for how peace operations approach and manage strategic communications and public information. It also aims to facilitate a cohesive and complementary approach to communications across UN peace operations. The policy, expected to be reviewed in early 2020, however, seems to muddy the waters as it still affirms a shared responsibility for public information in peacekeeping missions between the three departments, stating in clear terms that the three were "jointly responsible for providing peacekeeping operations with policy and guidance on strategic communications and public information" (United Nations, 2016c, p21)

The document also seems to separate strategic communication from public information and seemingly gives two separate definitions for public information (United Nations, 2016c, pp1-22):

a. *Public information*. The factual information or content which the Mission provides to, or ensures access to, the media and public about the Mission, the implementation of its mandate and developments in the Mission area related to its mandate. It is information

[25] The UNCG replaced the Joint United Nations Information Committee.

released, disseminated or made available for use by the public to increase knowledge and foster awareness of the Mission and the UN, or as mandated by UN policy.

b. *Strategic communication*. Purposeful or directed communication with the objective of building support for the mission, its mandate and activities, as well as for the peace process and related host country activities such as elections. Strategic communication requires the consideration of objectives, audience, messages and content, and the platforms for dissemination. It also involves evaluation and adjustments of communication plans to ensure objectives are met. Strategic communication can also help guide the Mission's response to crises.

This new position seems to uncloak PI of its strategic nature and importance. For example, the definition of PI could mean that the function is just a means of providing information to the public so the public can use it, and it does not matter whether they need it. It could also mean that audiences and PI messaging may no longer be important. It should be noted that no mission can determine whether anyone can increase their knowledge of the mission. This situation is likely to affect the kind of support and attention necessary to be paid to PI's effective practice in the field. So, while there have been strenuous efforts to reposition DGC as a strategic component at the UN HQ (United Nations, 2003c), one has observed that this orientation, re-orientation and transformation of the structure and operations of the department was yet to permeate down to field missions, as reports of the UN OIOS's audit of selected peace operations seem to paint.

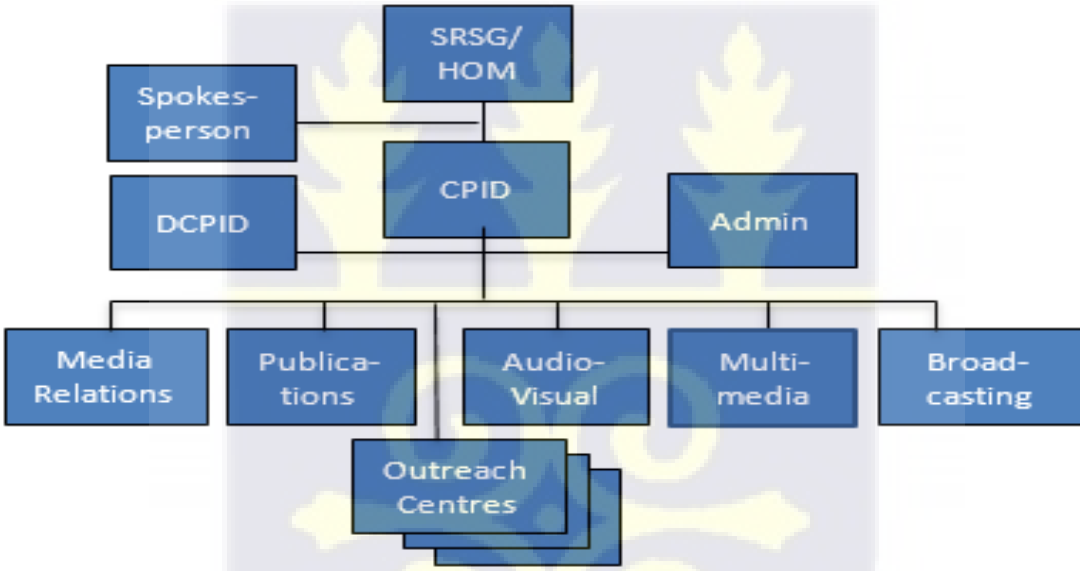
2.2.4 Normative Organisation and Structure of Public Information in UN Peace Operations[26]

Although the 2006 policy notes that the role of PI in peace operations is evolving, it recognises PI

[26] The account is largely drawn from the publication *Provisional Guidelines for Public Information components in United Nations Peacekeeping and Other Field Missions* published in 1997.

as an integral part of mission strategy (United Nations, 2006a, p6). It also provides that all peace operations must deploy a core PI capacity. While the military component could have its own PI section and appoint its spokesperson, the Mission PI component should closely cooperate with the military component and assign a military public information officer (MPIO) to the staff of the civilian spokesperson (United Nations, 2006a, p21). Notwithstanding that the Mission PI component be integrated to be effective, this seems not to be the case. There are therefore separate structures for both the civilian and military PI components.

Figure 2.1: Line Organisational Structure of the Public Information Component in a Peace Operation



Source: Author's Field Research, 2019. Adapted from various sources.

Figure 2.1 presents a typical structure of a Mission PI Component, what may otherwise be termed the Civilian PI Office. It consists of a Chief of Public Information (CPIO), the head of the component (United Nations, 1997a), a Deputy CPIO and several specialised functional sections responsible for areas such as media relations, outreach, audiovisual, specialised information,

publications and multimedia, among others (United Nations, 2006a). The CPIO could additionally be the spokesperson for the mission. In some cases, the position of the CPIO and spokesperson are separate (United Nations, 1997b). Depending on the size and spread of the mission, the PI component could also have regional or sector outreach centres with more staff who will provide vital information and other materials for the use of the public. Professionally qualified, competent and experienced staff are expected to be recruited into public information.

The staff will normally include a mix of international and locally recruited support personnel (United Nations, 1997a). In more complex missions, the core civilian information staff would be supplemented by the following, expected to contribute to the professional work of the PI Office (ibid):

a. Chief of Information/Director of Information
b. Press Officer(s)
c. Public Affairs Officer(s)
d. Writer(s)/Editor(s)
e. Radio/TV Producer(s) and Camera crew
f. Graphic Designer(s)
g. Still Photographer(s)
h. Translator(s)/interpreter(s)
i. Secretary

The information section might also include one or more full-time MPIOs in detail. Apart from the chief of the division and a deputy chief who may be seconded from UN HQ, and a military representative provided by the military component, the staff listed above may be recruited through the UN HQ or by the Mission authorities.

The civilian spokesperson and/or CPIO must feature in the organisational chart of the mission and be considered active players in the mission information loop as they must work up to the Head of Mission (HOM). They should also participate in regular meetings of senior staff, including those of the HOM and Head of the Military Component (HOMC). This participation is

essential because PI is considered to take place in a political context and key PI staff must not be ignorant of strategy and developments in the mission (United Nations, 1997a).

The structure of PI components of field missions differs from mission to mission (Atintande, 2019). Personnel, equipment and supply requirements of the PI components vary according to several factors. These include mission characteristics (size, mandate and leadership); the information needs of the mission and its components; the relationship between various components; the relationship between DPO and DGC; as well as the PI concept of operations (Loewenberg, 2006; United Nations, 2006a). Others are the mission's budget and availability of resources; the orientation of Troops/Police Contributing Countries (TCC/PCC) as well as the national interest (especially of the contending parties and the host nation). Consideration could also be given to current and future operations of the peacekeeping mission and staffing in the PI component (NATO, 2001) as well as the information environment in the conflict area (Lehmann, 2009). All these factors help in the designing of an efficient organisation to manage and/or carry out the mission's public information. In late 2019, it was observed that UN peace operations in Africa had re-designated their PI components "Strategic Communication and Public Information Division (SC-PID)" in line with the 2016 policy. Nonetheless, this did not significantly change other characteristics**.**

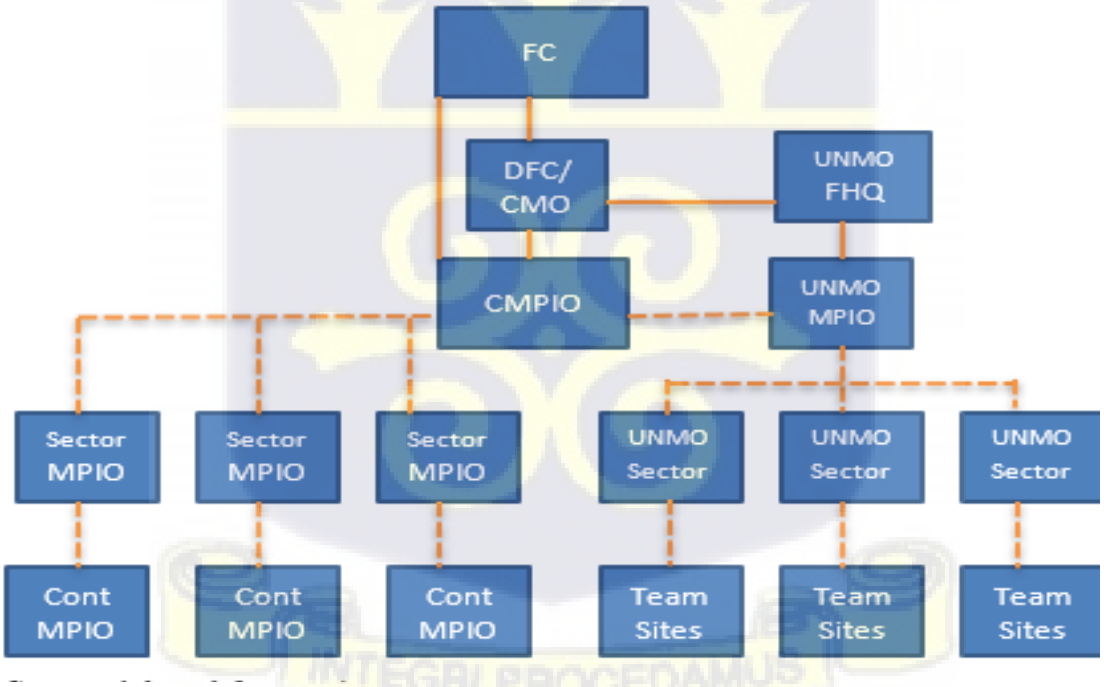
2.2.5 Military Public Information

As the 2006 policy provides, the military component in peacekeeping missions could maintain a separate PI outfit. This is the case in several peacekeeping missions (Atintande, 2019). Information dissemination by military forces in operational theatres is not new. Information activities carried out in military operations aim at behavioural change in favour of the dominant military forces (Dorn, 1999; NATO, 2001). Often directed at what may otherwise be termed the enemy or the

adversary, these are undertaken by various specialists among them PIOs, public affairs officers (PAOs) and/or military information officers (MIOs), where these are present. PI therefore forms part of the overall structure of information management resources and at each level of command directly supports the commander. It may, however, be further delegated or subordinated to other staff functions. Nevertheless, it is a unique area that has its organisational structure.

The military component in a peace operation is normally structured into a Force HQ (FHQ), which may be co-located with the Mission HQ (MHQ); Sector HQ (SHQ) if the mission area is sectorised; and forward units (contingents), with each unit deployed to control a specific operational area. The HOMC/Force Commander (FC) is a key member of the senior mission leadership and he/she is solely responsible for the military force. Where there is a military observer

Figure 2.2: Structure of Military Public Information in a peacekeeping mission



Source: Author's Field Research, April-May 2019. Adapted from various sources

component as part of the military force, this will also be represented at all levels, with the Chief Military Observer (CMO) heading the Military Observer (Milob) Group. By current doctrine, the

Deputy FC (DFC) is additionally the CMO where the military component is not solely a military observer group. IN MONUSCO, however, it was observed that while the DFC had additional responsibility for the Milob Group, there was a CMO as Chief of Staff of the Milob Group coordinating the work of the observers on behalf of the DFC.

Figure 2.2 is the structure of a typical MPI Component. There is usually a Military Press and Information Office or Military Public Information Office (nomenclature depends on the mission and its information requirements) at the FHQ. The outfit is part of the military organisational structure and is headed by a Chief Military Press and Information Officer or Chief Military Public Information Officer (CMPIO) who may additionally be the military spokesperson. The outfit is often staffed by only a handful of staff officers. The UN's guidelines for public information components in peacekeeping operations contained in the 2006 and 2016 policies do not cater to the specific PI needs of the military component in general and the contingents or Milob teams in particular. It may seem that before 2006, the UN's arrangements covering PI by the military component, in particular, were inadequate, a situation that the 2006 policy and guidance document attempted to clarify.

2.3 Public Information in Practice

This section presents empirical evidence of Public Information (PI) in practice in peace operations in Africa and elsewhere. Although it may seem to be the earliest comprehensive contemporary public communication by organisations, there seems to be a dearth of literature on it, but there is a preponderance towards communication and public relations. For those who have directly discussed it, there seems to be some distinction between their reflections. Perhaps, this could be based on the orientation and/or occupation of the writers.

In the section, PI's practice in UN peace operations and its impact are highlighted while outlining several themes from the literature. These themes are: the motivations for the deployment of PI interventions, the organisation and structure of the PI components, the relationship between civilian and military understanding of PI, as well as PI activities and programmes and how these respond to situational and audience expectations. Other themes are, the confusion between PI and information operations (IO), in particular controversies between the various players in the information space and the fact that many of these players often operated in silos, and finally, PI challenges.

Two groups of scholarly works have been discussed here – by soldiers (or persons related to the military) and civilians. The purpose of this grouping is to put the selected studies in the right perspectives and also consider the military's understanding of PI, given that most UN peace operations are military-heavy.

2.3.1 Public information in peace operations from the military perspective

Two case studies are reviewed in this sub-section. Avruch, Narel and Siegel (2000)[27] case studies of the peace operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Haiti, and Mentes and Browne (2012)[28] case studies of UN peacekeeping missions in Kosovo, Liberia, Ethiopia and Eritrea. Both studies discuss what the authors variously describe as information campaigns or information operations in selected international peacekeeping missions while referencing public information.

In the first instance, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the organisations were the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) (later Multinational Stabilisation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina

[27] All three authors have been associated with the American military and defence establishment and their work was under the auspices of the US Department of Defence.
[28] Osman Mentes at the time of the study was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Turkish National Police and Cheree Browne a Major in the US Army.

(SFOR) and the UN Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (UNMIBH)[29] from 1995-1997. In Haiti were the United States Joint Military Task Force and the UN Mission in Haiti (UNMIH)[30] from 1994-1998. In both countries, the organisations identified information goals and defined and executed a set of tasks leading to their accomplishment (Avruch et al, 2000, p. the military-145). While led entities preferred to engage in psychological operations and some public relations, the civilian-led institutions gravitated towards public information, public relations and public education. Key information functions were nevertheless psychological operations, public relations/public affairs and public information.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the peacekeepers' two most significant tasks were to foster state democratisation and media professionalism. Great effort was therefore directed at engaging and redeveloping the local media. This was under the impression that the local media were recognised to have played a crucial role in exacerbating the war and impeding reconciliation, with the nationalist groups still retaining control over the local media[31]. With the SFOR and NATO elements dominating the information environment, the effort was pegged on psychological operations, in the main. Aside from the UN mission, all the other stakeholder organisations seemed to have both psychological operations (PsyOps) and other military-related information units even though they also had PI units. But while PsyOps, as an information function, was designed to influence (if necessary, by informing) the local population (with or without a "media filter") toward attitudinal and behavioural changes that support the mission's mandate and goals, PI, on

[29] Others were the Office of the High Representative (OHR), UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).
[30] The methodology consisted of formal interviews (particularly of information campaign actors of the international organisations, governmental and non-governmental organisations, journalists of both local and international media, the diplomatic community as well as members of the general public in some cases) and review of grey literature on information operations.
[31] The Dayton Agreement, the basis of the international intervention, did not contain any provisions for dealing with the media.

the other hand, was designed to inform (and influence) international journalists and media, as well as local or indigenous media (not the population).

Although the PsyOps and PI Units of the various entities were enjoined to work together, PsyOps took priority. Each entity disseminated its information products tailored to the individual operational activities that were conducted during the period as shown in Table 3.1 at Appendix II. This affected the nature and manner of the information campaigns which, even though driven by similar agenda, were said to be ill-defined and haphazard, with information activities undertaken as needs arose or only as opportunities developed. All these information activities were undertaken by SFOR's Combined Joint Information Campaign Task Force (CJICTF) which operated under SFOR military operations. CJICTF was responsible for coordinating the various elements of the SFOR information campaigns and the information activities of all the entities. PI by the other stakeholder organisations entailed holding joint weekly press conferences, providing logistical and information assistance to local reporters covering the peacekeepers' activities, issuing regular press releases, media monitoring and the publication of the Task Force's internal news magazines (often referred to as command information). With UNMIBH operating side by side with the NATO-led military and other international elements, this was a matter of concern to the mission.

To UNMIBH, the international community's information role was expected to be more of providing the public with alternative information by putting out objective information so that the people have an alternative source of information and can make informed choices/judgments[32]. The concept of "information campaign" was therefore thought not only too militaristic but not "very effective" as messaging was often expected to be "culturally-sensitive" and the fact that it was

[32] The example is given of the introduction of new vehicle license plates both Croats and Serbs were earlier uninterested in talking about. UNMIBH did not "market" the change but simply put out information that the common plates were available, indicating where and how they could be purchased. The effort is said to have led to an upsurge in the patronage of the plates in all areas alike

going to be "very difficult to use information management to pressure the nationalist parties into a preferred course of action" (Avruch et al, 2000, pp.56-57)[33].

The study concludes that even though there was some degree of coordination in the information activities of the five major organisations, it did not prevent duplication of effort and redundancy on the ground and the fact that PI was only included as part of the larger political-military plan. Additionally, relations with the local media were more adversarial and even though some effort was made to train and reorient the media, this was not aimed at empowering them to contribute to the peace process (p.100). Also, there were policy differences between the various stakeholders who acted more individually and this affected their information activities; the campaigns were less effective because the messages were not culturally sensitive and were at variance with policy. Finally, the policies and practices of the dominant military force pervaded the entire international community.

In the Haiti case study, the international community's intervention was two-pronged: a United States-led joint military task force, for about six months, and a UN peace operation thereafter. Following the military coup-d'état of 1991, the purpose of the intervention was to restore a civilian government, establish and maintain a stable and secure political environment, maintain civil order and develop support for civil authority. The key information tasks were therefore initially to help gain popular support and reduce Haitian interference with the operations of the joint task force and later increase public support for the multidimensional UN Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). Because of media restrictions and restlessness, gross abuse of power and dire economic and social circumstances under the military regime, the key information functions were therefore PI, public relations (PR) and PsyOps. The latter was prominent during the military phase

[33] Attributed to the UNMIBH Public Information Officer (PIO) and spokesperson (Avruch et al, 2000, p57).

with the US-led intervention force creating a Military Information Support Team (MIST) which was expected to engender an information environment that will support the objectives of the intervention. MIST was composed essentially of military psychological operations specialists. As Avruch et al note, executing its functions was designed to support the various operational contingencies (Table 3.2. Appendix II). With PsyOps objectives being to discourage illegal emigration from Haiti, legitimise the intervention, prepare Haitians for return to civil rule, support the transition process from US-led forces to the UN phase, and increase public support for UNMIH, among others, MIST mainly adopted and employed publicity measures such as radio broadcasts[34] and the dropping of leaflets to the population.

On taking over in 1995, UNMIH did not only maintain but expanded MIST into a Military Information Support Task Force (MISTF) under the mission's operational control. The new outfit had essentially similar tasks even as the aim was to increase public support for the civilian-led UNMIH and set conditions for successful elections, continue with efforts to increase popular support for democracy etc. The UN mission's Press and Information (not Public Information) Office, under the direction of the UN mission's spokesperson, included separate subordinate military and civil police public information officers (MPIO/PPIOs). While these subordinate PIOs were initially co-located with the civilian PI office, the Military PIO was to subsequently move to the UNMIH operations branch and effectively reported directly to the Force Commander[35].

In the second instance, Mentes and Browne (2012) highlight information operations (IO) in three UN peacekeeping missions – the UN Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK), the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The

[34] The mission set up Radio/TV Democracy for this purpose.
[35] On ending its operations in 1996, UNMIH was succeeded in turn by two small-scale missions mainly to maintain UN presence in the country. These were the UN Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH) and the UN Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH), both civilian-led.

study is based on secondary sources. It examined the role of what the authors termed "information operation campaigns" in the three missions, in particular the messaging tools, the strengths and weaknesses of the campaigns, and the outcomes of PI and other information activities. In particular, it examined how the UN PI office utilised media tools to influence public opinion in the host nations in support of the UN's peace goals. It also examined the UN's IO capabilities, the impact of these systems on peace operations, the success or failure of the IOs, whether the UN had the appropriate doctrines, policies, and strategies for IO and how the UN could better utilise these information systems.

The authors identified the dire, desperate and unpredictable conditions in the three mission areas, thus baring the specific needs of the population which informed the thrust of the information campaigns in the respective peacekeeping missions. Against the backdrop of the population's information needs, and the debilitating environmental and developmental conditions in the three mission areas, the respective missions' PI components designed the appropriate methods for communication and the specific tools to employ (Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6, Appendix II). Mentes and Browne therefore explored the links between the needs and motivations of the local population and information campaigns and argued that IOs that address the hierarchy of needs of the local population have been powerful force multipliers, contributing directly to the success of the peace operation. A good understanding of the hierarchy of needs and the pulse of the local populace therefore requires a better understanding of the nature of the technical information and communications infrastructure, the studying of the messages being put out by the local and international media and assessing the combination of spoilers and disinformation. They conclude that, though UN peace operations could not fulfill their mandates without the understanding,

cooperation and support of all players (local, national and international), such support could quickly turn into apathy and/or opposition without effective communication.

PI efforts in the three missions were heavily challenged by the establishment, the environment and the population and this negatively affected the success of the respective information campaigns. For example, UNMIK's plans for its radio station were opposed by two of its international partners --- the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The objectors argued that this would counter the development of local media in a commercial marketplace as well as counter OSCE's plans for a public service broadcaster (Manuel, 2004). Even Fondation Hirondele, which teamed up with UNMIK to jointly set up the Blue-Sky Radio, was also said to have insisted on an independent editorial policy for the station. In the case of Ethiopia and Eritrea, the authors note that UNMEE's PI campaigns suffered several setbacks. Both governments imposed severe limitations on the activities of the mission, sometimes denying it free action in many areas, such as closing down its outreach centres, disallowing it independent broadcasting opportunities and pre-screening the mission's PI materials for so-called unwholesome information before release. All these negatively affected the ability of the UN PI office to positively influence the population and position itself to contribute effectively to the management of the conflict.

Nevertheless, as Mentes and Browne point out, "the public information campaign that recognizes and satisfies" the population's needs, desires and wants "is the one most likely to gain significant influence over the population" (Mentes & Browne, 2012, p37). Therefore, using both formal and informal communication methods and tools, in the case of Liberia, for example, misunderstandings were avoided and the mission was able to build good relations with the communities and groups and this contributed to its general success. UNMIL PI, the authors note,

was on the frontline to steer the political process and that even though there was often overlap between civilian and military components in peacekeeping missions, through the UNMIL PI Office, the separate PI sections of the military, police and civilian components were well managed, their activities integrated and information shared. Particularly, military information was adapted to provide transparent information.

The two case studies reveal a few grey areas in PI practice in peacekeeping missions. First, in respect of the needs of the media practitioners, in Kosovo for example, if the media landscape was found to be such an important area in the transformation and democratisation of the territory, then it behoved managers of the conflict, and in particular PI, to also consider the total transformation of the media towards achieving this as part of PI's tasks. Reorienting and retraining media practitioners was therefore imperative. Though the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) provided staff training and equipment to one of the radio stations in Kosovo, UNMIK ought to have made the effort to drastically improve the professional standards of media practitioners to allow them to contribute more effectively to its PI operations. This was to some extent done in Liberia, but as Linda (2008) contends, most training of journalists often aims at equipping them with knowledge and skills in news reporting under normal times. Because media coverage of peace-related activities falls far short of what is required to foster peace, media training should focus more on equipping trainees and practitioners to engage in peace journalism (Linda, 2008, p17: Gadzekpo, 2017; Atintande, 2018). This study has attempted to fill this gap by looking at PI's attention to situational and audience expectations in the conflict area.

Second, is the relationship between the PI sections/components in the respective peacekeeping missions. The studies allude to challenges of cooperation between UN civil, military, and police PI sections. In the case of UNMIL, even though the PI sections of the military, police

and civil components "managed to collaborate and overcome the adaptation of military information from secrecy and opacity to transparency and information sharing" (Mentes & Browne, 2012, p.53), it is unclear whether this collaboration entailed putting all these separate sections under a single command and control structure while still recognising the uniqueness of each component, or it was just the case of sharing of operational information. This to some extent may point to the fact that the respective PI sections of the "civil, military and police" components acted separately and only collaborated in certain areas. The fact that all the authors have underscored the importance of integrating PI operations/campaigns within all levels of conventional operations, speaks to the need for greater integration of all PI assets in a peace operation into a composite and unified structure for optimum performance. This study has attempted to fill that gap by interrogating the relationship between the respective components in the delivery of PI services.

Third is the place of the Information Office (IO) in peace operations. Military operations are generally classified into (1) War and (2) Operations Other Than War (OOTW). While the latter often refers to peace operations, it nevertheless places these squarely under the ambit of military operations. In peace operations, the military therefore engages in what they know best – military operations. Notwithstanding that military units are usually not expected to get involved in civilian aspects of peacebuilding because it could eventually erode their war-fighting capabilities ((Johnson, 1998/1999; Cucolo, 1999), OOTW, which is expected to be subordinate to outright military means, covers only those military operations that are not necessarily intended to destroy an enemy (Siegel, 1998). OOTW may therefore be expected to be neutral and undertaken with the consent of the disputing parties. As noted, however, the military often does not seem to see a distinction in the management of information in war and peace operations. The military's inherent

disposition is to fight and win wars. So even though they may be engaged in peacekeeping, there is the tendency to approach their work in the manner they know best. To the military, information management consists of a multiplicity of activities designed not only to publicise the work of the military in the field but also to help it suppress or upstage so-called competitors, adversaries or "enemies". As IO connects ultimately to "information warfare" (Avruch et al, 2000, p6), IO seems therefore to be used as a synonym for information warfare. As Crumm (2010) notes, the military is wary of using processes that are not familiar. It therefore seems less evident whether information campaigns in peace operations differ from IO, which the military often engages in while on independent military operations. So, although information management in peace operations has generally been characterised in these studies as IO, one is reminded that IOs are often associated with bad connotations, such as deception and disinformation. PI, in the way and manner it has been conceptualised, must therefore seem strange to the military. This study has also attempted to interrogate that area by looking at how military PI contributes to conflict management.

As Crumm (2010) again points out, the principles of IO are not yet clear enough in people's minds. Military commanders are therefore not to deem non-kinetic operators, such as PIOs, inefficient but must be convinced of the need to use them to maximise the execution of missions and strengthen support in peacekeeping. As peace operations are fundamentally political acts, not military, information campaigns and activities during peace operations should therefore be connected to realistic policy and wider political goals. The counterpoint is that, if these goals are self-contradictory or divorced from the political realities on the ground, such campaigns will only not flounder but be reduced to the military's well-understood use of information to fulfil tactical requirements of strictly military ends --- information warfare.

Whether military operations or peace operations, public support is an essential factor. PI is therefore the surest means of reaching out to the public (NATO, 2001) by the neutral third-party actor with a non-lethal, non-kinetic tool that should not only convince the population and the parties but also provide them with alternative information to assist them engage in friendly courses of action (Siegel, 1997). But as peace operations are not necessarily military operations, it will require the military's new understanding of the concept of PI in its most appropriate context so that it can use it positively and most efficiently and effectively. So, the military should be thinking of appropriate alternatives, in particular civilian analogues, to military-informed IO as the information campaigns they are familiar with could only take one part of the way in information management in peace operations. If the UN prefers to term its information activities for peaceful purposes as PI, the warning is that, though winning hearts and minds may be the objective of UN information operations/campaigns during peacekeeping, information that appears as propaganda or PsyOps may not only be counterproductive but rejected (Mentes & Browne, 2012, p.61).

2.3.2 Public information in peace operations from the civilian perspective

Hunt (2006) and Lindberg (2008) are the two case studies reviewed from the civilian perspective. In the first instance, Hunt (2006)[36] is a case study of PI in the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), Lindberg (2008) case-studies UNMIL.

Hunt's (2006) data was collected through in-depth interviews of former civilian heads of PI components as well as former and incumbent PI staff of the two missions; a review of relevant literature on PI in peacekeeping; and notes from a media in peace support operations module run at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Ghana. The choice of the two missions in West Africa was informed by the similarities of their experiences, their

[36] Charles Hunt was a research associate at the Conflict Prevention and Management Department of the KAIPTC.

proximity in time and space, and the sheer force in magnitude and progressive direction in the development of their PI. The study highlighted the PI capability in both missions and the wider efficacy this kind of capability brings to them.

Hunt recognises that PI has become a critical component of contemporary peacekeeping. This is because categorical support for the mission and the peace process remains the overarching goal and obligation for PI in peace operations. Deriving consent from the local population for a political process is essential in managing the conflict. He, however, cautions that even though there may be some cross-over between PI and IO in the handling of information in peace operations, and that the creation of both may be fundamental to the progressive success of the operations, PI being an information source and communication channel between the local and international communities and the mission justifies its independence of other informational types. The methods of information exchange and use in intelligence in peace operations should not be confused with the functions of a capable, distinct and effective PI capability.

Hunt defines PI in peace operations as essentially media in conflict management, underpinning this in the theory of media in peacebuilding. PI could therefore best be described as (1) proactive media-based intervention, with the media product of the outside intervener, such as a peacekeeping force intending to counter hate propaganda, provide timely practical information, for example, election and voting practices, refugee unification, education or health advice; and (2) programming intending to transform attitudes, promote reconciliation and reduce conflict, with content aiming to foster peace. Hunt views these as integral functions of field PI considered in general terms as media-savvy peace operations.

UNAMSIL was established in 1999 and UNMIL in 2003. Their mandates were essentially similar − implement ceasefire/peace agreements, assist the government and the parties to

implement the agreements, embark on security sector reforms, support humanitarian and human rights activities, protect UN personnel, etc. Despite being military-heavy[37], both multidimensional missions were civilian-led. As the local population is ultimately the beneficiaries of peace operations, Hunt notes that the focus of PI is to connect with the local population, to effectively communicate to them the activities of the peacekeeping missions in fulfilling their mandates. It is desirable then that a peacekeeping mission must have the right PI set-up capable of producing and disseminating PI outputs deemed essential. The set-up must have the required resources, organisational structure and required personnel and a clear coherent PI strategy that is sensitive to the target audiences and that will ensure efficient work. Such a strategy should establish the PI component as an impartial source of information on the mission and the peace process with cross-cutting coordination and transparent information-sharing across all components – civilian, military and police.

With media being critical mechanisms for information sharing and communication, Hunt notes that limitations to the potential of the media also limited information dissemination, with civil society structures and informal networks taking over this role from the media networks. He lists these media limitations to include limited transmission and reach for radio, poor standard of content and presentation for newspapers, unavailability of radio/television sets to the majority of the population and other cultural, economic and social factors. Considering the huge cultural limitation to populations in Liberia and Sierra Leone where the majority were said to be unlettered, Hunt places a premium on the radio in particular as probably the most powerful medium for mass communication. Aside from these limitations, he also identifies the challenge of information

[37] In 2002 UNAMSIL comprised 17,368 military personnel (including 260 military observers), 87 UN civil police officers and 874 international and local civilian staff. UNMIL, on the other hand, in 2006 comprised 15,891 military personnel (including 184 military observers), 1,051 UN civil police officers, 1,253 international and local civilian staff and 262 UN volunteers.

deficits in the rural areas where the majority of the population resides. This is said to result from state control over the media in the two countries and the misuse of media as instruments of propaganda for the state and powerful elites. Conflict exacerbates these problems. He therefore contends that media's potential as instruments for early warning and the growth of public opinion is weakened by conflict. In time they begin to align with conflicting parties and soon become tools for escalating and perpetuating the conflict and gravitating towards a destructive role and a climate of instability. Hunt therefore thinks that this information deficit and gaps are what the UN peacekeeping operation's PI component must fill. He nevertheless posits that the planners of the missions often underestimated the importance of a capable and effective PI component, noting that such a component should be prioritised in peace operations with the responsibility of collecting, analysing, and disseminating vital information in a timely and transparent manner which is essential for successful mandate implementation.

Hunt concentrated his investigation on a rather wider context of the missions, focusing mainly on the success of wider mandated mission goals. As he notes, the study did not involve the lower-level separate military components of the missions, even as he admits that a sensible integration of both civilian and military PI capabilities will generate a synergistic relation in furtherance of the peace process and the activities of the military in the front line. It is one's considered view that PI components in peace operations should be so structured as to see them not just sharing information and coordinating the individual political and operational activities of the various components but ultimately combining the PI activities of the respective substantive components strategically under a common thrust and unified and coherent PI strategy. This is something this current study has attempted to unravel.

In the second case study, Lindberg (2008) discusses UNMIL in 2006. In the understanding that information and communication strategies are increasingly critical to gaining public support and fulfillment of a mission's mandate, the study attempts to answer how peace operations deal with matters of media and information management as part of what the study terms Press and Information functions. It nonetheless identifies two main objectives for PI in a peacekeeping mission. First is to improve the population's access to information, by disseminating accurate, balanced, truthful and reliable information through the media and mission-related outlets and activities to bridge the information gap. The second is to build the capacity of the local media by providing the public with accurate and balanced information regarding the peace process. Lindberg conducted semi-structured interviews of UNMIL PI, local journalists and other stakeholders, and undertook participant observations in some field activities of the mission and local media outlets. The choice of UNMIL as a case study was informed by the following:

a. The broadened understanding of UNMIL's expanded media tasks.
b. UNMIL boasted innovative and wide-ranging applications for Press and Information functions that were employed in a variety of actor processes.
c. UNMIL's Press and Information functions operate in clear recognition of their importance.

Basing her inquiry on probably Henri Tajfel and John Turner's Social Identity Theory, Lindberg's study examines the growing engagement of UN peace operations in media and information. It speaks to the media's centrality to the conflict cycle and the fact that information inspires actions by reality. With language and messaging being crucial in shaping human conceptions and behaviour, she notes that an enhanced understanding of the management of information and media in times of societal upheaval is warranted. As the media are an arena where

conflicting parties battle for control over populations and opinions, by using media outlets the peace operation's messaging could be more widely disseminated, its impact inflated, and its function leading indirectly to securing legitimacy and credibility, and thereby winning the 'hearts and minds' of the people. This, Lindberg points out, also makes the domestic media a central feature of political conflict. It does however seem that efforts to influence the media context to promote peace have not always been sufficiently explored, and she attributes this largely to the local media's fear of repression and attacks. So, notwithstanding that the creative use of the media by UNMIL may have yielded positive results, work remained to ensure effective, mainstreamed and systematic application of media efforts in UN peace operations.

Despite doctrinal recognition of the media's importance, the study exposes the fringe nature of information and media management in UN peacekeeping. As she emphasises, the importance of an effective information capacity and strategy that should apply to the intervening force itself and its ability to communicate credibly with local audiences is critical to gaining the audiences' support and the fulfilment of the mission mandate. To Lindberg, management of the media and information should not just be a supportive tool but a strategic function central to the implementation of a peacekeeping mission's mandate. The PI component can therefore use the media to bridge the information gap, in particular providing accurate and reliable information, to enhance the mission's credibility. Effective PI is, therefore, able to serve as a tool for enhancing confidence in the peace process, building trust among antagonistic parties, and generating support for reconciliation while serving as a forum for inter-party dialogue and gestures of understanding and reconciliation.

This all helps to combat the potential dangers of misinformation, misunderstanding, disinformation and rumours, and counter the negative effects of irresponsible, hostile and

controlled media by serving as a credible source of neutral, responsible, balanced and truthful information. These are all that the UN recognises as roles, among others, for PI (United Nations, 2006a; United Nations, 2016c). All these, however, are contingent on the peace operation's capacity to communicate with local populations, seek their understanding and consent for its objectives, establish credibility among the local population and clarify the mission's purpose and mandate. All of these are often vital to the success of the mission, notwithstanding that at times it may be necessary to maintain a certain level of confidentiality to ensure security and impartiality.

The study's overarching objective was to explore how UN peace operations can better use media and information management strategies to positively impact security conditions and the creation of sustainable peace in a post-conflict setting. The study did not also consider the information activities of the individual components of the mission, such as the military contingents. These gaps this current study has attempted to fill by extending research to entities outside of the capital and included lower-level PI actors in the sectors and contingents. While agreeing that each component of a mission is reliant on the understanding, support and, at times, active participation of the local population, one nevertheless notes that this can only occur if the population is well-informed.

Lindberg's use of "Press and Information" to refer to the component mandated to manage PI in UNMIL no doubt also poses a conceptual ambiguity. Both "press and information" and "public information" differ somehow in form and function, even though some may use them interchangeably sometimes. In the mission itself, in particular, the outfit was recognised and designated as Public Information (United Nations, 2004).

Both Hunt and Lindberg considered the importance of media use in peace operations. They focused on the role of the public information or, as Lindberg puts it, the press and information

component that should manage a mission's media expectations. While this may be understandable, especially when considering media as essentially important in peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict situations, as Udeajah (2004) postulates, merely making communication infrastructure or facilities available or passing information around does not enhance successful peace operations. What audiences do with media goes beyond what media the peacekeepers themselves think they are serving audiences with. Additionally, media audiences are a little more selective than people think and they vary in their attention to mass media information. Moreover, the impact of media on conflict management is rather invisible, indirect and long-term than what has come to be known as the CNN effect − the immediate influence of the media on decision-making (Jakobsen, 2000).

While Public Information may not directly create peace, as the authors asserted, it is still mission-critical in that it indirectly contributes to the mission being able to implement its mandate. The media plays a crucial role in this. Against the backdrop of the failure of UNAMIR to use the local media effectively as part of a comprehensive intervention strategy (Lehmann, 1999; Atintande, 2019), the local media's central role in conflict management is recognised. However, while it is necessary to strengthen the local media sector, the suggestion that the peacekeeping mission should have the capacity to manipulate information and/or clamp down on so-called hate media could certainly be counter-productive. One considers that as far as possible, propaganda should not be a usual practice of PI. Clamping down on such "unwarranted" media may also not entirely prevent such media from sharing information to whomever they desire, giving particularly the complex and sophisticated media technologies and communication in general in use today. The proposition also that a peacekeeping mission should have an independent and separate information intervention unit authorised to conduct its own media monitoring, implement its outlet to disseminate messages or restrain media use, such as jamming local broadcasts in severe cases, may

portend disastrous consequences for such a mission (Metzl, 1997; Thompson, 2007). Any underhand media dealings will certainly undermine the mission's good traits, as both the output of PI and this other information unit will circulate side by side and this will undermine PI as a credible and trusted source of information on the mission and its activities (Broadwell, 2012).

2.4 Common themes running through the literature

The major themes running through the literature are: Understanding Public Information, Public Information Model, Public Information Strategy, Public Information Structure, Public Information and the Public, Public Information Leadership, and Coordination of Public Information Activities. The details of these themes have been provided in the Theoretical Framework in Chapter Three.

The literature highlights the increasingly mission-critical nature of PI in peace operations. Understandably, the military perspective sees the management of information during military operations as intending to deny the rightful information to the public while attempting to suppress it where needed. The civilian perspective, however, stresses the provision of open, transparent, truthful and balanced information for the public to make informed decisions on the peace process. This bolsters the peace process, leading to effective conflict management. One is reminded that one good journalist on the ground was worth a battalion of troops and when news reaches the general population, it shapes public opinion (Dallaire, 2007, pp.15-16).

While one expects that the transformation and reformation of UN peacekeeping should also directly affect the practice of PI in UN field operations, the UN is yet to arrive at a conclusive phase of its use of PI during peace operations. The attempt to separate PI from strategic communication is a case in point. The functions and responsibilities of PI during peace operations will continue to change and expand. This given, there is a need to identify whether there are any

differences and similarities in approach to IO among the major actors in peace operations --- uniformed and civilian --- and to position PI more appropriately. Hoffman (2013) adds that,

> …. if successive peace missions are incorporating more and increasingly broader public information functions within their mandates (including activities related to media development more recently), it will be a matter of necessity for those involved in setting them up to engage in the development and furtherance of the very concept of Public Information, make explicit its aims and underlying assumptions, integrate credible evaluation strategies, effectively use public outreach access to the grassroots level to engage in truly interactive communication processes, and ultimately justify its methods and tools, also in reference to their potential (long-term) effects on a media system of post-conflict societies (Hoffman, 2013, pp.14-15).

Piecing the two perspectives, one notes that PI in UN peacekeeping is obviously bigger than media use and media outreach. However, the following gaps/themes which are discernible in the literature could help to demonstrate the efficient applicability of PI in UN peace operations in Africa. These themes have informed the current study.

2.5 Summary

The chapter has discussed the evolution of peace operations and public information in UN peace operations to give context to the thesis. It has also discussed the relevance of public information in UN peace operations and the linkage between the two. Additionally, it discussed related studies of public information in practice. It has also highlighted the common themes running through the literature. Although public information has been with the UN since the beginning, it does seem that it has yet to attract the required attention and focus. The next chapter looks at the concepts and theories that underpin public information.

CHAPTER THREE

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Public Information in peace operations has been a subject of practical and scholarly interest. This is especially against the backdrop of peacekeeping failures in Africa and elsewhere; particularly in the light of the fact that communication is crucial to peacekeeping success (Udeajah, 2004). Grasping the theory and practice of PI in the field should serve to deepen understanding of the phenomenon investigated. This chapter contextualises the study to explain the place and usefulness of PI in UN peace operations. Therefore concepts, theories and models relevant to the study have been discussed.

The UN manages international conflict to generate global peace and good neighbourliness. Conflict and peace are therefore the two extreme signposts of the conflict management continuum. There may therefore be numerous concepts and theories that should speak to this study. For example, the concepts "conflict", "peace" and "conflict management" are very attractive. While these constructs may be useful in shaping our understanding of the dynamics of peace operations, the thrust of this thesis is communication in conflict management. Connecting PI to the outcome of UN peace operations should be desirable as a contribution to knowledge in the management of international conflict. In this chapter, I therefore prefer to look at the concepts of international conflict management, public communication and conflict communication. The latter shall also gather public information.

In the manner of theories, many scholars interrogating the area of communication in general and PI in particular in peace operations have tended to use conflict theory, peace theory,

theory of change, organisational communication theory, media theory and information flow theory, among others. These are useful in explaining aspects of the work of peacekeepers. However, these theories seem insufficient to explain the specific context of the subject of this thesis. Therefore, the public information model and the Maatic model of communication are more apt to underpin this study.

3.2 Conceptual framework

There must first be a conflict to be managed. The two legs of the construct of "international conflict management" are therefore conflict and conflict management. In this section, the concepts of international conflict management, public communication and conflict communication as the frames of reference are discussed.

3.2.1 International Conflict Management: concept and context

In underscoring peace and security as the natural end-state of international conflict management, it is significant to appreciate what conflict is and means as a way to determine how to deal with it. Generally, conflict refers to opposition to an existing view, stand, or position. When two or more parties do not have an accord and are thus on two different parallels on the same issue pursuing incompatible goals, there may therefore be an existing state of disagreement or hostility between them (Folarin, 2015, quoting Nicholson, 1992). In political and social terms, it is the state when two or more groups engage in a struggle over values and claims to status, power and resources in which opponents aim to neutralise, injure or eliminate their rivals (Jeong, 2000). Conflict could therefore be considered as the social interaction of two or more interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals which is expressed, among other things, in a struggle with a potential interference or blocking of these goals (Putnam, 2015). This struggle could involve the use of deadly violence, such as unresolved civil wars, secessionist violence and some level of widespread

organised crime (Andrews, 2017, p xi). Tjosvold (2006), however, points out that conflict may not simply be about two or more parties or involve only differences and incompatible goals. Nor may it necessarily be violent or destructive and devastating. While it could be intra-state and inter-state, both conflict types when not managed well could easily also spill over into global or international conflicts when the conflict becomes internationalised, as other states or organised groups in them enter the conflict in support of the contending states or groups.[38] International conflict may, however, just be mere hostility and may not necessarily involve armed violence (Nincic, 1982). For example, the re-ignited dispute from 2019 between Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan over the controversial damming of the Nile upstream by Ethiopia.

Defining conflict in straight-jacket terms, even though consistent with popular thought, however, poses two difficulties. Tjosvold (2006) notes that, first, it is not every conflict that is about perceived interests and goals. Second, such definitions make constructive management of conflict rather difficult; because conflicts can often have overlapping causes with hardly a single factor creating them (Folarin, 2015). But one is reminded that conflict is not just about conditions and circumstances, but also about the actors. Managing conflict should therefore be the rational and conscious decisional process whereby parties to a conflict, and with the aid of third-party outsiders, take steps to transform, de-escalate or terminate the conflict in a way mutually acceptable to the parties (Bercovitch & Regan, 1999).

Should conflict be settled, resolved, transformed or managed? To Ellis and Baiden (2008), there is a general understanding that in addressing conflict, the primary goal must be to reach an

[38] The first UN peace operation in the DR Congo in 1960 showed that internal conflict could easily assume international proportions requiring collective international intervention (United Nations, 1985). Other examples are: The Chadian civil war of the 1980s attracted direct intervention by France and Libya on the side of the factions (Amate, 1986); and the Libyan civil war following the toppling of Muamar Gaddafi in 2011, also attracted African and non-African countries fighting on the side of the factions (Andrews, 2017).

agreement, restore harmony or relationship and improve the ability of the contending parties to face challenges together in the future. Conflict management therefore follows the principle that all conflicts cannot necessarily be resolved; and that learning how to manage them could decrease the odds of their non-productive escalation (foundationcoalition.org). Butler (2009) clarifies conflict management (CM), by juxtaposing it with conflict resolution (CR),

> Whereas conflict resolution seeks to promote reconciliation at the basic level of a conflict by resolving the underlying grievances at the heart of a particular dispute to the satisfaction of all parties involved, conflict management remains closer to the surface. … As such, conflict management is far less ambitious in its objectives than conflict resolution, which seeks to transform the personal values, cultural practices, and social and political rules and institutions sustaining a conflict (Butler, 2009, p15).

Notwithstanding that managing conflict could include resolution, prevention and containment, the goal of conflict management is to minimise the potential of the conflict generating negative impacts. Butler affirms that CM was far more acceptable when a conflict was too complex, deeply embedded and intractable to be resolved at a particular juncture, such as the conflict in DR Congo which is the centrepiece of this study. This is because, the objectives of conflict management, while limited, tend to be feasible and widely applicable (Butler, 2009). Managing international conflict, however, considers how the third party can contain and limit evolving social conflicts in the international arena. It does not matter where a conflict starts from and who is involved. When it leads to or results in widespread violence and chaos that could threaten the peace and stability of wider areas across borders, it should attract the contemplation of or direct intervention by international actors (Malek, 2013a). It was precisely the need to move away from unhealthy means of managing international conflict and in particular, the use of military force that led to the formation of the UN.

For a neutral third party, like the UN, to find it worthy to intervene, conflict must be a violent engagement between two groups of people, or two states, driven by myriad interests

(political, economic, social) and which negatively affects peoples or political movements in two or more nations or in wider areas within and across nations. It should involve sustained armed combat and the use of deadly violence that imposes extreme costs in terms of human life (Nincic, 1982). Additionally, it should be intractable and enduring, continue to escalate towards ever-higher levels of violence and hostility and often be difficult to manage peacefully (Bercovitch & Regan, 1999). DR Congo is located in the Great Lakes region of Africa which is a hotbed of violent conflicts spanning several decades with general political instability and devastating outcomes of high magnitude (Lumumba-Kasongo, 2017). These conflicts invariably affect the international setting (United Nations, 1993; Roy, 2009, pp 34, 297) with their repeated cycles making them more difficult to manage peacefully.

The concept of conflict management therefore speaks to the use, particularly by a collective international consortium of forces and interests, of the most appropriate means of addressing conflict to prevent its escalation or spillover. This could be achieved by establishing the necessary structures for collective management, the focal point being to manage the deleterious effects of the conflict rather than resolving its underlying causes. Having grown out of the ashes of the two world wars and seeking to jaw-jaw rather than war-war in managing international conflict, the UN may not seek to dominate in any conflict environment. But as today's international conflicts involve not just state but also non-state actors and a wide variety of interested parties, affecting large populations on both sides of the divide, no one shoe fits all. This is because conflict is dynamic and diverse. Moreover, peace must always be the outcome of managing conflict. The attention paid to any conflict therefore requires a unique approach to dealing with the particular conflict which must come to an end through the interaction of many elements (Ritzer, 2008;

Banim, 2017). So specific actors pursuing or defending specified goals understandably should be aided by a neutral third party to end with a non-conflict (Galtung, 1973).

Over the years since the end of WW II, the UN has often intervened in response to international conflict via innovative preventive and enforcement mechanisms. This has been premised on the doctrine of responsibility, in particular, the need to maintain world peace as stated in its charter, and in line with international jurisdiction while nonetheless respecting state sovereignty[39] (Hehir, 1991). Inspired by the theory of change, and as espoused by Boutros-Ghali in his *Agenda for Peace*, the UN's models of conflict intervention have been Preventive diplomacy, Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, and Peacebuilding (United Nations, 1992). Peace operations therefore remain the most potent mechanism to stabilise conflicts and to allow prudent means to address them. It is a major technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace. The UN's management of international conflict should ultimately be viewed in this manner:

> …to seek to identify at the earliest possible stage situations that could produce conflict, and to try through diplomacy to remove the sources of danger before violence resulted; where conflict had erupted, to engage in peacemaking aimed at resolving the issues that had led to conflict; through peacekeeping, to work to preserve peace where fighting had been halted, and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers; to stand ready to assist in peacebuilding in its differing contexts; and to address the deepest causes of conflict: economic despair, social injustice and political oppression (United Nations, 1992, p. 823).

So, although the purpose of setting up the UN was to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" (UN Charter), war or conflict ending does not necessarily mean the end of violence; and violence undermines peace (Naidu, 1996). To talk about peace therefore suggests

[39] Article 2 (7) of the Charter provides in part that, the UN cannot intervene in matters essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state; but this principle shall however not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.

that one must first consider the threshold above which social violence should not occur, to establish the status of peace. Naidu outlines this threshold to include the following:

a. Eradication of hunger, poverty, unemployment, and underemployment.

b. Establishment of a minimum standard of education and health care within and between countries.

c. Legal acceptance and routine practice by most or all nations of an agreed code of basic human rights and civil liberties.

d. Rejection of war as a national policy instrument and the exclusive use of non-military means of addressing conflict.

All these, Naidu explains, are prerequisites necessary and sufficient for achieving and maintaining peace. He, however, advises that peace may not be expected to last forever since sooner or later there could arise environmental, political, or economic stresses severe enough to motivate those under stress to circumvent any global security system and go to war. Simply addressing the factors that led to violence in the past may therefore not be enough to sustain peace. What is therefore required are improvements in peace that require broader and more systemic strategies hitherto not considered (Positive Peace Report, 2018, p5). This is because, there is also negative peace (Kuditchar, 2021), which is the mere absence of violence or the fear of violence but where there is still unrest and the threat of violence. One cannot agree more with the Dalai Lama, that

> Peace, in the sense of the absence of war, is of little value…peace can only last where human rights are respected, where people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free. … we can say that peace means respect for human rights, the well-being of people and the freedom of individuals and nations (Abrams, 1995, p. 16).

Peace must therefore incorporate the conditions under which peace might initially be achieved, and once achieved, the conditions under which it might be maintained indefinitely (Naidu, 1996).

The minimum set of these conditions includes attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies (Positive Peace Report, 2018). These are issues public communication could contribute to addressing. The next section contextualises public communication in conflict management.

3.2.2 Public Communication: Contextualising communication in international conflict management

While communication is essential as a desirable process, what is of prime interest to this study should be public communication. Hänska-Ahy (2012) defines it as the communicative processes oriented towards shaping collective decisions on matters of common good. To Atkin and Rice (2009), public communication could be viewed as purposive attempts to inform or influence behaviours in large audiences within a specified period. This is done by using an organised set of communication activities and featuring an array of mediated messages in multiple channels to produce non-commercial benefits to individuals and society. Thomas Patterson simply describes it as communication used to inform and persuade, to build relationships, and to encourage open dialogue in the public interest (Paterson, 2005). [40]

Hänska-Ahy (2004) contends that the practices of public communication help to make the notion of the common good compatible with values expected in the society, where the common good could be viewed as something that has near-universal value. One considers peace and security to be of universal value. If the purpose of public communication is to influence what kind of good it should maximise, as Hänska-Ahy alludes to, collective decisions should usually be produced through non-coercive and inclusive public communication. Empirically examining public communication should demonstrate its value in seeking and telling the truth through a transparent,

[40] Thomas Patterson was introducing a new module on public communication at the University of Vermont for the 2005/6 academic year.

impartial and dialogic process, and cultivating virtue or advancing certain 'developmental' or 'emancipatory' goals, such as meeting audience expectations, public education, and imparting skills (Hänska-Ahy; 2004, pp.126-140). What is relevant to public communication, however, should also depend to some extent on what Hänska-Ahy says are the features of the particular society and culture, such as crisis and the breakdown of order in the case of a peace operation; and the context of the public communication, for example, the conflict and the requirement to peacefully manage it to restore order, engender peace and security and maintain stability in the conflict area. And as Rice and Atkin (2009) characterise, in public communication, audience members (including the publics, communities and institutions) have to be viewed as peers and collaborators in the mutual and interactive development and implementation of the change effort (p. 3). These approaches differ from traditional campaigns by giving greater emphasis to audiences' social and cultural contexts, replacing experts' goals with audience-derived goals, and using audience networks as ways to generate, frame, and share messages (Dervin & Frenette, 2001).

The concept of public communication should therefore demonstrate the ability of the UN to purposely engage wider audiences and stakeholders towards successfully managing the conflicts it intervenes in (Kaldor, 2007, p. 41). The UN demands that its communication with the wider world should be credible, non-partisan, accurate, reliable, timely and truthful (United Nations, 1997a; United Nations, 2006a). Looking at public communication by a UN peace operation therefore enhances understanding of its communicative function, both within itself and in particular to the larger universe. Such a function should aim to complement the peace operation's efforts in other directions to achieve its stated objectives (United Nations, 2003). However, not all forms of public communication can be viewed as working towards the common good. For

example, propaganda, psychological operations or what may be called information operations or war information (Palmer & Perkins, 2010). [41] All these forms of public communication, may not necessarily seek the public good.

Public communication, in the context of this study, should therefore be construed to be a deliberate and purposeful artful presentation of information, both word and action, directed at specific audiences to make them positively change behaviour or elicit or engineer a positive response to the communication (Hänska-Ahy, 2004). Being an interactive process consisting of information-sharing and relationship-building, public communication should therefore be more about influencing the audience towards the common good than projecting the communicator. This is more so in the context in which a third party intervenes to manage conflict. Public communication in the context of this study is therefore not to be viewed in isolation and must be connected to the root of the enquiry, which is conflict. The next section then looks at conflict communication, as a form of public communication contextualised for conflict management.

3.2.3 Conflict Communication: Contextualising communication in conflict management

Conflict management focuses on containing conflict as a precursor to settling a dispute. It involves employing the requisite skills and establishing a structure for managing the conflict. This includes conflict communication. In simple terms, a peace operation is set up to keep the peace. It may therefore not just communicate in a vacuum. Most importantly, Asante (2018) points out that it communicates to the specific audiences in the conflict area to mitigate the chaos, restore calm, and promote peace by changing behaviour.

[41] Forms of Public communication are: (1) public relations/publicity, (2) propaganda/psychological operations, (3) war information/information operations, (4) advertising, (5) journalism, (6) mass communication, (7) political communication, (8) public diplomacy, (9) public affairs, and (10) public information.

In any conflict situation, people try to predict the outcome of interactions they may be engaged in before such interaction even takes place. They therefore consider the rewards and the costs to be expected and this determines their subsequent behaviour (Griffin, 2009). So, communication is not just impulsive or top-of-the-mind sort of. Garcia considers it strategic and therefore intentional; that is, an "act of will" directed towards audiences, to provoke a reaction to change something (Garcia, 2012, pp. xxvii-xxviii). Conflict communication then assures of the varied underpinnings of communication in all contexts that will deliver the objective of not just ameliorating the conflict but promoting peace and a peaceful resolution of conflict. The two legs of conflict communication are therefore: one, enlighten the audience; and, two, help them change behaviour and contribute to conflict management.

Several scholarly works have discussed communication in conflict, communication and conflict and communication in conflict management (Ting-Toomey, 2013; Putnam, 2013; Cahn & Abigail, 2014; Nwagbara & Brown, 2014). Conflict communication as a concept is however yet to attract a comprehensive understanding. Cahn and Abigail's (2014) perspective is that it is about demonstrating useful techniques for communicating in conflict situations which relates to managing one's handling of various factors that contribute to conflict escalation and containment. To Cahn (2014), it is all about using communication to resolve conflicts, since, to be able to solve a conflict, one must first understand what triggers it, and this is because it is often difference in ideas and opinions which is the major cause behind conflicts. Putnam (2013) focuses more on communication in interpersonal and inter-group conflict.

In conflict management, communication should rather perform a healing function. Viewing this from an African prism could therefore help in nuancing its importance in that context. It is to emphasise that Africa has its experiences that could lend themselves to scholarship. Reminding

that Africa needs peace and Africans deserve a settled life to fully exploit their potential, Sam Kutesa[42], Uganda's Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2009, points out that, diverse challenges are often based on the logic of confrontation and rivalries (Kutesa, 2009). This is often to the detriment of concepts that are more receptive to the exigencies of peaceful solutions anchored on dialogue, compromise and win-win for mutual benefit. Managing Africa's conflicts should therefore best be achieved by seeking African solutions and viewing through the prism of the African experience.

Conceptualising conflict communication should ideally therefore be rooted in the African experience. Communication during conflict, in the African context, aims to hold back chaos and prevent society from falling back into it (Asante, 2018). Conflict communication should ideally function as a platform for dialogue, critical control and provider of information to enable citizens take an active part in the peace process (Bonde, 2006). In a peace operation, communication should therefore project truth, while being persuasive and informative; advance justice, while demonstrating even-handedness, fairness, equity and honesty; promote order and balance, while exhibiting transparency and reciprocity; and build strong and good relationships since all communication deals with human beings (Asante, 2018). One cannot agree more with Cucolo (1999) that as a third party and as an outsider intervening in a conflict marked by hatred, fear and distrust, the peacekeeper must be a "trusted agent" in the reconciliation process.

The value of conflict communication is in its tenets or attributes. These are motive, quality and context. In the first instance, motive is the reason why we communicate in the first place. In conflict communication, the first key motive is to reduce uncertainty. It is natural to have doubts about others we communicate with, especially in the initial stages of interaction, especially where we didn't know them before and where we are unsure of what to expect. Uncertainty simply relates

[42] In a paper titled Peace and Conflict Resolution in Africa, presented at a JICA conference in Tokyo, Japan in June 2009. Accessed at https://newyork.mofa.go.ug/files/downloads/PEACE_IN_AFRICA_2.pdf on19 November 2019.

to *doubt, dubiety, scepticism, suspicion, mistrust, and lack of sureness about something or someone* (Meriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 10th Edition). There is therefore the assumption that no matter how close two people eventually become, they always start as strangers and their behaviour and that of others in the interaction has to be predictable (Griffin, 2009).

Uncertainty Reduction, attributed to Charles Berger, focuses on how through human communication knowledge is gained and understanding created (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 535). Our ability to predict the outcome of our encounters or interactions should therefore serve to either reduce or increase our level of uncertainty depending on our understanding of the text of the communication or the interaction. Good manners, for example, should ordinarily be an acceptable procedural protocol. If we therefore have to increase the level of our verbal communication, our non-verbal warmth, our information-seeking behaviour, our high rates of reciprocity, our similarities and our shared networks of communication (Griffin, 2009, pp. 126-128), then we should be able to discover who the other person is as a unique individual. The eventual outcome of uncertainty reduction in a conflict situation is therefore effective communication. To Morris and Shin (2002), for a decision maker facing a choice under uncertainty, greater access to information permits actions that are better suited to the circumstances. Berger posits that this must be premised on our interaction strategy, messaging plan, our ability to be open to new information while recognising multiple perspectives, and forecasting future benefits and costs in our communicative behaviour (Berger, 1987). This means that we can be effective in our communication if we reduce uncertainty. But critics of this position suggest that our communication could also create rather than reduce uncertainty (Kellerman & Reynolds, 1990), especially where overreaction to public information could magnify damage done by imperfect information or unwarranted disclosure (Morris & Shin, 2002).

The other motive for conflict communication is to embolden the public to speak out against all those tendencies that result in and sustain conflict. Public opinion is the tangible force that keeps people in line whereby they express themselves without running the danger of isolating themselves as they tally up information about what society in general is thinking and feeling (Griffin, 2009, p29). As Creel (1920, p3-4) puts it, with public opinion considered the “minds of men”, and public communication the battle for the "verdict of mankind", an organisation could only plead the justice of its cause before the jury of public opinion by converging its expectations, wants and needs to embolden the local population to speak out. This is because isolation is what drives what Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann calls the spiral of silence. Spiral of Silence identifies those factors that prevent the public in a conflict situation from effectively contributing to conflict resolution largely out of the fear of speaking out. As Campo and Frazer (2007) contend, social change occurs sometimes as a result of pressure from groups outside of institutions. This is, however, hampered by the inability of varying parties to talk to each other because often harmed parties become frustrated with inaction (Campo & Frazer, 2007, pp355-356). Spiral of Silence therefore shapes our understanding of what needs to be done to embolden and arm members of the public to actively contribute towards not just ameliorating but effectively managing conflict, by reducing their fear to isolate and encouraging them to speak out against what might be fueling the conflict. The public’s willingness to speak out is noted to be reinforced, among other factors, when they are educated, informed and emboldened by the dominant public opinion. Horn (2008) could not have said it better, that, as information is a means of power, “a more effective tool for the management of fear, and one with less harmful side effects, is the timely and accurate passage of information” (p294). Miller (2002) also notes that the mass media do influence the perception of public opinion by their portrayals. It may therefore be necessary to consider media influence in

communicating for social change in conflict situations. This is because people are not just helpless in the face of public opinion and communicators can use the same mass media to increase the public's access to information with the understanding that the more informed and educated the public, the more they are emboldened and the less they may be inclined towards a deviant viewpoint (Severin & Tankard, 2001).

When it comes to the quality of conflict communication, since the communicator is the person emitting communication and must be able to communicate within the language of the recipient to be understood, the first key quality is for public communication to be integrative.

Nwagbara and Brown (2014), quoting Drucker (2007), contend that communication must be within the range of the recipient's perception so that they may be able to receive and understand what is being communicated. There is also inherently in communication the expectation to receive what is perceived, as, according to Drucker (2007), people see what they want to see and hear what they want to hear. The "human mind attempts to fit impressions and stimuli into a frame of expectations" (Nwagbara & Brown, 2014, p.18). Therefore, the challenge arises when what we see or hear is not congruent with our expectations, i.e., what we perceive. Integrative communication serves to provide a platform for engagement, mutuality and profitability of conflict management, serving as a springboard for dousing potential conflict since different individuals, groups and interests are appreciably represented in the communicative process (Nwagbara & Brown, 2014).

This brings to mind the issue of communication demands as the second quality. This refers to that which is required and which will often stimulate the recipient to take some form of action (Nwagbara & Brown, 2014). This may range from changing an opinion, attitude, behaviour or to engaging in a conversation (McCroskey & Richmond, 1996). This process, Putnam (2006)

describes as demonstrating the complexity of communication which requires a good measure of dexterity, relationship-building and participation to build trust without which conflict ensues. In this process, different interests are competing for attention and dominance. As competing interests are at the heart of conflict, the thrust of conflict communication is more to reduce conflict, rather than highlight the need to facilitate suitable conditions (Siira, 2013). Where, for example, stakeholders constantly allege that their interests have not often been given the needed voice in the process (Irobi, 2010), and this undermines the quality of communication.

But communication occurs in a cultural context. This context may be seen as bonding by national or ethnic background, a set or pattern of common experiences and behaviours and values and norms that guide those behaviours (Miller, 2002). George Wilhelm Hegel postulates that human beings live in a world characterised by a constant interplay between individual consciousness and the objectification of that consciousness in the objective external world with this situated in a specific time frame (Miller, 2002, p.61). This is commonly known as culture. It may manifest in either individualistic or collectivistic modes. This in itself shows how people handle conflict. Stella Ting-Toomey's Face-negotiation Theory therefore also explains the cultural differences in responses to conflict. People in collectivistic cultures are more likely to be interdependent, maintain a sense of collective identity, and have equal concern for the image of all parties in a conflict but are also concerned about the public image of their relationship (Miller, 2001). And as society is dominated by human experience, communication appears prominently in the expression of collectivistic culture. Barring power play in conflict, and the fact that giving face to others may cause embarrassment, healthy communication makes conflict productive and transparent conversation creates positive relational outcomes (Griffin, 2009).

Even though communication may not guarantee that a conflict may be resolved or ameliorated, it nonetheless greatly increases the likelihood that the conflict will not be exacerbated. Communication and conflict are therefore in an interdependent relationship (Hener, 2010). This duality presupposes that communication could lead to and exacerbate conflict as well as ameliorate it and promote peace and a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Bray and Rzepecka (2018) explain that,

> …human communication has been simultaneously identified as an instrument of harmony and as a weapon of discord. Consequently, how we broker understanding and rapprochement is challenging and often crucial in situations where those involved have quite different ways of being in and seeing the world. Although good communication is often equated with skills that intentionally facilitate change and the successful realization of desirable outcomes and the improvement of human situations, it is also certain that a withdrawal of communication, or its intentional manipulation, provokes misunderstanding, encourages mistrust, and precipitates a gradual decline into disorder (Bray and Rzepecka, 2018, p. 4).

Hener's (2010) advice is that, as communication represents a very important factor when dealing with any active/potential conflict, it has to be effective, meaning that messages should be interpreted in the same manner between those who communicate and those who receive such communication. However, such communication should be directed at all who can and must contribute to managing the conflict. The communicating entity should therefore have to use a variety and multiplicity of communication tools/media and methods to be effective.

Relating the concept of conflict communication to MONUSCO, there has been much uncertainty in how the Mission was carrying out its functions and tasks. As the findings of the study (Chapter 5) present, there has been some disaffection against the Mission from both the internal audience and the local civilian population. In the case of the latter, over the last year, for example, there have been several demonstrations and even attacks against MONUSCO interests, not by the armed groups but by the local population. Reducing the public's uncertainty could be beneficial. Moreover, emboldening the public to speak out against the armed groups and

conflictpreneurs should contribute to addressing the triggers of the conflict. Effectively targeting the local population, both the civilian public and armed groups, with effective and culturally sensitive messages and information should be the sure way to go.

This conceptual framework (international conflict management, public communication and conflict communication) recognises the role of conflict communication as the desirable form of public communication in the management of international conflict. The next section discusses the theoretical framework.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

The concept of communication crystallises what role communication can and must play in conflict management. In this section, the Maatic Model of Communication and the Public Information Model are discussed to establish the role and relevance of communication in international conflict management. To Cheldelin, Druckman and Fast (Eds) (2003), theory is a conceptual model that defines a set of actors and conditions[43] and postulates associations and causal relationships among them. As the objective of this theoretical framework is to appropriately and properly guide the study, my choice of the two theories is because they speak comprehensively to the role and value of communication in international conflict management, particularly in the African context.

3.3.1 The Maatic Model of Communication

A UN peace operation is a special organisation created to answer to a specific situational need – the successful management of international conflict. In general terms, it is essential to understand the peace operation environment and what is to be expected thereon. This is about its environment, objectives and goals. It cannot be seen as anything else. With the understanding that

[43] Such as for example, intervention strategies, outcome conditions and factors other than the intervention that affect the outcome.

communication theory is ever evolving (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009), as demonstrated in the literature, there is not one recognised single theory on conflict communication comprehensive and sufficient enough to explain communication in the context of conflict management in the area of peace operations. Every writer uses what suits them to explain their perspective and explicate their philosophy. Tafese (2016) recommends that African communication scholars may have to ground non-Western experiences in their cultural milieu. He points out, that much of the world seems to rely on Western models of conflict management which seem not to recognise that traditional African societies have developed their conflict management systems/institutions which apply indigenous knowledge and laws to settle all types and levels of conflict. He clarifies that the essence of conflict management in traditional African communities, states and regions includes (1) removing the root causes of the conflict; reconciling the conflicting parties genuinely; and (2) preserving and ensuring harmony to set the right setting for societal production and development (Tafese, 2016, p23). It should then be the case that one has to look inward to identify the relevant underpinnings to guide empirical work, hence the reliance on the Maatic Model of Communication.

Asante's (2018) Maatic Model of Communication derives from the concept of *ma'at,* which in turn derives from the persona of the ancient Egyptian goddess Ma'at, the daughter of the Sun god Ra. Ma'at is often depicted as a young woman with wings on each arm and an ostrich feather on her head. Ma'at was crucial in how the universe was maintained as the Egyptians believed that the universe had an order to it and it was Ma'at who kept everything in balance and contributed essentially to anyone achieving eternal peace in the afterlife. She was crucial in human life, as the goddess who embraced the notions of harmony, justice, truth, fairness, reciprocity and moderation. Ma'at's feather was an integral part of the ceremony where the heart of the soul of a

dead person was weighed in the scales of justice against the feather (truth) in judgment. The ceremony was said to establish the desired right attitude of the individual in his/her lifetime and which could provide the one the path to a peaceful afterlife. As balance and harmony are seen to be crucial to success in society, one was required to live life by Ma'at's principles, keeping in mind one's neighbours and the cosmos.

Ma'at is often also considered a concept and the Maatic Model of Communication therefore emphasises the following elements:

a. The objective of communication is to hold back chaos.
b. Human communication is reciprocal in both substance and form.
c. Evil must always be seen as the enemy of order and harmony.
d. Proper communication restores that which is broken.
e. Good communication is that which is justifiable, complete and justified.

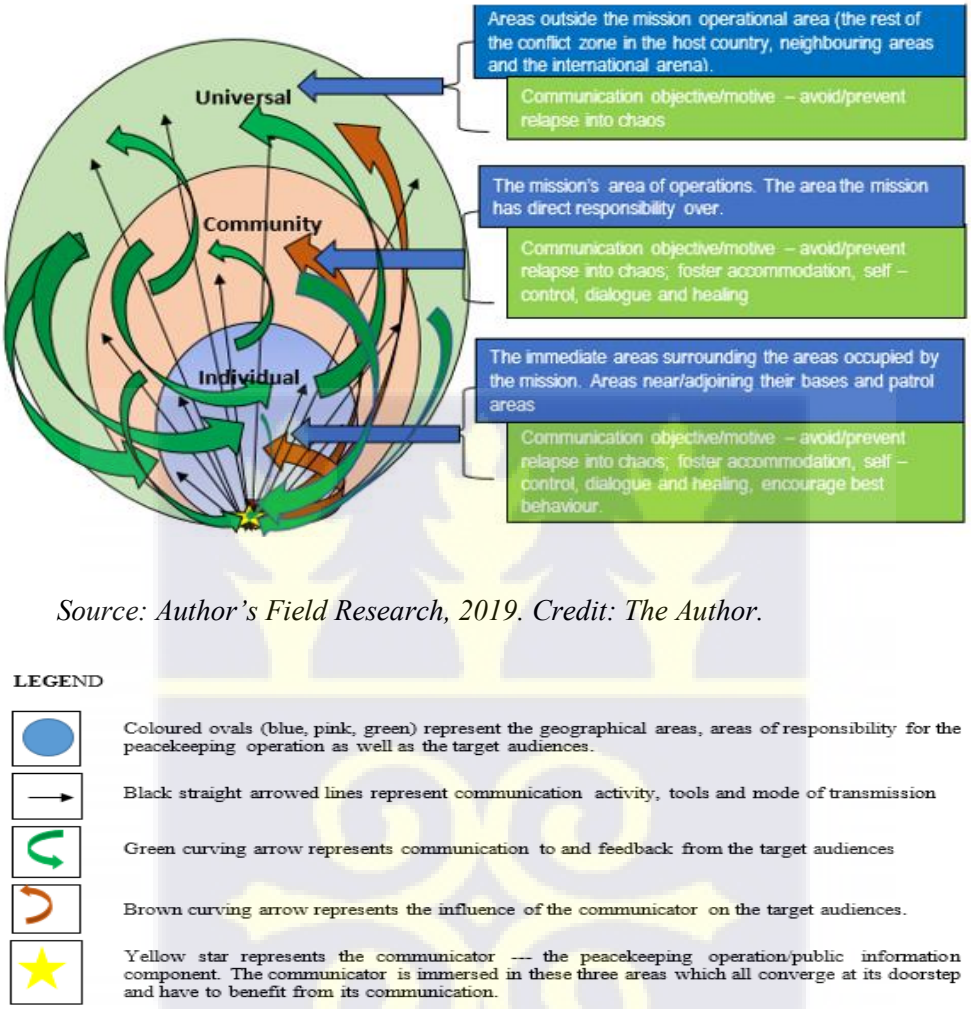
While not discounting the likelihood of communication leading to conflict, to Asante, in communicating, the search is for order, stability, and harmony. In effect, the communicator must demonstrate fairness, equity, even-handedness, honesty and transparency. Maat postulates that the communicator is empowered to have a quality representative of peace, neutrality and the virtue of seeking fair play. He/she must strongly be interested in achieving relationships as the aim of any person in an interaction should be to bring into existence good relationships while keeping the society from falling back into chaos (Asante, 2018, p. 20). From this perspective, Figure 3.1 shows the elements of a typical communication environment in which the peacekeepers will often find themselves in Africa. These should underpin their communication and should be taken into consideration in the manner of the communication.

Any communication (message or action) from the peacekeeper (the yellow star) is received by three levels of audiences: those immediately around the communicator (blue oval), the larger community (Beige oval) and the international audience (green oval). There is constant interaction

between all these groups of people, with information from the communicator likely to be shared by all. An individual close to the peacekeeper could also be a member of the larger community and possibly among the international audience when they travel out of the conflict area. Figure 3.1 also exposes difficulties in controlling the information environment in conflict areas. As the arrows show, the movement of information within the conflict and communication environments may not be controlled by any one entity. Information (brown arrows) from the sender (yellow star) to the immediate people around (blue oval) could be shared by these people to others in the adjoining areas (beige oval) or even to far-flung areas, outside of the conflict area (green oval). So will any information from the sender (brown arrows) to any of the other intended recipients. What is being shared and how may never be known by the original sender and certainly cannot be controlled by him/her. As the information travels the distance, there may be several versions of the original information. The Maatic Model therefore advocates transparency in communication as desirable in conflict management. It, therefore, distances communication from propaganda, viewing the

former as working across platforms − interpersonal, mass media, rhetoric and intercultural − in truth, righteousness, justice, order, balance, harmony and reciprocity (Asante, 2018, p19). This

Figure 3.1: Elements of the Conflict Communication environment in African

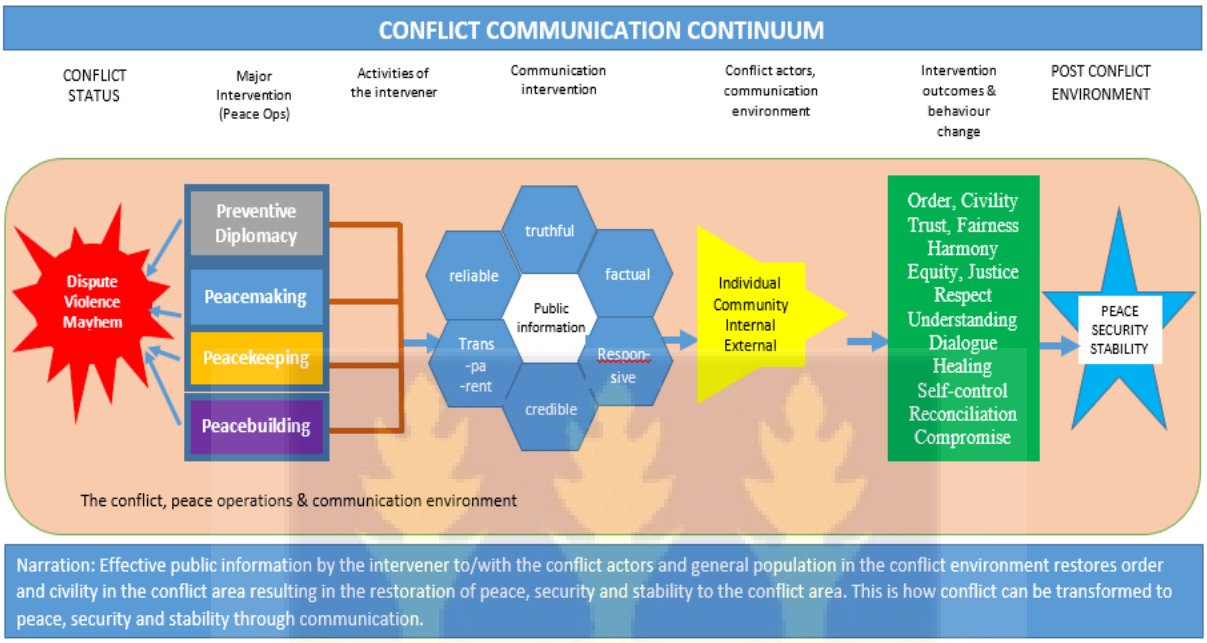


Source: Author's Field Research, 2019. Credit: The Author.

may be the answer to critical issues confronting African culture in these conflict situations. Drawing from this, it is essential to point out that, if peace, security and stability have to be the ultimate outcomes of effective conflict management, then the communicator must engage the contending parties and others in the conflict area towards transforming the conflict to a peaceful state. For example, by preventing chaos, restoring order and promoting peace, any effort at conflict management aims to create order and harmony. It therefore underscores the need for a win-win

solution to conflict in Africa and should provide an effective prism to view conflict communication in the right context.

Figure 3.2: The conflict/communication environment



Source: Author's Field Research, 2019. Credit: The Author.

Conflict communication is a continuum in the conflict environment and both conflict and communication environments are integrated. It all speaks to the environment in which all these constructs play out. As depicted in Figure 3.2, to be effective, our communication (blue-coloured web) should therefore serve as a bridge between the intervener (multilayered multicoloured box to The left), the conflict actors and the general population (yellow colour) without which the intervener may not be able to influence the behaviour of the actors, both in and out of the conflict area. As defined, the environment is (1) the circumstance, objects or conditions by which one is surrounded (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 10th Edition, 1993); (2) the surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates (google.com); and (3) the natural world, as a whole or in a particular geographical area, especially as affected by human activity

(google.com). The environment is represented by the geographical area, social conditions and surroundings in which and around which the conflict intervener is located and operates (beige colour). According to Singh and Kumar (2011), the environment may comprise factors like social, political, technological and others. In this sense, it is important to consider the space within which all these play out.

Firstly, we have a conflict environment. This is both the geographical area and the debilitating conditions enveloping the conflict intervener. It is not a specific event; neither is it a particular location. Next is the peace operation environment in which the conflict intervener operates. This is not one single event, but a myriad of activities and engagements cutting across a geographical area and consisting also of conditions. Finally, we have the communication environment. This consists of the conditions under which the intervener engages physically or otherwise with all the stakeholders engaged in the peace process. It is not one single event and virtually surrounds all the actors, including the conflict intervener and the conflict parties. Typically, while the conflict intervener influences its environment, it also gets influenced by the environment.

Figure 3.2 demonstrates that the intervener intervenes in the conflict using the appropriate intervention mechanism (peace operations) and subsequently undertakes the relevant activities while engaging the actors through public information resulting in the restoration of order and civility (green box) in the conflict area and in the end achieves peace, security and stability (light blue star). As the objective of peace operations is not to win a war but to restore peace, security and stability to the conflict area, public information should therefore be the filter which articulates both the actions and rhetoric of the intervener as they engage the conflict actors and others in the conflict area to transform it to peace, security and stability through communication. The Maatic

Model of Communication underscores conflict communication and in particular public information to be the special and ordered artful communication by a neutral third party intervener interested in positively resolving the conflict to the satisfaction of all contenders aiming to return the conflict area to peace, security and stability.

3.3.2 Models of Public Relations

There are four models of public relations. These are press agentry/publicity, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical (Grunig et al, 1995). The **Press agentry/publicity** model describes propagandistic public relations that seek media attention in almost any way possible. The **public information model** characterises public relations as practised by "journalists-in-residence" who disseminate what generally is accurate information about the organisation but do not volunteer negative information. Both of these models are one-way models in that practitioners who follow them give information about the organisation to the publics but do not seek information from the publics through research or informal methods. The t**wo-way asymmetrical** practice includes the use of research and other methods of two-way communication. **Two-way asymmetrical** public relations programmes use research to identify the messages most likely to produce the support of publics without having to change the behaviour of the organisation. Effects are asymmetrical because the hoped-for behavioural change benefits the organization and not the publics, although many practitioners believe that manipulated public benefit also from the manipulation. As a result, the two-way asymmetrical model is the epitome of much of modern sophisticated public relations practice. In contrast, **two-way symmetrical** public relations use bargaining, negotiating, and strategies of conflict resolution to bring about symbiotic changes in the ideas, attitudes, and behaviours of both the organisation and its publics. Generally, two-way communication can be manipulative (Grunig et al, 1995, pp. 69-70). This

study concentrates on the Public Information Model because it seems to be most popular in governmental agencies, especially in scientific agencies such as the United Nations (UN) hence its usage in this study.

3.3.3 Public Information Model

Varied definitions of public information seem to cloud its understanding. For example, UKEssays (2018) describes it as how to inform the public without emphasising promotion and publicity or carrying any explanation. But publicity is part of the functions of the DGC and public information units in peace operations. Grunig and Hunt (1984), describing the PIO as a journalist in residence, suggest that it is akin to journalism. PI practitioners in peace operations do more than just report on their activities. There are therefore varied expectations of PI, with no one unified and comprehensive theory sufficient enough to explain and predict it.

These different expectations can be explained by different perspectives and approaches to theory, drawing heavily from the missions and attributes of public communication, conflict communication and the Maatic Model of Communication discussed above. There are several perspectives from these that can highlight the area. In this section, the following perspectives are discussed: PI as a Tool, Operational Function, Arena and Relationship-building.

a. **Public Information as a Tool**

A tool is a device or instrument which is used to perform a task or aids in the accomplishment of a task (Merriam-webster.com). It often suggests that it is adapted to facilitate a definite kind or stage of work, is capable of delicate or precise work and its use needs skill (ibid). UN literature suggests PI as a tool that could be used to "enhance the ability of peace operations to carry out their tasks successfully and advance the peace process" (UNDPKO/DPI Operational Policy, July 2006, p.7;

UNDPKO Provisional Guidelines for Public Information, November 1997, 14). Gelders and Ihlen (2009, p.60), quoting Kjellgren (2002), describe public information as an inherently 'good' policy tool that is useful for promoting certain core values and that is supposed to increase the ability of citizens to participate in public life. PI should therefore be the peace operation's major tool for its public communication. It facilitates the flow of information between the peace operation and the wider public; enables the public to contribute to the peace process; and articulates the mission's communication strategy.

As a tool, PI's processes and interactions are therefore not just temporary but institutionalised (Gelders & Ihlen, 2009); and it is guided by its organisational structure, strategic objectives and designed practices. In this sense, it could be viewed as the peace operation's media of mass communication and its PI strategy. As the peace operation's own media, public information is the source of credible, factual and transparent information on the peace operation and its activities and as Lehmann (2009) articulates, it develops the mission's strategic approach to communication, designs the mission's multi-audience information products, communicates the mission's public identity and avoids creating unrealistic expectations of the mission. It is the reason it operates and manages the mission's own media outlets and channels, such as radio, publications, websites and other online platforms, outreach centres, etc.; and undertakes its programmes and activities, although within policy.

In terms of communication strategy, Benita (2003) points out that it provides the strategic approach needed by the organisation to proactively identify, prioritise and manage issues and stakeholders. It is therefore moulded on approaches that are

adapted to trends, events, issues and stakeholders in the environment while focusing on relationships, symbolic actions and communication, and attitudinal and cognitive complexity among diverse stakeholders; particularly where communication goals emerge through the process of identifying key strategic issues and their implications for the organisation's stakeholders and strategies (ibid, p.i).

However, as PI could be double-edged, it could be used to seek both negative and positive ends (Morris & Shin, 2002; Deshmukh, Shaha & Kohinkar, 2021). For example, it could help the peace operation get unconditional publicity, but it could also ruin its chances of affecting the public (Ghosh, 2013). Moreover, as Howlett (2009, p28) points out, it could convey to target audiences either factual information or information that may not be factual.

PI's efforts as a tool that seeks to increase knowledge and set the agenda among the local population, could, for example, be hampered by the public's lack of adequate access to its channels and platforms, its inability to widely disseminate its products, challenges of undeveloped information/media environment in the conflict area, resource constraints and insufficient cooperation from the host government. Moreover, media of mass communication are generally noted to be uni-directional (Grunig, 1984) rather than interactional, and this could reduce the tool's chances of effectively reaching out to the target audience.

To be an effective tool, PI should therefore be credible and impartial, and a trusted source of information (UNDPKO/DPI Operational Policy, July 2006, pp12/18). Otherwise, it may not be able to maintain the cooperation of the parties to the peace process, garner public support for the peace operation among the local population,

build trust among the parties to the conflict and generate support for national reconciliation (ibid).

b. Public Information as an Operational Function

The function is used here as a noun. The UN aptly describes PI as a political and operational necessity (Chapter 2). This makes it a core function in peace operations. Kirby (2000), citing Vego (1999), observes, in reference to public affairs, that for it to be considered an operational function, it has to be vital to the success of the operations, established early in the theatre of operations and be well synchronised.

As an operational function, PI must therefore, be of a theatre-wide concern and weigh in across the full range of activities of the peace operation, have global repercussions, enhance the HOM's ability to plan, prepare, conduct, and sustain operations, and help shape the operational area by managing those efforts that influence the decisions of political leaders and bolster the morale of one's forces (Kirby, 2000, p95). In many cases, Kirby adds, it could determine the success or failure of the operation rather than by its prowess alone (ibid). This was even truer of peace operations where the goal is not to conquer territory or defeat an enemy but to persuade parties and the local population in the conflict into a favoured course of action (Siegel, 1998, pp146–147).

As a competent-based function, PI has to be a professional practice, must be undertaken by competent practitioners and imbued with the requisite assets and structures to be impactful. However, its relevance as a system-wide function is challenged. For example, it does not seem to attract the required attention in peace operations (Lehmann, 2009), some practitioners are low on expertise (Atintande, 2019) and the fact that it has to compete with strong contenders such as information operations which is often preferred by

the biggest component, the military (Avruch, Narel & Siegel, 2000), or confused with it (Lindley, 2004).

Fall (2015) lists nine benchmarks for PI as a function. These are (1) it is embedded in strategic planning at the global, regional and national level to support the organisation's strategic goals and priorities; (2) it has a formal and inclusive organisation-wide framework/strategy that cascades down to the communications plans of the departments and offices at various locations; (3) it has sufficient access to executive management to ensure its proper integration in the strategic decision-making processes of the organisation; and (4) its activities and products are delivered by all parts of the organisation through concerted planning and based on harmonised and coherent messaging. The rest are: (5) PI activities and products reach out to local audiences and to maximise the uptake of its messages; (6) the organisation devotes adequate and sustainable resources to it, enabling its dedicated corporate entity to coordinate, guide and perform its advisory role at all levels; (7) the organisation integrates internal and external communications into a holistic approach, recognising the role of non-communication staff in public information and communications; (8) the organisation offers regular public information and communications training, in order to refine the competencies of public information and communications officers as well as of other staff communicating on behalf of the organisation; and (9) public information and communications activities and products are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to assess their impact on intended audiences, noting that good practices and lessons learned are identified and help management to shape future public information and communications initiatives of the organisation.

UN policies demonstrate PI in peace operations to consist of these attributes, thus characterising it as a function (UNDPKO Provisional Guidelines for Public Information, November 1997, 14; UNDPKO/DPI Operational Policy, July 2006, p7; UNDPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on Strategic Communications and Public Information, 2016.23). However, as Benita (2003) puts it, it was necessary to raise PI from a technical dissemination role to a more strategic one by integrating these benchmarks into the peace operations' policies and practices. This should strengthen PI as a function that could make it more effective and efficient in delivering its mandate.

c. Public Information as Arena

Aula and Siira (2012), quoting Stacey (1991) and Aula (1999, 2000), consider the arena in communication terms to be all organisational surroundings where those who inhabit them create and share meaning and make sense of their experiences. The arena is also the place in which organisational members and stakeholders encounter each other create representations and interpretations, and manage conflict. The authors identify the arena to be institutional as well as spontaneous, with communication influencing the way an arena operates while being simultaneously influenced by the arena's culture structure. However, institutional arenas are intentionally constructed and draw from the organisation's formal structures, rules and processes; whilst a spontaneous arena, on the other hand, enables the use of dissipative communication in which interaction is free of hierarchy or conflict and may sometimes be unexpected.

PI's mandate and tasks (UNDPKO Provisional Guidelines for Public Information, November 1997, 14; UNDPKO/DPI Operational Policy, July 2006, p7; UNDPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on Strategic Communications and Public Information,

2016.23) accord it the status of an arena where it is expected peacekeepers and the local population and other stakeholders engage to create and share meaning and manage the conflict. For example, public information communication channels, such as radio, provide the means to establish direct communication with the local population to enable the mission to explain its mandate, and also provide a forum for engagement with other stakeholders in an inclusive approach (Lehmann, 2009). As an arena, PI merges the communication and conflict environments (Figures 3.1 and 3.2) into a composite place where both peacekeepers and the public engage each other to manage the conflict through communication (Alleyne, 2008; Siira & Aula, 2010; Fall, 2015). Additionally, it is can effectively and efficiently control public communication across the organisation, encourage all opinions to surface and shape the public mediascape (Lehmann, 2009). The analogy of an arena is consistent with best practices and it affords the organisation to communicate as one and speak with one voice; while giving PI scope to coordinate mission-wide public communication (Benita, 2015).

Arena challenges may include the fact that it may not allow for elaborate opinions or discussions, communication may be kept more formal by the organisation and conflict participants may also not consider the available channels to be sufficient to address their concerns (Aula & Siira, 2010). As the nature of conflict is complex, it may be difficult to provide conflict participants with the tools, options, and time to play out their differences. Organisation dynamics, such as conflict issues and relationships, may attract lesser attention. All these serve to inhibit the arena from playing its rightful role in conflict management.

d. Public Information as Relationship-building

PI recognises the central role of the public in the success of peace operations and in UN doctrine, there is a requirement for peace operations to grow mutual relationships with the local population and wider stakeholders, including civil society groups, opinion leaders and others (Lehmann, 2009). Building and maintaining relationships has therefore been identified as a core role and mission of PI. Communication is a vehicle for social interaction; it is vital for building better relationships and understanding between organisations and their public (Okafor, 2014). And communication is the lifeblood of PI.

Building effective relationships is what has led to UN to institute good offices and special envoys, use influencers to improve its reputation and introduce outreach centres in peace operations, among other arrangements, to reach out to the general public and to build good sustainable relationships (Lim, 2013). Although the UN, as a non-profit organisation, does not encourage commercial advertising and public relations practice, relationship-building is essential for peace operations to help manage the expectations of the public in conflict areas. So advocacy and outreach are important PI tasks that form part of the overall PI strategy (UNDPKO/DPI Operational Policy, July 2006, p17). In line with these strategies, PI creates relationships as part of its practice (Bruning, Castle & Schrepfer, 2004).

Ledingham's Theory of Relationships Management suggests that organisations and the publics need to determine common interests and shared goals and should engage in a dialogic approach that emphasises the relationships as the organisation actively solicits information from key public members, listen to, processes, and respond to the public's messages (Ledingham, 2003; Bruning et al, 2004). Ledingham and Bruning (2001) further

describe the relationship between organisations and their publics as the state that exists between the organisation and its target publics, where the actions of each party produces an impact on the other parties' economic, social, political or cultural state.

Relationship building, however, takes time and different needs are manifest at different points in the relationship. Failure to meet or exceed expectations can determine whether a relationship continues (Thomlinson, 2000). With relationship being an imperative (Ledingham, 2001), Coombs (2000, p2) argues that damage to a relationship tends to result from (1) incongruence between the public and private definitions of a relationship, or (2) the people involved in the relationship have different expectations of each other. It should therefore be essential for PI to increase its social value by providing complete and reliable information to the public (Morris and Shin, 2002), promoting community-based events, community wellness issues and public education (Bruning et al, 2004), and by upping its corporate social responsibility to meet the expectations of the public as a responsible relationship partner (Grunig, 1993).

Contrary to the view that PI is only responsible for communicating on behalf of the UN before the media (UN Careers, 2014), the general public and within the organisation, in a peace operation it is girded by these four perspectives. These perspectives meet the general criteria for Public Information Theory. The theory ideally should be underpinned by these strands that expand and explicate its value, relevance and contribution to conflict management in peace operations.

a. Understanding Public Information

There seems to be a lack of clarity on what PI is, can do or cannot do. According to Hoffman (2013), this may partly be a case of problem definition. Though one is not unmindful of the importance and value of intelligence in peace operations, the use of an

information office (IO) may have to be viewed with circumspection. Military forces usually have to complement their public communication with other communication functions during military operations. This obviously could undermine PI.

As Hunt (2006) rightly elucidates, notwithstanding that there could be a cross-over between the handling of information in both intelligence and PI, the latter should exist independently of the conceptually accepted efficient gathering and utilisation of intelligence in peace operations. In any case, it is one's view that intelligence gathering in peace operations should not aim to support military operations but rather enable the peacekeeping mission to be proactive in handling its responsibilities. The current study has attempted to seek the views and opinions of respondents, including mission leadership, on what they understand of PI which should inform how and what could be done with it.

b. Public Information Model Practice

It does seem that the current PI model in practice across peace operations is designed along the basis of what was being practised at the UN HQ by the former DPI. This, as demonstrated in the literature, seems a given, having been supplanted by the DGC and based on its dynamics. But the UN Secretariat is different in all respects from a field peace operation. Similarly, the UN Country Team in most countries, expected to operate in peacetime, is also different from a field peace operation.

The PI model currently in practice in these field peace operations, as I understand from the literature, seems to focus on selling the peacekeeping mission rather than contributing directly to thawing hostile relations between the conflict actors and restoring peace to the conflict area. The literature, however, reveals that the authors would rather have a model that consists of a forum for dialogue, a tool for enhancing confidence in the

peace process and managing the mission's and the media's expectations, a bridge to close the information gap, an arena that brings the parties together but not as a battleground, and a strategic function that is central to implementing the mission's mandate.

There is also a need for a PI model that is designed to answer to the particular needs of the organisation and its stakeholders, in that respect, in meeting its core objectives and raison d'etre. It is necessary to be sure of the PI model in current practice and identify the reasons for such a model. An attempt has been made in the current study to identify precisely the type of model in use in MONUSCO to better understand the thrust of its PI intervention. Now that the former Department of Public Information (DPI) has been re-designated Department of Global Communication (DGC), how is this going to affect the PI model in field missions?

c. Public Information Strategy

From the literature, it does seem that rather than a PI strategy, the missions tend to rely on communication strategies. These do not provide a better scope for PI practice. A peace operation's PI strategy is not in the manner of the use of communication tools or just the passage of information. It is expected to guide and support the operations and/or activities of the PI component. Some of the authors (Hunt, 2006; Lindberg, 2008) have recommended PI strategies, something that seems new to current practitioners in peace operations, but desirable if PI has to be more effective than it has been.

As Public Information campaigns and activities aim to manage public expectations of the mission's audiences, a peace operation's PI strategy is tailored to meet the growing expectations of the particular peace process, and the needs of the various audiences, including the mission staff, in contributing to managing the conflict. A PI strategy should

be clear and coherent, establish the PI component as an impartial entity and take advantage of the dynamics of the conflict to play an effective role in meeting the peace operation's core objectives (Hunt, 2006).

Public Information should advisedly be creative and innovative in adopting and adapting its activities (responsive) to answer to the whys and wherefores of the particular mission's needs and the expectations of the local population. This is a critical area lacking in the capability of PI components and this study has attempted to unravel MONUSCO's strategy to determine its true characteristics.

d. Public Information Structure

In the respective missions in the literature reviewed, it was unclear what the ideal PI structure should be. It was evident that the different line components, and especially the military, might seem to prefer to maintain distinctions between themselves, creating the impression of being siloed. Often, the structure of peacekeeping missions recognises the unique and individualistic dispositions of the components. This should be reflected in the structure of the mission's PI. Bellamy (2016) points out that, unity of effort of peacekeepers fosters a shared understanding of the peace process, the roles and responsibilities of the actors, a common vision and purpose of the peace operation, and coordination that will ensure coherence across the mission. This should derive from effective integration. In this direction, this study has attempted to bear that problem by seeking views on the connection between the various PI entities of the respective components.

e. Public Information and the Public

The local population is ultimately the beneficiaries of peace operations (Annan, 2012). Peacekeepers have to effectively engage the population. They must think about the

ontological, epistemological and environmental requirements to maintain relations between the intervener and the recipient of the intervention. Peacekeepers must be fully aware that interveners and recipients are bound together by complex relationships that extend beyond the ostensible limits of the particular intervention in question. It does seem, however, that there is less consideration for ontological and epistemological issues that should inform the performance of peace operations and what their functionaries, especially PI practitioners, must consider in their work (Bellamy & Williams, 2004, p7). As the public should feature prominently in the measures that peacekeepers take to manage any international conflict, PI should be connected with the local population and actors. Answering issues relating to audience and situational expectations and the strategic nature of PI in the current study has attempted to unravel this aspect of PI.

f. Public Information Leadership

In both the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), in particular, there was a close relationship between the mission leadership and the leadership of the PI component. This proved decisive in what the missions could gain with PI. While some of the authors noted that the civilian leadership of PI components often improved the coherency of PI programmes, the centralisation of resources within the civilian management of PI was thought to be inhibiting (Anyidoho, 1997) and particularly for some PI activities across other components. The political nature of PI requires a civilian leadership with a politically sensitive understanding of the mission and its day-to-day developments. Mission leaderships were, however, yet to recognise and incorporate the PI heads of the respective components in a unified and joined-up

leadership. In the current study attempt was made to explore this area to put in perspective the nature of the PI leadership in the field.

g. Coordination of Public Information Activities

Across all the missions, the problem of coordination of PI activities was very evident. This was probably because the PI or information sections of the various substantive components seemingly operated in silos and pursued separate and mutually unsupported objectives. It was only in one instance, in Haiti, that the Combined Joint Information Campaign Task Force (CJICTF) was instituted to help coordinate the information operations of the various components. This structure seems desirable in peace operations if the information efforts are to yield the needed results.

3.4 Summary

In this chapter international conflict management has been contextualised. First, the relevant concepts: of conflict management and conflict communication were looked at. Then the theoretical underpinnings of the study: the Maatic Model of Communication and Public Information Model. These concepts and models have served to direct the study towards more appropriately determining PI in the context of communication in international conflict management. PI as a practical discipline still lacks clarity in both concept and practice and is yet to be niche among the many activities that a peace operation should employ in managing international conflict. Themes identified in the literature, such as a current understanding of PI, the structure, strategy and models of PI in practice and coordination of PI activities, have become useful and in the current study have provided the basis for further interrogation of the dynamics of PI, particularly in MONUSCO. In the next chapter, the methodology for the data collection in MONUSCO is discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the details of the ethnographic fieldwork embarked on. The choice of the Mission de Organisation Nation Unies Stabilisation du Congo (MONUSCO) as a case study was informed by the following:

a. It was the largest UN peace operation at the time, consisting of over 20,000 Peacekeepers, three-quarters of which were military.

b. It was current about the study date, having been established in 2010.

c. It would have benefited from lessons learnt from earlier peacekeeping missions.

d. It had faced extreme public resentment, media hostility and international displeasure largely as a result of peacekeeper misconduct and its seeming inability in particular to contain armed hostilities to the east of the country.

4.2 Research Philosophy

This study relied on the ethnographic paradigm of qualitative research that involves the immersion of the researcher in a particular community or organisation (culture, everyday life etc.) to observe behaviour and interaction (Ouroussoff, 2020; Alasuutari, 1995).

This is a methodological approach or paradigm that brought the researcher into direct contact with the players and actors in public information in MONUSCO. The focus of the study was to see what was there in the DR Congo in public information terms and what was happening. Therefore, this approach allowed the researcher to embed himself in the world of the hosts within

a human context (Whitehead, 2004). Moreover, as the interest was to explore contextual issues relating to the subject area, in particular, to determine the "what" of the phenomenon, it was necessary to select this single deeper inquiry of ethnography.

4.3 Research approach and design

A qualitative approach for the research design was adopted, using qualitative multi-data-gathering methods. A number of researchers who have interrogated this subject or a similar subject matter have usually used in their field study qualitative interviews, focus groups, field visits and participant observations. The same multi-methods approach was adopted.

In this research, multi-methods were applied to the case study of MONUSCO. A case study is an extensive examination of a single entity (an organisation, a set of people such as a social or work group, a community, an event, a process, an issue or a campaign) which is bounded by time and place, using multiple sources of evidence (qualitative, quantitative or both) (Daymon & Holloway, 2002; Watson & Noble, 2007). Usually, it is associated with a location. A case study could also be seen as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, relying on multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 1994). There are research participants for this single case study. It has helped to enrich the understanding of the specific case (Walton, 1992). It has allowed the researcher to see which theoretical perspectives provide the best explanations, as different outcomes of general processes suggested by the theories depending on different contexts were explored (Stoecker, 1991). It has also aided in eliciting more valid and comprehensive data through multiple methods which a single method could not have made possible (Grunig, 2000).

Multi-methods complement each other in addressing any apparent shortfalls in the qualitative approach. The approach itself allows the researcher to collect preliminary data

(Wimmer & Dominick, 2003), investigate the depth of and satisfactorily explain the phenomenon. While the natural setting of qualitative research serves to provide real-life conditions for a study, multiple sources of information can also improve both the reliability and validity of the study (ibid)

4.3.1 Study Population

The study field was DR Congo, and in particular the Mission de Organisation Nation Unies Stabilisation du Congo (MONUSCO) area of operation (AO). The study sites were multi-locale. MONUSCO's AO was split into two with a very large virtually impassable area between them. The main Mission Headquarters (MHQ) was in the west in Kinshasa and the main Force Headquarters (FHQ) in the east in Goma. The study sites were Kinshasa, Goma and Beni, with the latter being the area where the UN troops had direct contact with the armed groups (Garcia, 2012). Travelling to Beni was by fixed-wing aircraft, flying from Goma in DR Congo through Entebbe in Uganda and redirecting back to Beni in DR Congo. At the time of the study, the mission had started downsizing with many of the forces in the west especially in and around Kinshasa and its environs moving to the east or repatriating home. The choice of the specific sites was therefore based on geography and informed by the desire to reach the most appropriate personalities relevant to the study.

In Kinshasa, the specific sites were the main MHQ, the Sector West HQ and the Ghanaian Contingent. In Goma, there were the main FHQ, the Sector East HQ and the Indian Contingent. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, the latter could not be visited. In Beni were the Sector HQ/ Force Intervention Brigade Headquarters (FIB HQ) and the South African Contingent. The main sources were people and documents.

4.3.2 Sample population and size

The general population was the entire MONUSCO personnel, both civilian and uniformed (military and civil police). This consisted of the group of people about whom we wanted to conclude (Babbie, 2010, p.115). It was important to define the most likely group of people whose perspectives would lend credit to the study and for the in-depth interviews, sampled respondents were persons who operated in public information and/or had anything to do with public information, as direct actors or policy-makers. The civil police were not included in this group because the research was unable to connect with the police component. The absence of this group of persons in MONUSCO has not negatively affected the study nor the findings. For the qualitative study, the sample was essentially drawn from the Ghanaian contingent in MONUSCO**.**

As the focus of the study was the in-depth investigation and understanding of small samples of people who are nested in their context and their milieu (Rhee, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994), the sampling type was non-probability, purposive and convenient. Babbie (2010) explains that this sampling type often covers available subjects: people purposely targeted by their positions and experience and those who probably belong to a special group, all of whom could talk directly about the issue under investigation. The sample size, therefore, consisted of N=68 in MONUSCO (n=30 Civilians and n=38 Military).

Since the PI function depended on participants sharing some prior notion of the purposes for which they communicate and who they communicate with (Hänska-Ahy, 2012), key research participants for the in-depth interview were essentially drawn based on criteria that sought to identify these special populations from the military and civilian clusters. The key criteria were that, (1) participants should be current active practitioners and/or former practitioners, and (2) policy actors in PI matters in the mission area. There was therefore special emphasis on

MONUSCO mission leadership and persons who occupied sensitive and policy-oriented positions as well as those who had direct working knowledge of and experience in PI. Several respondents for the interviews were also identified through snowballing. For instance, there was a former military officer who had previously served in different positions during different periods in the DR Congo and was back on the mission as an international civilian staff. He had a wealth of knowledge very essential to the understanding of how PI has been handled in the Mission by both the civilian and military components and during different timeframes.

For the qualitative survey, a sample (N=15) was purposively selected from among the population of soldiers of the Ghanaian Contingent. This was drawn from the rank structure of the unit and consisted of officers and other ranks. Full details of the sampling are provided in Table 4.1 (Appendix III).

There was no difficulty recruiting participants. The research participants were carefully selected (Table 4.2, Appendix IV). The list of possible key research participants was prepared before embarking on the field study. This was informed by the literature and the objectives of the study. However, while in the field it became necessary to identify further research participants recommended by other research participants.

With the express help of the minders, it was fairly easy to identify and engage sources. Except in one case, they all responded positively to the requests. The minders in Kinshasa contacted the participants earmarked for engagement to confirm their availability while the researcher waited at the Strategic Communication and Public Information Division (SC-PID) where working space was provided. At the right time, the researcher was ushered to the particular office to meet with the participants. At the SC-PID, it was fairly easy to meet with the heads of the various sections. Some of them were initially not factored in during the planning process, but since

there was the need to be well-informed of the workings of the Division itself, it was necessary to engage them to understand their perspectives and their specific functions as affect public information practice in the mission. The Director of the SC-PID was readily available to clarify thorny or unclear issues arising from engagements with the various actors.

Civilian staff in the sectors and the frontline areas were well aware of the research mission, and were ready to assist. In respect to this category of research participants, one key research participant, however, declined to be interviewed, the reason being that once his superior officer, the Head of Office (HOO) in the Sector, had agreed to speak, he did not find it appropriate to be interviewed. This was notwithstanding that his superior officer had no particular responsibility for his specific area of expertise which was the subject of the study.

On the military side, things were much smoother, even though not entirely without challenges. Thanks to the correspondence from the FHQ in Goma and the GHQ in Ghana, it was easier to recruit and engage the military research participants. Soldiers are relatively very busy. They are always planning and carrying out operations, holding operational conferences and fluid meetings. There is much mobility in their spaces. This often proves problematic in the recruitment of military research participants. The ethnographer therefore needs to be very flexible to meet the set arrangements and catch research participants where they could be found.

Among the interviewees were senior leaders of MONUSCO, by the positions they held. These were the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and the Mission Chief of Staff (both civilians); the Force Commander (FC), Deputy Force Commander (DFC), and the Police Commissioner (all uniformed persons). There was no difficulty getting access to these top managers of the organisation. Elite interview is a very important aspect of qualitative research. It involves people who have the power and authority in decision-making and who could

only be the persons to provide certain authoritative information about the phenomenon being investigated and are better able to exert influence (Rhee, 2004; Harvey, 2015).

4.4 Sources of Data Collection

The natural setting of qualitative research serves to provide real-life conditions for a study, and multiple sources of information improve both the reliability and validity of the study. The data collection methods adopted were both primary (in-depth interviews, participant observation, and qualitative survey) and secondary (desk research and document review). Desk research, which set the stage for determining and designing the field research methods, is explained below.

4.4.1 Desk Research

Desk research was the starting point. This is a method that involves the use of existing data, collected and summarised to increase the overall effectiveness of the investigation (questionpro.com). In this initial phase, grey and anecdotal literature and scholarly articles were read. Personal notes developed during work in PI in the missions participated were also relied on. These enabled the researcher to explore the topic area, identify knowledge gaps, find relevant data and statistics to support the project and analyse trends and patterns in PI. The desk research also allowed understanding of what had to be observed in this niche area in nearly 20 years and to figure out what had to be done to add to knowledge. The pros and cons in PI practice across these areas and in field peace operations were also identified.

Some of the documents were sourced while the researcher was doing the post-graduate studies in 2001 at the Department of Communication Studies, University of Ghana and in 2004 at the Department of Mass Communications, University of Leicester. Many were equally sourced later when the decision came to enrol on this PhD programme. These included official UN guidelines, policy documents and standard operating procedures (SOP), all on PI, as well as reports

of the audit of PI components of selected UN peace operations by the UN OIOS, the DPI/DPKO Operational Policy July 2006 on Policy and Guidance for Public Information in UN Peacekeeping Operations and particularly the tell-it-all book *How We Advertised America* which gave the clearest indication of the beginnings of PI in conflict and military operations during WWI. [44] All these helped to gain a better understanding of the governance structure and the informed practice of PI in peace operations. Based on these, the ideal research approach that could aid the enquiry was determined. It was evident that the quantitative approach would not be very helpful in either explaining or exploring the phenomenon and that mixed methods could even offer less.

Out of the desk research, the conceptual and theoretical framework were drawn, PI as a practice was defined and the specific area of enquiry: public information practitioners and policy-makers were determined. Identifying the particular research objective, then led to the setting of the research questions that needed to be answered which in turn informed the research approach and selection of the appropriate research methods.

4.4.2 Document review

Documents considered for this review were different from those relied on during the desk research. These documents were essentially accessed at the research sites during the field-work. Document review and analysis is a systematic procedure for evaluating documents, both print and electronic (Bowen, 2009). The data is examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007). Approximately 50 documents were collected for review (Table 4.3. Appendix V). They covered the following categories, among others:

(1) Legislation, UN policies and standards (n = 8);

[44] See Table 4.3 in Appendix V for the full list of the documents.

(2) Policy reviews (n = 3);

(2) Contingent policies (n = 4);

(4) News magazines/newsletters published in the mission (n = 15);

(5) Original research and research reviews (n = 10); and

(6) Official documents (n = 10)

Most of them were official. The documents have been reviewed and placed in the appropriate context for evaluation. Some respondents referred to some specific documents but these were not available at the time of departure from the research site. Archival research included both electronic and hard-copy issues.

These documents, among others, provided data on the context within which the research participants operated. They also provided supplementary research data whereby information and insights derived from them served as valuable additions to the knowledge base. They additionally provided means of tracking change and development and helped the researcher verify the findings, and where feasible corroborated evidence from other sources. Where appropriate, the documents also provided suggested areas that needed to be questioned and situations that needed to be observed as part of the research. The documents also provided contextual richness in the research, as they were particularly useful before and after the interview situations.

4.4.3 In-depth interviews

In-depth interviewing was the primary data collection method. It was most important to hear directly from the players. The research questions explicitly sought the perspectives and views of participants. The key civilian and military research participants interviewed (N=68) were essentially drawn from MONUSCO. These were those who had the ability and knowledge in and

understanding of PI, including persons who were directly engaged in it as Public Information Officers (PIOs) or other technical people, such as staff in the PI offices.

4.4.4 Qualitative survey

Soldiers across all the ranks in the Ghanaian Contingent (N=15), representing the diversity of ranks and not the population, were sampled and interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire (Form SI – Survey Questionnaire, Appendix VI). The survey sought to elicit the views of the soldiers on the following:

a. Their major sources of information about the UN, MONUSCO and their contingents in particular, and how this information was transmitted to them.

b. The impact of the mission's and the contingent's PI activities, on themselves and/or the people they deal or interact with.

A survey is not a usual qualitative method. However, the principle behind qualitative surveys is not to generalise the findings but to explain the phenomenon (Creswell, 1997). It is to examine the 'why' of what is observed (Senam & Akpan, 2014) and determine the diversity (not numerical distribution) of the topic of interest within a given population (Jansen, 2010). So, the intention was not to count the number of people with the same characteristic (value of variable) but to establish the meaningful variation (relevant dimensions and values) within that population (Dul & Hak, 2008; Yin, 2009). In qualitative surveys, sample size is unnecessary (Harrie, 2010).

The choice of a qualitative survey was borne by the pragmatic reason to learn and explore views expressed by participants in their own words about their experiences relating to the subject of interest in the hope of understanding the phenomenon deeply and in detail (Young & Hren, 2010). This was mostly to investigate participant accounts and evaluations of their social

interaction (Jansen, 2010). Each participant for the qualitative survey completed a Participant Information Sheet (Form A, Appendix VII) before the interview.

4.4.5 Participant observation

Since not all experiences can be put into words, in qualitative research, the ethnographer must be there and see for himself/herself what the lived experiences of participants might be (Agyekum, 2016). There were few opportunities to observe public information in practice. Table 4.4 presents a summary of my participant observation experience in MONUSCO.

Table 4.4: Summary of Participation Observation

Serial No.	Place/Activity	Duration of observation	
		Days	Hrs.
1.	SC-PID – Kinshasa (Office of the Director)	7	
2.	SC-PID – Goma (Audio-visual Section)	2	
3.	Press conference – Goma		2
4.	Office of the Chief Military Public Information – Goma	4	
5.	Military public information office − Beni		0.45
6.	Military public information office Ghana Contingent – Kinshasa	4	

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

The major opportunities were at the MHQ in Kinshasa, where the researcher looked around the SC-PID at work; and in Goma, where the researcher had the benefit of sitting in during one press conference that was carried live in the two HQs with local and international media at the time (both in-person and virtual). The researcher was immersed in both naturalistic settings (University of Toronto, 2005; Babbie, 2010). While the first was over a few days, with both formal

and informal interactions, the latter was for just over two hours. Both, however, revealed how issues surrounding PI were considered and handled by the various participants. Given these two activities, insights into the context, relationships, and behaviour of the participants in the natural setting were achieved. These opportunities enabled the researcher to experience activities directly and get a feel of what events were like (Sandiford, 2015; Spradley, 1979/1980) while listening to the people and watching them in the natural settings. Where it was possible, interactions and observations were recorded electronically, but much of the recording was confined to note-taking, to record my thoughts, feelings and experiences as well as the observations. All of this was guided by a participant observation checklist (Appendix VIII).

Since informed consent from the key minders in both situations had been secured, it did not seem necessary to seek such consent from every member of the groups in question. Though largely a passive observer in the two settings, it was essential at one point or another to seek further understanding of what was being observed. For example, after the press conference in Goma, it was significant to find out more about the hostile attitude of one participant towards a media personality who was upset because her question was not answered throughout the conference even though she had on several occasions attempted to attract attention.

The research objective was to explore how MONUSCO could factor in audience and situational expectations in designing and carrying out its activities and products. It would have been most rewarding if the researcher had seen the soldiers live in action during one of their engagements with the armed groups in the Beni area. This was so the researcher could have insight into how they would complement their military operations with a PI strategy (Wilcox, Cameron & Reber, 2015) that would answer the informational needs of their audiences, hostile or not and the situational need for the conflict area.

During the field study, aside from the mentioned participant observation opportunities, the goings-on were also observed and recorded timely. These were the means of recording what was observed and experienced, as the ethnographer. Maintaining hand-written field notes was necessary, as a very effective means of enabling the researcher to remain seized of what was happening around during the fieldwork. Two notebooks were maintained. What was experienced and learnt during the interactions with respondents and participants in events/activities at the research sites were all recorded. These notes were done advisedly every day while the issues were still fresh in the researcher's mind (Whitehead, 2004). The notes only described the observations as straightforwardly as possible, without containing any explanations or comments about the observations (Sheppard, 2019).

4.5 Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

The interviews were guided by a semi-structured interview guide (Form KI 1-7, Appendix IX) The guides were informed by the themes identified in the conceptual framework and literature review and essentially along the lines of the research questions. They were specific to the relevant levels of the peacekeeping mission – MHQ, FHQ, sector civilian and military staff and military contingents. As a qualitative interview is less structured and less rigid and essentially a conversation (Babbie, 2013), the respondents did most of the talking. It was not intended to generalise the findings but to listen to the key actors in their own words and experiences.

All interviews were conducted in person. Most interviews were 30 minutes on average, except in one case where the interviewee was called off to a pressing meeting of the senior leadership. A few of them went beyond two hours and for the Director of the SC-PID, the interview went into days and as and when there was time to engage him. All interviews were, however, conducted cumulatively over a 30 days (nine days in Ghana and 21 days in the DR Congo). Except

on three occasions in DR Congo when the interviews were conducted at eating places (2) and the home of a key research participant (1), the rest of the interviews were conducted in the offices or working spaces of the respective respondents.

The interviews followed a standard process. After a personal introduction to each interviewee, there were discussions on the nature of our engagement, associated risks and benefits, issues of confidentiality of source and responses and other ethical issues. The interviewee was further assured of his/her wish to withdraw from the study at any time (Form B – Participant Information, Appendix X). Once consent was secured (Form C – Informed Consent, Appendix XI), this was followed with the collection of the interviewee's demographic details willingly given (Form D1 – Participant's Demographic Information, Appendix XII). The interview then proceeded. In a few cases, these forms were to be completed and returned to the researcher, given time constraints and the nature of the employment of the research participants. This was not expected to affect the integrity of the interview process and the interview itself. All interviews were electronically recorded and supported by note-taking.

A semi-structured questionnaire was employed to collect data for the survey with the soldiers across all ranks to represent the diversity of ranks. (Form SI – Survey Questionnaire, Appendix VI). A checklist was used to gather data during the observation of participants in the research locations (Appendix VIII).

4.6 Data Collection Procedure

4.6.1 Preparatory arrangements

The researcher visited MONUSCO in 2012. This was helpful during the planning and the fieldwork. A UN peace operation is a world of its own. As a closely guarded space, nobody walks in and out at will; especially when the person is an outsider (Wulff, 2000; Monahan & Fisher,

2016). While close associates in the UN HQ in New York and MONUSCO provided guidance and direction, getting into this closed space required navigation through a series of rigorous paths. There were two major formal steps to take: first, to secure permission from the UN HQ in New York to visit the specific mission, and second, to secure a valid visa to travel from Ghana to the DR Congo. Visa acquisition does not seem that simple, especially when travelling to a country with a long history of conflict.

The first step was a tortuous journey. As a former military officer, it required, in the first instance, communication from the university to the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) for initial clearance and further assistance. From GAF, the correspondence continued through the Department of International Peace Support Operations (DIPSO)[45] at the General Headquarters (GHQ) to the Office of the Military Advisor (MILAD) at the Ghana Permanent Mission to the UN in New York. The MILAD then sought the necessary assistance from the Office of the Military Advisor to the UN Secretary-General (OMA). Peacekeeping missions in conflict areas are operational theatres. The express consent and approval of the specific mission were therefore imperative before any visit could be authorised. The OMA through the appropriate channel therefore sought the appropriate authorisations from MONUSCO. The mission's authorisation was routed to the researcher in Accra through the same channel used to place the request. Informal consultations with various people in New York and MONUSCO were also made. This was mainly to facilitate the arrangements being made to include travel and reception.

With the first hurdle cleared and armed with the mission's authorisation, the second step was embarked on. This was the acquisition of the relevant travel visas. It was imperative to start this

[45] This outfit at the General Headquarters of the Ghana Armed Forces, at the time of the study, was responsible for generating, training and deploying Ghanaian military peacekeepers and also coordinating between the Ghana Armed Forces and the UN Headquarters in New York in these matters.

process while waiting for the response from the peacekeeping mission. Following the provision of the proposed programme for the visit to the mission, a formal request for the appropriate visa was then routed through GAF to the Ghana Ministry of Defence (MOD) which formally requested the assistance of the Ghana Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFARI) to facilitate the acquisition of the appropriate visas from the DR Congo embassy in Accra. As luck will have it, the authorisation did not take too long to come and the visa was readily available in reasonable time. Armed with these accomplishments, departure from Accra was on April 25, 2019, and arrival in Kinshasa was early afternoon on Friday, April 26. The weekend was used to firm up earlier arrangements for the conduct of the study.

4.6.2 Navigating the research space

By the researcher's military past, experience in UN peace operations and the goodwill of the powers that be, the researcher came through as trustworthy to many. This facilitated the steps to gain access to the research area and to recruit research participants. The modest approach, eagerness to listen and be tutored, general knowledge of the subject area and humble nature all contributed to the ability to win the confidence and trust of the participants. This made conversations oftentimes informal and effective.

4.6.3 Negotiating access to the field

The field study was conducted from 29 April to 20 May 2019. Though entry into MONUSCO had been achieved, formal access to its guarded spaces and the research participants had to be granted. Part of the measures to gain unhindered access to the study sites was to be provided with the mission's identity card which was easily acquired on the first working day. The identity card is mandatory for anyone entering and travelling within the mission area.

Once the study was focused on Public Information (PI), there was an understanding that the first point of call was the Strategic Communication and Public Information Division (SC-PID). Earlier contacts seemed to paint this picture. There was, however, a lot more to understand about the mission's internal workings. Though the authorities had been provided with a tentative work plan before arrival, it was necessary to work out a more realistic programme. The prospective research participants were all busy people and they had to conduct their work nonetheless. It was therefore necessary to cross-check with them or their minders to plan more realistic meetings. The work plan was jointly drawn with the SC-PID.

As bonding is expected to enhance trustworthiness between people (Amit, 2000) bonding with the Director of the SC-PID and the two staff detailed to assist in coordinating the interactions with the research participants came easily. One of them had long-standing knowledge of the workings of the mission and particular of the military system. He had served in the same missions as the researcher. All this helped greatly to iron out any foreseen and unforeseen difficulties in the ease of navigation within the mission. These, nevertheless, did not affect the outcome of the study.

The mission was effectively divided into two parts, one required to travel between the two areas flying more than two hours one way by fixed-wing aircraft. The mission had graciously agreed to provide free air transport between the two parts and also within the operational area. The expectation was that with the research work to be conducted in the mission already known, gaining official access to the military component would be easier. It did not seem so. On arrival in Goma, the first point of call was to the Chief Military Public Information Officer (CMPIO). The researcher was in contact with the CMPIO before emplaned from Kinshasa. Here, the researcher also had to discuss the realistic programme of engagement and realised that a key link was omitted in the arrangements. This was the office responsible for military visits. Even though the Chief of Military

Visits (CMV), a Nepalese lieutenant colonel, was well aware of the visit, he had not been formally apprised of my arrival in DR Congo. Ghanaian and Nepalese soldiers share some common experiences that have lasted up to today, having served together for decades in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Wherever and whenever they meet there is always some warmth between them notwithstanding that the particular officers may not have served together in UNIFIL. The officer was very helpful in firming all arrangements to meet the military research participants at all levels.

The prospective research participants in the mission area were drawn from both the civilian and military components. There were therefore two streams of correspondence on my visit. One was from the SC-PID through the civilian channel for the civilian research participants at the MHQ and the sectors. The other was from the CMV through the military channel for the military research participants at all levels. The researcher was warmly received wherever the researcher went and with whomever the researcher met. The researcher felt at home in all the spaces of interactions.

4.7 Methods of Data Analysis

The data from the documents, interviews and observations have been analysed together, using mainly the manual method. Where appropriate this has been supplemented with the NVivo data analysis software. Being qualitative, there are no numerical assessments. The manual method of data analysis is laborious. It involves manually reading through the data to find repetitive themes, patterns or commonly used words to derive conclusions based on solely what is known by the researcher (Babbie, 2010). Babbie identifies steps in the manual analysis as coding, memoing and mapping. This method provided the researcher with a more flexible approach to seeing what the data provided as the researcher noted the various indicators, categorised data, observed patterns and tracked concepts.

In more specific terms, with the in-depth interviews, the analytical indicators were the views, experiences and perceptions of the respondents; while with the participant observation, the units of analysis were individuals in their work processes and work environment. In terms of the documents, it was necessary to identify common threads in relation to what the policy, direction or instruction was and how this was being implemented.

Some themes emerged across the data, which speak to the depth of the enquiry. For example, with respect to General Dallaire's assessment of the importance of PI in UNAMIR (Chapter One), competence should be a key factor in how the PI office would apply itself. Competence was therefore found to be determined by the following: (1) the responsibility assigned to the individual; (2) the person's employment terms of reference; (3) the person's exposure or prior experience in a similar post; (4) professional training and (5) the organisational structure.

In trying to understand how impactful PI could be, another theme that emerged was the integration of assets and functions. Here it was found out that some of the players in the sector seemed to operate in silos and this affected their working together. The flow of communication and information was encapsulated, with crossing over the various entities practically restricted.

Another key theme was the model of PI. It seems that by the generic nature of the model as implanted by the UN HQ on peace operations, this seems to affect the way and manner PI should operate in response to conflict. The activities of the Department of Global Communication (DGC), which used to be the Department of Public Information (DPI), present a different format of practice and influence. They are driven by different motivations. In attempting to understand the model in practice in MONUSCO, issues such as activities, functions and outcomes come into play. Other themes have been discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

4.8 Ethical considerations

Before the interviews commenced, legal requirements had to be satisfied by completing an indemnity form. It was an unexpected twist but rewarding, especially when the importance of the study was explained, the usability of the findings and the express need for confidentiality where necessary. The note had been taken of the usual challenges facing researchers in such closed settings and that without the authorities' good understanding of what was to be done, they would either not proffer any meaningful support or even discourage staff from doing so. The indemnity therefore also served to afford greater opportunity to attend to the work with all the necessary help that was required.

Researchers are often expected to distance themselves from the subjects/phenomena being studied. While there may be agreement on the importance of such "objectivity" (Babbie, 2013, p301), nonetheless in qualitative research, and in particular in ethnomethodology where the objective is to look deeply into and report the stories of research participants and make sense of these perceptions, it could be acceptable to see the researcher not far removed from what they are observing. The place of the researcher may therefore not be separated from the field work. According to Kirk and Miller (1986), a qualitative researcher is seldom a "neutral observer".

With Ghana deploying a contingent in MONUSCO and being a former senior Ghanaian military officer, these gained the researcher the fullest trust of sources and research participants. In addition, the wide experience of the researcher in peace operations and in particular in the area of PI practice made it much easier to access what was evident. These personal motivations aside, the researcher's personality has in no way directly or indirectly influenced the study and the findings.

4.9 Limitations and Delimitations

The study was bounded by the following:

a. A full-fledged ongoing UN peacekeeping mission, whose mandate was to be effective up to December 2019.

b. The mission should have been established after 2000.

c. The mission should be multidimensional with a recognised PI component.

d. The mission should additionally consist of the requisite components necessary for its functioning, e.g., the military, civil police, and civilian.

e. The military component should consist of both military contingents and military observers.

f. Military contingents should be of normal battalion strength (between 400 and 800 personnel) and deployed in and responsible for a recognised sector.

g. The mission should be widely dispersed.

The study was also limited by time, logistics constraints and the diverse and wide deployments of the mission. Much time was therefore spent in Kinshasa, Goma and Beni. Key decision-makers were located in these places and there was therefore much activity there. Notwithstanding these challenges, the study was not affected in the bid to tease out the relationships key to producing useful ideas on and the factual base of the issue being investigated (Hansen, Cottle, Negrine & Newbold, 1998).

The study was also restricted mainly to PI practitioners, those who work in PI, those who contribute to policy-making relating to PI and others who have been identified to have some insight into the subject matter or a role to play. There was however no conflict of interest identified.

4.10 Summary

This chapter has presented the methodology employed during the ethnographic fieldwork. In the process, the researcher has demonstrated how the researcher navigated the research space in a closed UN world, detailed the steps to gain access to research sites, discussed the strategy to identify and recruit the research participants, as well as the research methods, sampling and data gathering and analysis techniques.

As a case study, the research methods were multiple qualitative strategies, in particular in-depth interviews, participant observation, qualitative survey, and document review. Sampling was purposive with N=68 respondents identified for the study. Approximately 50 documents have been reviewed. Several themes have emerged from the data, some of which are consistent with the literature. For example, the organisation and structure of the PI component, and the PI model in practice. In the next chapter, the findings of the study are analysed and discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

PUBLIC INFORMATION IN MONUSCO: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In this Chapter, the findings of the study are discussed. The results are situated within the understanding and experiences of respondents. They present a rich description of MONUSCO's public information social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) and reveal in particular how Public Information is organised and practised (Meluch, 2016) in the Mission.

The findings generally show that MONUSCO has a well-functioning Public Information (PI) component, the Strategic Communication and Public Information Division (SC-PID). However, its structure, organisation and functions and the coordination of its activities with other components may have to be looked at. These findings are particularly not new, given the literature of interest reviewed and what has been developed in the conceptual and theoretical frameworks in Chapter Three. The results, nevertheless, serve to translate the practical dimensions of PI in peace operations. While they answer questions that are potentially more complex, they also introduce new ways of looking at PI in UN peace operations at large. For example, what kind of public communication should the UN peace operation adopt? PI or Information Office (IO) operations or both?

As themes provide the researcher with the opportunity to explicate findings, the following themes were identified before the data collection, while reviewing the relevant literature and during the data collection. Some were also observed during the treatment of the data. The findings

are organised, analysed and discussed essentially along the research questions (Chapter One) and in line with the following themes:

a. Understanding of PI by key stakeholders.

b. The organisation, structure and efficacy of the SC-PID.

c. The communication strategy and how PI activities were consistent with it.

d. Military PI and its contribution to conflict management.

e. PI activities and how they reflected the situational and audience expectations in the conflict area.

In the first section, the respondents' understanding of PI was discussed. To understand is to have insight and good judgment and it was important to have a sense of what the understanding of public information was among the various players and actors to appreciate how they could cope with its intricate dynamics and relationships.

5.2 Understanding public information – elite views

The views of particularly senior leaders were thought to be significant in how the Mission understood PI that should inform what could be done with it and by it. The major finding was that there did not seem to be a unified understanding among senior leaders. This finding demonstrates their comprehension of PI, both in concept and practice. This could probably affect the kind of attention and support provided by PI at the highest levels.

The views were varied. While all key research participants whose views were solicited acknowledged the SC-PID as a desirable outfit and PI as a necessity, some, however, saw the PI as a tool and others as a function. Yet others saw it as a forum. To one Key Elite Research participant, "There's no doubt about it…. This is a very good, important tool…." [46] In this view,

[46] Interview with KEI 1A on 17 May 2023 @1159

PI could be used by the Mission to reach out principally to the local people to help them appreciate the challenges facing both the country as well as MONUSCO and to play their part in achieving the objectives of peace. It could also speak on behalf of the Mission. As a function, it was either journalism or advertising. Another key research participant viewed it as something like "trying to sell ourselves…., like advertising what we are doing." [47] This, according to the research participants, clouds understanding oftentimes of what the challenges were on the ground.

It did not seem that there was any significant difference between the views of civilians and the military. Key Elite Research participants (KEI 2A), a military officer, for example, also viewed it as a tool that could help MONUSCO build the confidence and resilience of the local population; but that it could not act alone in this and had to belong to a "well-established tool" comprising "public information, information operations and intelligence."[48] Similarly, KEI 2C, another key military research participant,[49] viewed it as an agency entrusted with the responsibility of disseminating information to the public through the public news media.

Public Information practitioners themselves had similar varied views. KI 1C, who had been serving in the SC-PID for up to six years, saw PI as a function that was using traditional communication tools to reach out to the global audience, the public, and to inform them, [50] implying that there was a need for something else with the advent of social and digital new media. His counterpart on the military side, KI 2D, however, also saw PI to be like "marketing" and a means by which to "communicate better." [51]

[47] Interview with KEI 1B on 03 May 2019 @ 1644.
[48] Interview with KEI 2A 10 May 2019 @ 1140.
[49] Interview with KEI 2C 10 May 2019 @ 1058.
[50] Interview with KI 1C on 30 April 2019 @1557.
[51] Interview with KI 2D on 8 May 2019 @ 1528.

Each of the people interviewed had a different understanding. They looked at it from the context of its roles and influence as they understood it. Table 5.1 presents a summary of the understanding of these actors and players of PI in MONUSCO.

Table 5.1: Understanding of respondents of public information.

Serial No.	Orientation of Leadership	Position	Public Information Understanding		Remarks
			Attribute (what it entails)	Goals (what can be achieved with it)	
1.	Civilian	SRSG	Tool, agency, filter, practice	Public education, spokesperson, journalism	Legal expert
2.	Civilian	MCOS	Agency,	Advertising, PR	
3.	Civilian	D/SC-PID	Agency, function, platform	Reach out to population, sensitisation, civilizing	
4.	Military	FC	Tool, platform, channel, function, receptacle	Reach out to population, inform stakeholders, public education, collect information	Info Ops expert
5.	Military	FCOS	information	inform	Basically through civil or own media
6.	Military	CMPIO	Tool, function	Marketing	

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

From all indications, even though they seem to have individual positions on what it entails, they all seemed to see PI as communication with a strategic purpose, either to project the organisation, speak on its behalf or sensitise/educate the public to play a role in the peace process. The elements of PI's strategic nature were as follows:

a. Share information on the Mission and tasks with its varied stakeholders.

b. Engage these stakeholders towards attaining Mission stated objectives.

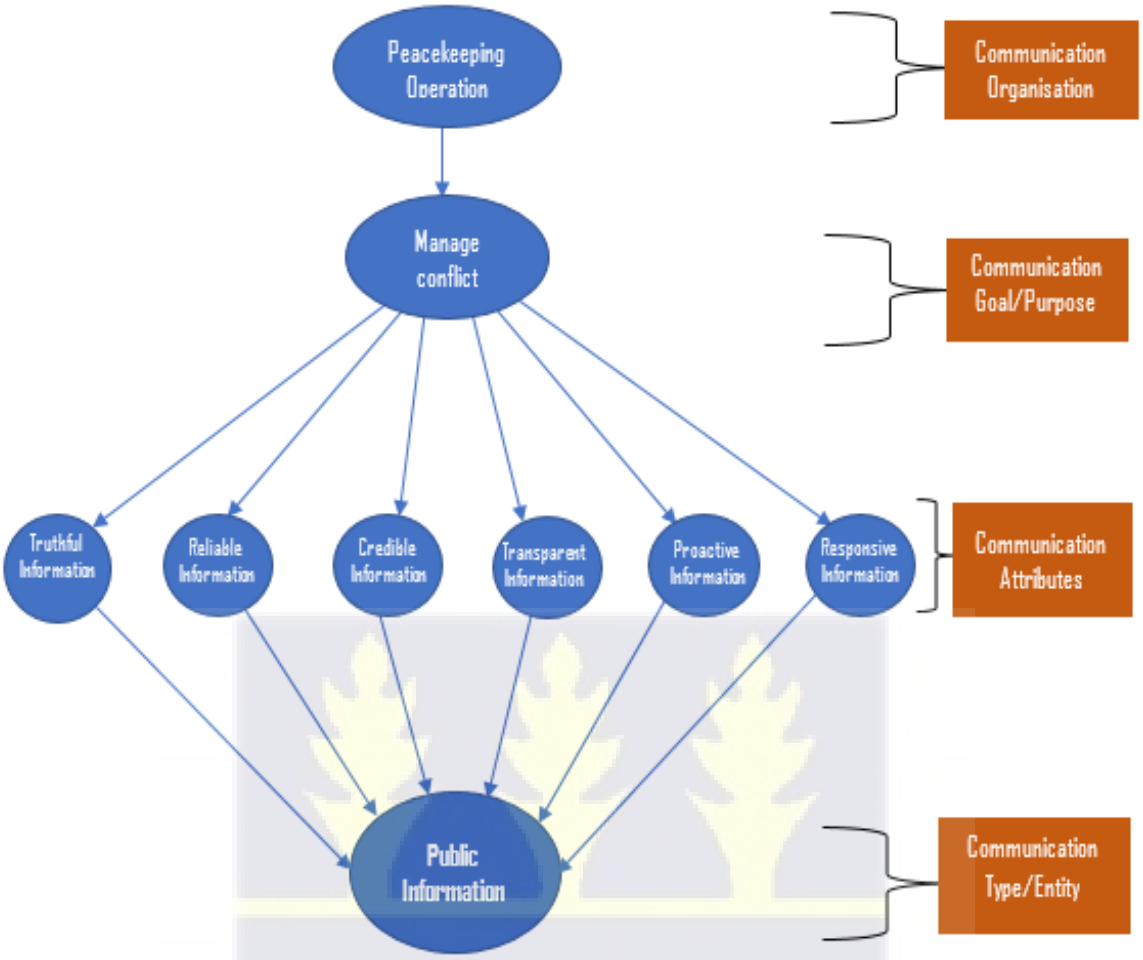
c. Involve the stakeholders in the attainment of the Mission's stated objectives.

d. Popularise/market/project MONUSCO.

There was also the indication that the Mission was not only interested in PI but also in IO. The latter synchronised with the concept of strategic communication in line with the 2016 policy. This is a function which to a large extent was aimed at what a military commander described as "winning the minds and hearts" of the population, which it was felt PI was unable or reluctant to adequately address. There therefore seemed to be a mixed understanding of PI in the Mission, with a thin line separating it from IO, especially in the Military Component. No matter their views, the elite research participants in particular seemed to see it as not adequately meeting the informational needs of the Mission. There were therefore indications of the need for either its restructuring or replacement with a function that could adequately and promptly respond to these expectations.

However, from the literature and in particular official UN documents, a suggested model of PI could be presented in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Suggested model of public information in peace operations from literature



Source: Author's Field Research, 2019. Credit: Designed by the Author

The model presents PI as a proactive and responsive practice that provides truthful, credible, transparent and reliable information to contribute to the management of international conflict and the effectiveness and success of peace operations. It shows that if the objective is to manage conflict, PI was the most effective and appropriate form of public communication, since the function was aimed not to stoke but most importantly help douse the fires.

The next section discusses the findings of Research Question 1 on the organisation, structure and efficacy of Public Information in MONUSCO.

5.3 Organisation, structure and efficacy of the SC-PID

Key findings for RQ 1 were that, the structure of the Strategic Communication and Public Information Division (SC-PID) was inadequate; functional relations between PI practitioners in the Mission were poor; the competencies of some of these practitioners, especially in the Military Component, were low; working guidelines and instructions on PI were not adequately disseminated down the line; and there was also inadequate capacity building of some PI staff.

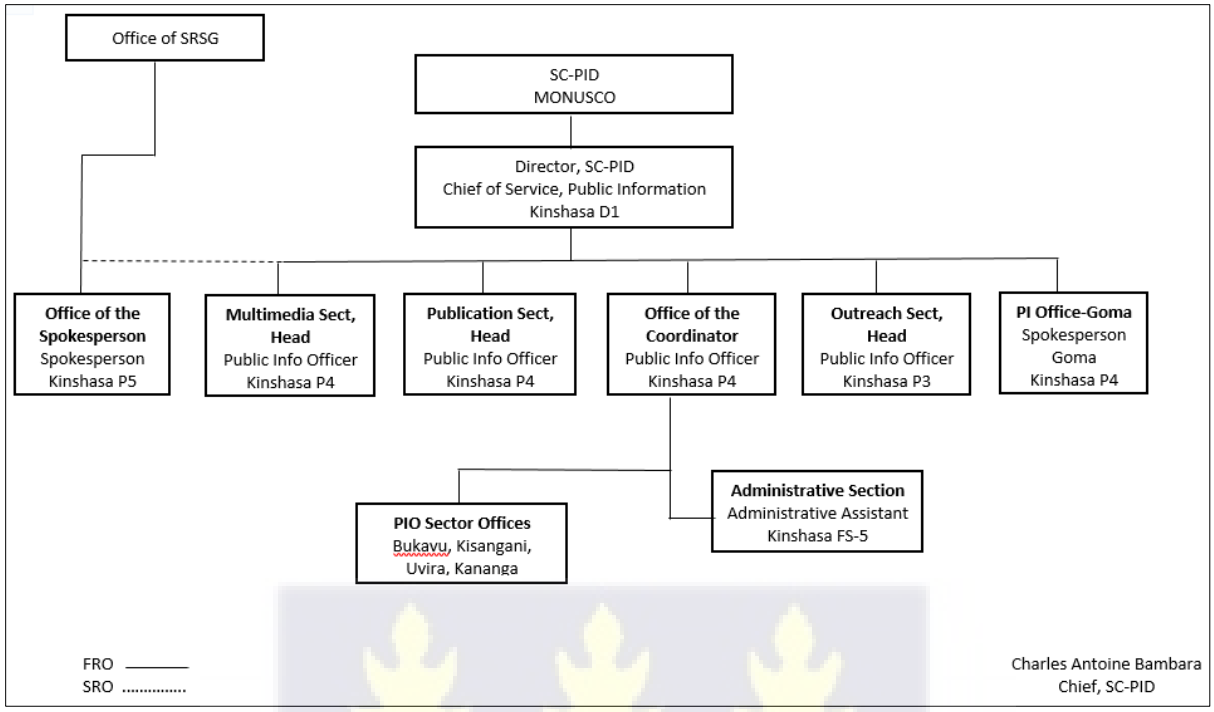
These findings are discussed under the following themes: the organisation and structure of the SC-PID; functional work relations between the various PI components; the competencies of PI staff; procedures, guidelines and instructions on PI; and capacity-building in PI.

5.3.1 The Organisation and Structure of the SC-PID

MONUSCO was an integrated and multidimensional mission at the time of the study. It consisted of essentially four major components – Civilian, Military, Civil Police and the UN Country Team (UNCT). By current UN doctrine, by roping the UNCT into the structure of the peace operation, the UNCT head was MONUSCO's second Deputy SRSG (DSRSG) responsible for humanitarian affairs. This placed all the assets of the UNCT at the behest of the Mission, though these were still under the operational command and control of the respective UN agencies in-country. The civilian component was itself made up of several separate sections/divisions. [52] These and many others were entrusted with the responsibility to carry out specific functions. All these were expected to benefit from the activities of the SC-PID.

[52] These include the Mission Headquarters (which grouped the Office of the SRSG and other senior leaders as well as departments such as Mission Support, Engineering, Medical, and Aviation, etc), Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), Civil Affairs, Political Affairs, Humanitarian Affairs, Conduct and Discipline, Human Rights, Strategic Communication and Public Information.

Figure 5.2: SC-PID Organisational Chart



Source: The Author's Field Research, 2019. Credit: MONUSCO

Even though it may seem that a PI component in a peacekeeping mission is an ecosystem with constituent parts consisting of the elements responsible for PI in the Mission's respective substantive components, the picture in MONUSCO presented otherwise. Figure 5.2 was a draft organisational chart of the SC-PID. There was no evidence of a previous one. The chart reflected only the SC-PID HQ, its functional units at the headquarters and sector offices, all of which were under the direct command and control of the chief of the Division.

Some respondents expressed reservations about the inadequacy of the structure. For example, notwithstanding what was called a Communication Contact Group which consisted of the UNCT communication teams and the SC-PID, the PI needs of the integrated Mission were yet to be efficiently met by the Division. Moreover, as was evident on the ground, some components seemed to have taken care of their PI, without any noticeable input from the Division. It was

explained that this could have resulted largely from the non-representation of all these other entities in the organisational structure of the SC-PID, to probably suggest that they were not the responsibility of the Division.

The structure was found to be inadequate, mainly because, firstly, it was thought not to have captured its responsibility over the separate PI outfits of the substantive components; and secondly, it did not seem the Mission's objectives were considered in probably fashioning out the structure. A peace operation's PI involves several components, all of which are engaged in different aspects of the production and dissemination of information about their activities and operations. As a greater degree of management of field-based PI was warranted (United Nations, 1997a, p15), this should incorporate these components into the SC-PID's organisational structure. The interests of all these components should be factored into this. However, it did not seem that the design of the structure was informed by the composition of the Mission and other related dynamics. An example of how the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia's (UNTAC) public information component was designed in 1992 is given as a guide, as follows;

> … the Deputy SRSG announced the creation of a Community Relations Office… It was established primarily in response to an open letter to Akashi[53] published in the *Phnom Penh Post* of 11 October signed by 100 men and women from UNTAC, NGOs and the Cambodian community. …. (Findlay, 1995, pp. 151-152).

This eventually led to the appointment of an ombudsperson for women and the establishment of an office under PI to liaise with the Cambodian community and educate UNTAC personnel on issues of cultural sensitivity and gender awareness. A month later, a UNTAC Information Centre was also opened to foster understanding among Cambodians about UNTAC's mission, mandate and activities (Findlay, 1995).

[53] Mr Yashuki Akashi was the UNTAC SRSG.

An organisation's organisational structure also ought to be influenced by its objectives and goals. Combined with recognition of the representation of the Mission's substantive components, these in turn must inform (1) its governance/decision-making and administration, (2) its functions, about the delivery of its services to the various components and the local population, (3) its efficiency and (4) its relationship with other components. The DPI/DPKO 2006 Policy guidelines provide that the PI component's "first goal" was to make information widely available to those involved in and affected by the peace process (United Nations, 2006a, p18). This was virtually everybody in and associated with the Mission, both in and outside the mission area.

The policy further outlines PI priorities to include establishing itself as a credible, non-partisan source of information about the peace process and the role of the UN; play a proactive role in addressing negative public perceptions and attitudes about the mission through clear, accurate and timely information; and respond quickly and transparently to negative media coverage. Others were: to promote all aspects of the mission's work to the national and international community to include ensuring a wide understanding of the mission's mandate and responsibilities; and implement a communications strategy that actively supported the peace operation's objectives.

All these should ordinarily inform how the PI component should fashion out how it should carry out its responsibilities and tasks. While these are generic and do matter, when it comes to creating an entity that will answer to the information needs of an organisation, the best bet is to rely on its specific demands. Going by the listed priorities and coupled with responding to the mission's core objectives, the SC-PID ought to be organised along the lines of its decision-making and administrative arrangements or governance and its functions, with the understanding there was a need for efficiency and effectiveness in its performance and relationships with other components.

There was no evidence to suggest that any of these factors were considered in drawing up the organograms of the Division in the past. What is evident nevertheless are the standard UN guidelines (United Nations, 1997a, pp. 19-35; United Nations, 1997b, p. 21; United Nations, 2006a, pp. 14-17) which have outlined how public information component should be organised, structured and function; but as mentioned, these are generic and could only be useful in guiding what ought to be the case and not what is the case.

Considering that the former Department of Public Information at the UN Secretariat was the public voice of and principal source of information on the UN system (United Nations, 1997b), by implication the SC-PID ought to be the principal voice of and source of information on the mission. It was argued that a fragmented network of independent and semi-independent PI entities plagued with duplication and overlapping of functions and impact could therefore hamper MONUSCO's ability to speak with one voice and be impactful as expected. For SC-PID to be impactful, with a far higher chance of success, some respondents, therefore, stressed the need for a coherent and results-based approach to public information management in MONUSCO, which should inform a joined-up organisational structure as a priority. This should consist of two organisational charts: one to set the outline of the Division's decision-making and two, to clarify its functional responsibilities. The joined-up structure could therefore reflect the communications and relations in the organisation and additionally be characterised by its specialisation, coordination, expertise and responsibility.

The first speaks to the hierarchical structure with a chain of command and the lines of communication and responsibility. Nwagbara and Brown (2014) posit that while an organisational structure gives legitimacy to the organisation, it aims to facilitate better relationships between its constituent parts, and emphasises the need for shared, bi-directional engagement processes and

strategies. But while it was essential for close coordination between the SC-PID and the various substantive components of the integrated mission, this could only be effective with the active support of the respective components (United Nations, 2006a, p. 22) and could survive and thrive only when its members engaged in a free-flowing and interactive communication.

However, it was evident that the respective entities seemed to operate in separate silos. For example, the uniformed components, as expected, did not assign dedicated public information officers to the office of the Director of the SC-PID, nor was any one of them assigned to the "staff of the civilian spokesperson" (p. 21), even though the Chief Military Public Information Officer (CMPIO) was designated the military's spokesperson. It was indicated that about six years earlier, there was an MPIO stationed in the SC-PID. This had somehow been discontinued. According to the Director of the SC-PID, one reason could be the split nature of the MHQ which saw the bulk of the military leadership moving to Goma, thus affecting the deployment of military staff officers (MSOs)[54]. While the Director was in support of an MPIO deployed to the Division, he was unsure how this could be effected, noting that it required a senior leadership decision. It was contended by some interlocutors, nonetheless, that the split headquarters ought not to affect the necessary standing arrangements required to ensure effective PI management and practice, and that this rather should inform the appropriate structure. An example was given of UNMEE, which had a split headquarters in both Addis and Asmara and which had a PI that incorporated this dynamic[55].

The UN's claim that PI was a political and operational necessity (United Nations, 2006a), by all accounts, was placing PI at the heart of peace operations. Additionally, by redefining public information practice in peace operations as Strategic Communications and Public Information (United Nations, 2016c), the UN was cloaking public information with the appropriate garb as a

[54] Interview with KI 1C on 29 April 2019 @ 1557.
[55] Interview with interlocutor INT 1 on 14 May 2019 @ 1957.

strategic entity which must function and be considered as such. To enable PI in MONUSCO to deliver its mandate, two model organisational structures were suggested.

First was a fully integrated structure. It was a consensus that public information in MONUSCO was not integrated enough. For example, a senior military commander pointed this out,

> I don't think that the public information area here is really integrated. I don't know why. But the fact is that we do not have a voice in the structure as we believe that it should. This is why we develop some initiatives…. This lack of integration doesn't mean that we don't have a good relationship, which is, it seems, contradictory, but it's not. … But the fact is that the public information of the mission is so busy with other things. They are always focusing on this political leadership and the political developments of the mission and sometimes … they forget the role of the military, the role of the police and the role of humanitarian. They are not maybe properly staffed, managed, and that means that they do not have enough staff to do what they should. … So, the fact is .... there is a very good relationship, but it's not integrated as it should.[56]

Integration was therefore to include all the major PI units/sections of the various substantive components. This was to allow for substantive planning, procedural planning and executory decision-making (Simon, 1997) with an integrated model leading to and explaining how the various entities were represented, related and communicated (Miller, 2001). Integration was expected to facilitate efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination. Full integration should therefore be reflected in a unified organisational structure.

Based on the DPKO/DPI/DFS Policy on Strategic Communications and Public Information, the Mission was considering adopting a new concept for its public communication in line with what was called a "comprehensive approach." [57] This was to ensure that all components sat around the table to plan and implement strategies, whether operations or logistics or PI, among others. It did not seem this approach was extended to PI yet. The UN's Capstone Doctrine provides

[56] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.
[57] Interview with KEI 1B on 03 May 2019 @ 1644.

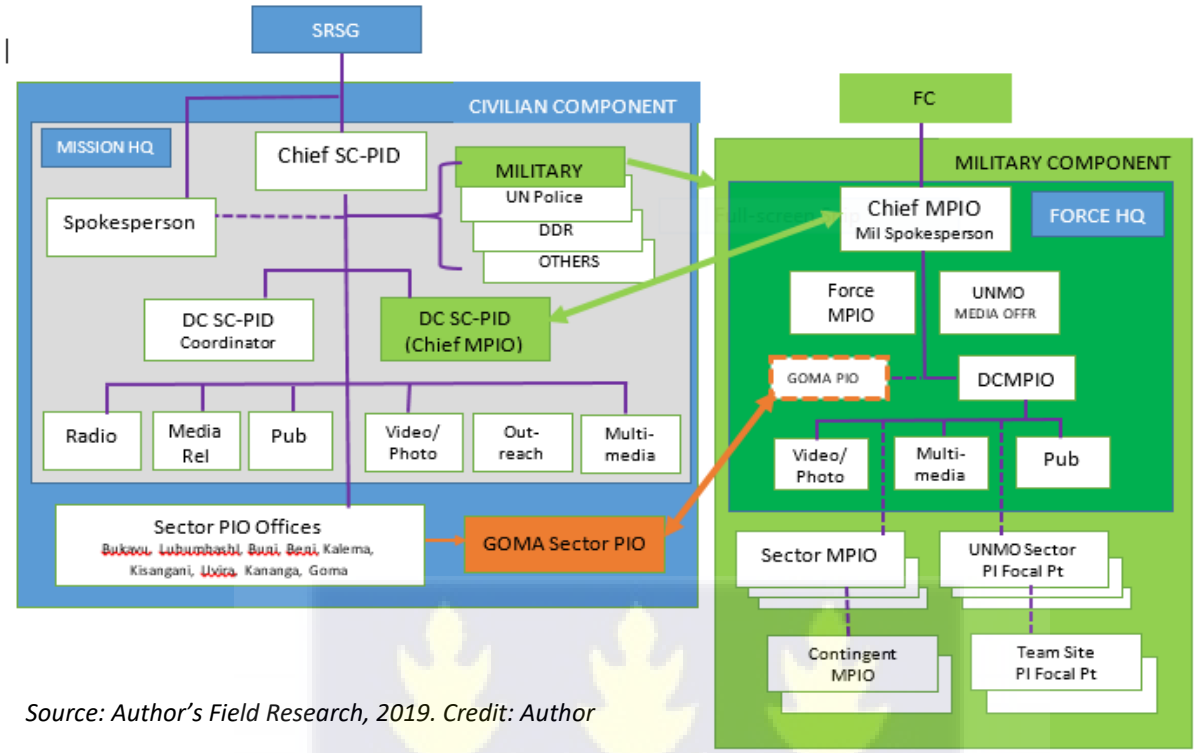
for an Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP) which was expected to facilitate the planning of multidimensional UN peace operations. The IMPP intended to help the UN system arrive at a common understanding of its strategic objectives in a particular country by engaging all relevant parts of the system (United Nations, 2008b) and to ensure that the right people were at the planning table, that the right issues were being discussed, and that the appropriate authorities and accountabilities were in place to motivate integrated thinking and planning (ibid).

A more inclusive organisational structure for PI, it was expected, would allow coherence in PI activities, comprehensive decision-making and effective dissemination and sharing of information across MONUSCO. Integration was not to be merely superficial, whereby representatives of the components were merely placed within the SC-PID. It would rather mean putting in place practical transparent measures that truly integrate both military and civilian PIOs, for example. This was expected to include an integrated organisational chart, common operating procedures, practical approaches to PI management and effective feedback mechanisms. While the size and spread of MONUSCO in the vastness of DR Congo could hamper efforts at full integration, it was advocated, for example, that as a first step, military and civilian PI staff, for example, could co-locate. They were, additionally, to look at their standard operating procedures and see where practical steps could be taken to overcome any obstacles, such as rank versus civilian professional grade, which were often said to stand in the way of full integration of PI assets in a peacekeeping mission. In the view of KEI 2A,

> If there was integration, in which case I mean having the MPIO and the CPIO sitting together, you are likely to see that, despite the fact that the headquarters are separate here, you get to have an improvement. But I sincerely don't know why it was not implemented yet. I believe that we have room to do that.[58]

[58] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.

Figure 5.3: Model organisational charts of an integrated SC-PID



Source: Author's Field Research, 2019. Credit: Author

Figure 5.3 is a suggested model of an integrated mission-wide organisational structure of the SC-PID designed by the author informed by various suggestions from respondents. At the SC-PID HQ, for example, it was suggested that there should be dedicated PI representatives of the respective major components. While being operationally under the command of their various component heads, these specialist representatives were nonetheless to be professionally under the direction of the Director SC-PID. This is represented by the blue patch, the MHQ. The green boxes at the MHQ, represent the military. The top green box is further expanded in the green patch to the right, representing the military component and the FHQ. This ought to be similar to the other representations. It was additionally suggested that the CMPIO, as head of military PI, the second green box in the MHQ patch, and largely because the military was the biggest component in the Mission, should be one of the two deputies to the Director of the SC-PID. KEI 2A's more enriching view was that co-locating the CMPIO in the SC-PID would not

mean the military was losing him. He will be the deputy of the section and with that, the military will have direct access to everything they could use. [59]

It was therefore suggested more emphatically that there should be one office for PI, with the main office to be in Kinshasa with somebody from the military component there. The military's main presence was to be in Goma together with the civilian structure. It meant that there would be one office for PI connected with all components of the mission. This was said to be the desirable structure for PI in MONUSCO.[60] With the split MONUSCO HQ, it was said to be prudent to co-locate the Goma Sector PIO in the office of the CMPIO, mainly for coordination and liaison. This is represented by the orange box in the SC-PID HQ and the orange checked box at the FHQ. However, if it was not feasible to locate the CMPIO in the office of the Director of the SC-PID, he/she could be represented by a Military Public Information Officer (MPIO). This arrangement, it was explained, would afford greater unanimity in PI management and avoid any departmental tensions between the major components and the SC-PID, thereby enhancing the standardisation of PI practice in the Mission. Of course, as it was acknowledged, there was some collaboration and cooperation between, for example, the CMPIO and the SC-PID Director and some of his staff across the mission. But as it was intimated, there was more room for improvement.

The suggestion to have one structure for public information was further explained by an interesting view raised by interlocutors, individually but which in summary was as follows. It was explained that in the past, especially when the UN maintained peacekeeping missions, there were often frictions between the Head of the UN Country Team (usually known as the UNDP) who was often the diplomatic representative of the UN in the country and the SRSG who was the head of the peacekeeping mission. Somehow the UN has found a clever way to deal with this by

[59] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.
[60] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.

incorporating the UNCT into the peacekeeping mission with its Head becoming the second DSRSG. And so, it was therefore suggested that this could be the case with PI, whereby by policy all elements engaged in PI, whether military, civil police or civilian, would be directly brought under the authority and direction of the Mission Public Information Component. The PI heads of the substantive components would then be subordinate to the Director SC-PID under one structure. Even though this was assumed in principle, the interlocutors explained further, that this was not backed by any specific policy placing all these subordinate entities under the SC-PID and this made coordination and collaboration a little more difficult. The suggestion was borne by this need.

> … as we have here for aviation and for medical and for engineers, the public information office should be one office with everybody working with the same purpose in providing coverage about everything that's happening in the mission, not only the military or police but everything that's happened and that is relevant. I sincerely believe that we have room for a better integration. [61]

The second suggestion was a joined-up operational functional structure. It was observed that the functional responsibilities of the SC-PID were not identified and articulated. In Figure 5.2, what is represented is a mixed line organisation and technical function responsibility. This does not give a clear indication of what the Division was to do by way of its operational functions to answer to the expectations of the Mission, bearing in mind its stated objectives. For instance, the SC-PID's operational functions could include publicity, liaison and coordination, public diplomacy, public speaking, outreach, media development, public education and internal communication, and so, all representing just what the Division must do. These operational functions will cut across all the various PI sections and be reflected in them. As noted above, functional structures are determined by the goals of the organisation and the objectives deriving from these. MONUSCO's core goals were the protection of civilians (POC) and stabilisation. How

[61] Interview with KEI 2A.

would PI help to achieve these? Multimedia, for example, is a technical function. This is to provide the needed tools for certain operational functions to be carried out, such as publicity. How was publicity to be carried out? And by what means? Multimedia could contribute by providing the technical expertise for this.

There was also the need for effective coordination of PI activities and programmes across the Mission. Another joined-up structure was suggested to take care of this. This would incorporate the public information units/sections of the various components with the SC-PID in a coordinating cell. This was expected to offset inherent challenges of the widely dispersed nature of MONUSCO and its divided Mission/Force HQs, which could hamper efforts at full integration. According to a top senior military commander, MONUSCO's split HQs made things harder. Nevertheless, PI was one office that should be integrated, similar to aviation, medical and engineering which had already been integrated, as noted above.

> …the public information office should be one office with everybody working with the same purpose in providing coverage about everything that's happening in the mission, not only the military or police but everything that's happening and that is relevant. I sincerely believe that we have room for a better integration.[62]

There was said to be a directive from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for the two separate HQs in Goma to integrate[63], which could have affected public information. But as it was intimated, PI was one of the offices in the HQ yet to integrate, even though as already suggested it was quite easy to do so. It was nonetheless suggested that something similar to the standing structures that currently support integration in peacekeeping missions should be adopted for PI practice and management. Currently in multidimensional peacekeeping missions, including MONUSCO, there are standing coordinating mechanisms, such as Joint Operations Cell (JOC)

[62] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.
[63] The author could not have access to the directive to confirm this.

and Joint Mission Analysis Cell (JMAC). These joint structures have qualified personnel seconded from the substantive components. They provide sufficient resources and support to senior management decision-making, and can also act as force multipliers across the full range of capabilities and tasks of a peace operation (United Nations, 2011, p13). A Joint Public Information Coordinating Centre (JPICC) was therefore thought to be an ideal method to effectively integrate PI and coordinate PI functions, activities and products. This was designed by the author motivated by the various suggestions in that direction during the in-depth interviews. It would consist of the PI representatives of the various substantive components and others as indicated in Figure 5.3. All these components play active roles in the mission's PI outreach and do need to work as and in a team. The JPICC is a web-like structure that should be under the leadership of the Director of the SC-PID. It was expected to feature at all the levels – Mission/Force HQs, sectors and contingents – and offer the mission's PI assets greater leverage in the mission-wide practice. Working very much like the other joint structures, the JPICC will afford timely decision-making, in addition to other benefits. For example, the SC-PID will get enough information about the activities of the various components and there will be minimum or no delay in information flow.

Additionally, respective PIOs will be provided a forum/platform to share information and experiences while the SC-PID will serve as a credible and true repository of information generated as part of the mission's public information. Figure 5.4 presents a typical JPICC in MONUSCO. Where components may not have a dedicated public information presence, the JPICC could encourage them to field persons with the requisite experience and expertise to serve as PIOs and also assist them carry out public information in their various sectors. Above all, the JPICC will ensure teamwork in and continuity of public information practice in the

Figure 5.4: Example of a Joint Public Information Coordinating Centre

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

mission, especially where the staff of certain components, such as the uniformed components, rotate more frequently. It will also help the SC-PID as the hub of public information in the mission to exercise effective command and control over and shape public information in the mission.

It has been argued that these models aim to standardise the structures of PI in MONUSCO to the greatest extent possible. It will also facilitate critical decision-making and especially communication during a crisis, prevent duplication of jobs, functions and responsibilities, and lead to full and judicious use of resources in furtherance of the SC-PID's objectives. Above all, the arrangements could more effectively support MONUSCO realise its strategic goals.

5.3.2 Functional Work Relations between the Public Information Components

Functional work relations establish a connection between positions or organisational units at different management levels based on the specialised nature of their operational functions for which a mutual responsibility is shared (USPS, 2022). It means a complementary and interactive relationship between and among entities performing the same or similar functions within an organisation. It also speaks to these specialised units supporting themselves while making efforts to build their competencies and for their development with a variety of team-related activities (Vasilena, 2014).

Though the relevant policies already referenced in this thesis called for "close and collaborative working relationship" between the specialised PI personnel of the respective components and the SC-PID (United Nations, 2006a, p.20), while enabling them to "readily integrate" their efforts into the SC-PID (United Nations, 2016c, p.17), a major finding was that functional work relations between the various PI components in MONUSCO were observed to be uncoordinated and sometimes unrelated. This notwithstanding that the Director of the SC-PID insisted that no component could carry out its PI work without input from his office. The SC-PID has the primary PI responsibility in MONUSCO. MONUSCO as an integrated mission consisted of several major components, some of which have been captured in Figure 5.3. It therefore presupposes that there should ordinarily be a functional connection between the SC-PID and the various PI components in the mission.

Some respondents identified this largely as to result from what was said to be the lack of coordination among the various entities performing PI functions and activities in MONUSCO. For example, it was revealed that a major component did not often share information on their activities with the SC-PID. Other factors were also identified to hamper effective functional work relations

within the PI ecosystem. There was the problem of efficiency and interest of Public Information Officers (PIOs); the case of competition between field PIOs and even sometimes individual staff members who were interested in contributing information to PI channels. Respondents were therefore concerned that there being no direct working relations between the various PI components was detrimental to a comprehensive approach to PI practice in MONUSCO. Without connectedness, the SC-PID would be unable to influence these independent or autonomous PI components in the manner of their functions and performance.

A principal requirement for connectedness is, first, the presence of an entity entrusted with responsibility for PI in the particular component and, second, the prescribed function in the component. For example, in 2004, when it became imperative for UNMEE's Public Information Office to involve the military component in its work, the latter had to create PI positions in the various contingents and field staff officers to perform that function (Atintande, 2019). This is consistent with best practice. Creating the specialised structures in the individual components, based on the operational requirements of each separate unit/entity, and appropriately staffed (USPS, 2023) facilitated their connection with the Mission's Public Information Office. Many of the major components in MONUSCO fielded PIOs. The military component, for example, had MPIOs at all levels of the Force: FHQ, Sector HQ and even some field contingents. A major constraint here was the frequent turn-around of the uniformed PIOs, for example. [64] UN Police was said to also have a PPIO in the office of the Commissioner. The Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) was said to have a well-functioning office and was even claimed to own

[64] The military contingents and staff rotated annually and in some cases more frequently.

its radio broadcast capability[65]. It was therefore probably easy to connect all these entities and establish clear functional working relations with all of them.

According to one interlocutor, Civil Affairs in MONUSCO was said to be very dynamic in public information. It had always been very necessary to provide adequate information to the public about civil affairs activities. There was therefore a close link between the section and the SC-PID. However, it was noted that there was often limitation to their institutional communication with the public in the field, as their communication often had to pass through tools managed by the SC-PID[66]. And so, it was mentioned that without connectedness, there was often frustration in information flow from the front line to the SC-PID and across the PI architecture.

Even though the Mission and Force leaderships were noted to be fairly stable and could provide direction and guidance to those below, it was stressed that joined-up and integrated organisational structures as suggested above that clarify relationships between the actors could help offset this drawback. Additionally, regular PI operational conferences attended by all PI stakeholders, as time and resources would allow, could also facilitate functional work relations between them. Complementing each other in the coverage of the mission's activities was also thought to contribute to these relations[67]. It was therefore suggested to increase collaboration between PI field officers of the various substantive components, with collaboration to be intensified.

Connectedness through regular communication and engagement of the PI practitioners, across the board, was more necessary, especially because of the tendency of some field-based PIOs to favour the projection of their activities rather than telling the Mission's story.

[65] Interview with KI 1C on 30 April 2019 @ 1013.
[66] Interview with INT 5 on 30 June 2019 @ 1028.
[67] Interview with I1 G(1) on 07 May 2019 @ 0801.

5.3.3 The Competencies of Public Information Practitioners

Dallaire (2004) was in no doubt that a PI office needed to be competent enough to perform its operational functions to satisfaction. He must therefore have been referring to what Le Deist and Winterton (2005) consider as (1) an institution with the requisite attributes to drive higher job performance and (2) professional staff with traits and motives for satisfactory micro-level job performance. Le Deist and Winterton (2005) point out that, competence refers to knowledge, skills and attitudes. These particularly relate to the vocational standards that describe what people require to do their jobs, tasks that people currently undertake, and the personal traits and characteristics which describe what people are like in the jobs that they do. While there are varied definitions of competence from the sociological, linguistic and functional perspectives, the term holistically refers to "what a person knows and can do under ideal circumstances" (Glaesser, 2019, p73). And performance is an indicator of competence.

A major finding was that the SC-PID generally was staffed by skilled and competent people. Even though this researcher had no access to the personal records of the staff, such as employment letters and qualification certificates, it was observed that both international and local staff in the SC-PID HQ in particular and the sectors were imbued with the requisite aptitudes for their functions[68]. Interacting with the staff, from the Director down to the lowest ranking person, it was evident that they had the requisite qualifications and competence in their respective fields. They seemed not just fit for their jobs; some seemed to have the talent and natural flair for their functions. The SC-PID Director intimated that he often reviewed the terms of reference (TORs) of his staff and could vouch for their suitability for their functions. Some local staff also have had good prior professional training before being engaged.

[68] This position was adduced following interviews with the functional heads of the various departments in the SC-PID HQ.

Public Information is said to be a competence-based function. The UN itself has indicated in its 2006 and 2016 policies on PI that the PIO should be a professional and that the PI component must have "highly skilled and experienced staff who were trained professionals in communication" (United Nations, 2006a, p.28; United Nations, 2016c, pp.15-17). It was therefore expected that PIOs or persons deployed or were deploying in such a competence-based role must be able to perform their professionally skilled functions.

While by and large the civilian PI staff were professional in their jobs, this was not so with the uniformed components, particularly the military. For example, it was revealed that some MPIOs were not necessarily imbued with prior professional competence. A few months before the study, the CMPIO at the FHQ was relieved of his position and repatriated back to his country, for unprofessional conduct. He was replaced by yet another person from the Force who did not have the requisite competence. Some respondents variously reacted to the issue of competence of military PI functionaries. It was a question of them not having the requisite background in PI and were even said to be beyond training. "Two of them for example were really beyond all the training we gave; all the feedback we gave them; they could not really satisfy our needs," some respondents stressed.

Acknowledging the civilian concerns, some military respondents were of the view that, the military had its way of looking at things, the aim being to contribute to strategic leadership goals, which were clearly defined. For example, though the military system was said to be somewhat rigid, it did not mean that the military was unreachable, inflexible, unapproachable or not opening up enough. It was simply to make the Mission successful. And because experienced people could be at the FHQ MPIO cell, who could make the necessary changes to the content and consider the implications of what was to be put out into the public domain, specialist people were not required

at the lower levels. After all, first and foremost, the troops were in MONUSCO as soldiers, not necessarily as PIOs.

This view was, however, not welcomed by sections of the military. Fielding competent soldiers with PI expertise into professional areas was therefore a matter of priority. There was therefore a general understanding of the military leadership at the highest level that, there was a need to have "real experts."[69] For MONUSCO, the requisite expertise, as key elite research participants put it, were two: French-speaking background, and real expertise in communication/public information. The ability to speak French was essential because DR Congo was a Francophone country and it was imperative to be able to deal with a population who understood French or Swahili or Lingala, such that they could read what the Mission published[70]. There was nevertheless the view that this problem was beyond MONUSCO and lay squarely at the doorsteps of both the UN HQ and Troop Contributing Country (TCCs). While it was fairly easy, for example, to replace a non-performing MPIO with a temporary substitute from within the Force, as in the case of the non-performing CMPIO referred to earlier, the problem was much deeper than that. The point was made that, peacekeeping missions use resources sent to them by the UN. According to one top commander, staff officers who are deployed to PIOs from TCCs must satisfy specific UN HQ requirements. The UN HQ, in 2002, while raising concern over peacekeeping missions experiencing difficulties arising from the competencies and ranks of UN military observers and staff officers, directed that such personnel deploying to peacekeeping missions must be "proficient in the mission language to an extent that they can effectively communicate and write reports in that language" and particularly be proficient in the "staff skills

[69] Interview with KEI 2B on 09 May 2019 @ 0950.
[70] Interview with KEI 2B on 09 May 2019 @ 0950.

required for the appointment for which they are nominated."[71] In this direction, requests from the UN HQ for the nomination of a staff officer – MPIO, for example at the FHQ or Sector HQ − presents TCCs with elaborate job descriptions and other requirements necessary (Appendices XIV and XV) for the specific position.[72] It was left with the TCC to field the most qualified persons. The point was made, however, that the problem of TCCs not fielding competent staff officers could arise from limited human resources and too many operational commitments at the TCCs that might not allow them to provide the right calibre of staff all the time.

Notwithstanding that this problem could be one to be solved from outside MONUSCO, it was indicated that the Mission in the past attempted to address the issue with representations to UN HQ. This did not yield any positive results. Senior leaders in the military component were however of the view that it was important to deal decisively with this matter. The suggestion was therefore that, any MPIO sent to the MONUSCO and considered inappropriate for the position and without the requisite background should be sent back home. The explanation was that were such an action taken several times, it may force TCCs and UN HQ to wake up to their responsibility to field more competent Military Staff Officers (MSOs). [73]

How realistic this will be, is yet to unravel in MONUSCO. It does seem that MONUSCO was unable to influence the choice of competent persons deploying from the TCCs, especially where the position is country-specific. PI, it was stressed by interlocutors, was a professional area and did not lend itself to learning on the job.

[71] In a memo dated 10 July 2002 by the Military Advisor to the Secretary General to all TCCs and peacekeeping missions operational at the time on the competencies and ranks of UN military observers and staff officers.
[72] Vacancy announcement for Initial deployment request for senior military staff officer at the Force Headquarters.
[73] Interview with KEI 2A on 09 May 2019 @ 1049.

The other concern with the competence and professionalism of MPIOs was their frequent turn-around. It was argued that the frequent turn-around of staff officers ought not to affect the professional functioning of the Military PI Component. This was because leadership at all levels of the Mission was stable and provided strategic guidance and direction. For example, the SRSG was there for three years; the Force Commander for two years, the Deputy Force Commander for three years and Sector Commanders for at least one year. Leadership therefore was stable and the direction remained the same[74]. The people at the tactical level, such as junior and middle-level officers, did not contribute to the formulation of the strategic goals; they just worked towards them. Therefore, frequent changes at the lower levels did not have any impact, as there was a multiplicity of individuals working towards the Mission's goals. The worry was, however, that those who would have gained enough experience during their work soon ended their tenure and had to be repatriated back home. This was a problem that the military leadership had been grappling with. This was also acknowledged to be a UN system problem. In the past, a way MONUSCO dealt with the issue was to extend by six months the duty tour of such performing MPIOs. For example, it was pointed out by a top civilian officer that two or three years earlier, the PI authorities had suggested to the Mission leadership to at least change the policy to retain good-performing MPIOs a little longer. It was explained that this was "useful for the mission, the force, and for everyone to have someone knowledgeable about the things going on and can project that and share it with the media, with the public in general."[75] But this was not adequate to address the needs of both the Mission and the Force.

One other way to address the problem, particularly at the FHQ was therefore to encourage longer tenure of MPIOs. It was suggested that a two-year fixed tenure for a professional post was

[74] Interview with KEI 3A (2) on 18 May 2019 @ 0927.
[75] Interview with a senior PIO, KI G(2) on 02 May 2019 @ 1516.

ideal to make the best out of the individual and for efficient performance. However, it was argued that instead of a fixed two-year tour of duty, it would be better to have them for one year and prepare the TCC to have a pre-commitment for the second year. The issue was that sometimes a military staff officer (MSO) may have the requisite expertise even with previous experience in his current role in another institution. But because of the new environment, and the particularities of the UN system, he might have difficulties performing well. Challenges in the current mission could be very specific. For example, language, different components of the mission (civilian, military, police, humanitarian); the trust that must be built within the national organisations and the press, (local, national and international).

So what MONUSCO would prefer, it was suggested by the military leadership, would be that an MPIO could deploy to the Mission for up to two years but his/her initial tour of duty would be one year. Based on performance, MONUSCO would then ask for an extension for the second year. It was mentioned that with this arrangement, MONUSCO authorities would not risk receiving a "no" answer from the TCC, which usually happens. [76] There was therefore the need to adopt a flexible staff manning plan at the FHQ that could afford MONUSCO to retain well-performing MPIOs and also to fully benefit from their professional expertise.

5.3.4 Procedures, guidelines and instructions on public information

For several decades, UN peace operations were guided largely by unwritten principles and informed by the experiences of the peacekeepers themselves (Langholtz, 2010). Today, however, the UN provides a gamut of policies, guidelines and operating procedures for virtually every endeavour in peace operations, including PI. PIOs are therefore reminded to access clear, authoritative guidance available on the multitude of tasks they are required to perform (United

[76] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.

Nations, 2008b, p.7). The goal, among others, is to provide operational practices for the performance of the functions of the PIOs and the efficient management of PI in peace operations.

However, Lehmann (2015) points out that often guidance documents for PI in UN peace operations (Chapter Three) have not been easily applied on the ground. A major finding seemed to confirm Lehmann's position, that notwithstanding that there were guidelines, working instructions, directives and standing operating procedures (SOPs) on PI issued in MONUSCO, these were not fully implemented or adhered to. One key elite research participant, for example, during our interview admitted that though the number of policies and strategies in MONUSCO was impressive, a major challenge was their implementation. [77] Was it the case of non-implementation? Or could it be something else? To find out, the starting point was obviously the SC-PID, from where any such guidance and instructions ought to emanate and disseminate.

The DPI/DPKO 2006 and 2016 policies already referred to, for example, provided overarching guidelines on PI in peace operations. These guidelines are generic. Peace operations were expected to adopt their guidelines and instructions specific to their missions and cover field-based issues of interest. These documents are therefore adaptable to specific situations. While the 2016 policy had been received at the Division, the Director claimed ignorance of the 2006 one. The former was a first review and amendment of the latter. It did not substantially change the earlier policy and only clarified certain processes while redesignating public information into strategic communications and public information, requiring more detailed guidance and new arrangements.

An interaction with the Director of the SC-PID confirmed that MONUSCO had no mission-wide comprehensive and unified PI SOP. The Division and its staff therefore relied essentially on

[77] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.

the specific TORs or job descriptions of the respective staff. As a key elite research participant pointed out, TORs were inadequate to guide to a mission-wide practice[78]. It was the Director's view that even where SOPs existed, most of the time people don't refer to them[79]. They were therefore not crucial to civilians. The Director's regular review of staff individual TORs (both HQ and the provinces) was said to be what kept staff focused on their jobs. Staff were nevertheless expected to be guided specifically by the provisions of the 2016 policy guidelines on strategic communications and public information, which were only generic and not specific to MONUSCO. There was no evidence of the 2016 policy widely distributed down the chain, even though the FC in Goma confirmed knowledge of it. Many respondents, both civilian and military, did not know of this document, nor the 2006 policy, which at the time of its promulgation was considered to supersede earlier guidelines.

While the Mission lacked this vital document, the military however had one, SOP 518. The military component maintains SOPs for almost all recognised activities and functions, from operations to intelligence to welfare and administration. SOP 518 was on military PI (Appendix XIII). The 7-page document had been issued by the Force Chief of Staff as at March 2019, just one month before the study. The SOP provided details of the organisation of military PI and the subordination of MPIOs, permanent and specific tasks for MPIOs, relations with the local media, journalists and local authorities, communication with the SC-PID and the military chain of command, and how MPIOs should plan and conduct their operations. However, there was no evidence of the widespread distribution of this document down the chain.

Even though the absence of an SOP could not hamper professional work, SOPs are very essential for mission-wide practices. They specify clear-cut directions and detailed instructions

[78] Interview with KEI 2B on 09 May 2019 @ 0950
[79] Interview the Director SC-PID on 30 April 2019 @ 1013.

needed to perform specific tasks or operations consistently and efficiently. They usually describe the step-by-step processes that must be taken to properly perform a routine activity. They should normally be followed in the exact same manner every time to guarantee that the organisation remains consistent and in compliance with industry regulations and business standards. This researcher finds the absence of a mission-wide public information standing operating procedures (PI SOP) in MONUSCO a drawback as it was possible PI practice could lack the needed clear-cut direction, as was evident during the study.

Standing operating procedures are often complemented by instructions and routine directives, all of which staff should have easy access to. Instructions and directives from the leadership to the Division on the performance of PI tasks were said to have been issued to the Division, but these were not made available by the Director to the researcher for verification. There was therefore no indication that these instructions and directives had been disseminated down the chain. There was nevertheless indication that some directives and instructions from the Division were received at the respective provinces but whether these were informed by the directives from the leadership was not evident. These were however mainly restricted to the civilian staff of the Division. There was no indication that these had been received by the Military component for example. An example was given about the inadequate integration of the PI assets in the Mission with key research participants revealing that the Force had not received any formal guidance and clear direction on this.[80] Overall, it was a major finding that regular instructions and directives from the right sources on PI were often not passed down the line and that sometimes those who for example desire certain information would only have to personally contact sources anytime for them. Nothing was written and disseminated.

[80] Interview with KEI 2B on 09 May 2019 @ 0950.

> He comes directly to me and asks for the information and then if he specifies the day, I go and check the reports, and I give him. I give him only that which he specifies. [81]

There was, however, one exception. An Interoffice Memo (IOM) on Rules on Mission personnel interacting with Media and sharing sensitive information with external sources, issued by the then MCOS dated 12 July 2016, had been received in the Office of the CMPIO. This document was made available to the researcher, suggesting that correspondence on PI matters was indeed received down the chain. How far down was however not evident.

There was a different situation with the military component. The FHQ had started to issue specific directives to the Force. In three of these directives from the FC, cited by the researcher, portions touched on PI or communication. In the first of the directives dated 27 April 2018, the FC specifically directed the Force to "communicate better" by employing specific initiatives to project the Force and MONUSCO and interact with the local population, the latter under the assumption that the Mission could not protect those it was not in touch with. There was clear evidence that these directives had been disseminated down the chain. In the distribution of this document, however, neither the SC-PID nor the CMPIO were prime recipients.

Another directive dated 18 November 2018, actually spelt out a communication strategy for the Force in which recognition was given to the Military Public Information Cell and the Information Operations Cell to get together with the SC-PID to develop a series of activities to implement the plan. Priority of action was however given to Information Operations. This document was not as widely distributed as the other one mentioned. Nonetheless, in the distribution, neither the CMPIO nor the SC-PID were even copied. What all this means is that the directives may not have been informed by any specific policy on PI in MONUSCO[82] as it was not

[81] Interview with I2E(1) on 10 May 2019 @ 0944.
[82] The FC described himself as an information operations expert, in an interview.

clear whether the issues relating to PI derived from higher guidance, especially from the SC-PID. It was also the case that was the directives to be redirected from a higher source to these entities tasked with functions, this bureaucratic path could delay response and probably even prevent task implementation. The SC-PID did not even seem to be aware of the Force PI SOP, nor formally apprised of these directives.

These findings seem to confirm the earlier statement that, first, directives, instructions and guidance on PI often are not widely distributed to those who must know. Second, that the SC-PID did not have full responsibility for PI across the Mission. Third, PI in MONUSCO may not have the appropriate and comprehensive guidance and direction.

Three key suggestions were offered on how to improve the situation. It was a general understanding that this related to information management. The first was that the SC-PID should be recognised as the central point for managing all information on public information. As the Director of the SC-PID pointed out, everything communication in MONUSCO was the responsibility of the SC-PID, not the military nor the civil police. Directives and instructions emanating from higher authority, for example, could be routed through the Division and released by the Director. While this was said to be a useful mechanism, some interlocutors however felt that it was not feasible. One reason was that it seemed there were usually verbal rather than written directives from the top which were not easily documented for sharing. [83] Another reason was that leadership was often eager to stamp their authority, rather than empowering subordinate institutions to exercise their responsibility. It was also stressed that this was often difficult, especially with the military. It was important to respect the responsibility of the SC-PID in this issue.

[83] Interview with KEI 1C on 16 May 2019 @1638.

Another suggestion was that all PIOs, civilian, police and military, were to take clear guidance and direction from the SC-PID. It explained that this would serve a better purpose were there to be a central mechanism to facilitate the sharing of information and experiences in the PI Component. Something similar to the JPICC mentioned earlier was suggested. This will not only afford effective command and control of PI by the SC-PID; it would facilitate the sharing of the necessary documents and information.

The third suggestion was that there was a need for a central storehouse of information that must be easily and readily accessible to all PIOs, who could walk there to find what they wanted to know. This was a sort of special archive just for the Public Information Component that should be decentralised as far as possible. There was something of an archive in the SC-PID HQ. It was however observed that while it could assist in the direction suggested, there was a need for similar structures across the Mission to enable PIOs to be abreast in real time with events and information. Travelling to this place would have been demanding. Archives need to be decentralised effectively.

5.3.5 Capacity Building of Public Information Officers and Staff

A major finding was that there was a capacity-building gap that could affect the professional capacity of PI practitioners across the Mission. This was largely a result of budgetary constraints, the wide dispersal of mission personnel, including Military Public Information Officers (MPIOs), and the inadequate competencies of especially the MPIOs.

At the time of the study, SC-PID had about 180 staff, made up of local and international employees and volunteers. These were located at the SC-PID HQ and in the provinces/sectors. Even though it had lost in four years over 40 of its staff, [84] the number was said to be just enough for its work. Generally, there had been some effort to improve the training of staff across board.

[84] At the time of the study, the mission was continuing with a planned drawdown.

Staff were encouraged to do their training in the mission area, where this was possible, and online once or twice a year if available, all on their own. Where these were not possible, some training was arranged for them, if essential.

The Mission had sponsored training in graphics and social media for two staff outside the Mission area, one in South Africa and another one in the US. Another 20 including some outside of public information had also done a week-long course on social media use in the Mission. While this was commendable, it was considered inadequate.

Radio Okapi, with nearly 120 staff, was under the responsibility of the SC-PID. The situation there was far better. At its inception, for example, staff recruited had to undergo intensive training before deployment and taking up their responsibility. Some were well-trained journalists with the requisite professional qualifications.[85] Still here, as some respondents observed, there was room for improvement. Its personnel were deployed in the provinces and there was a need to keep them abreast with current trends. As part of the engagement with Fondation Hirondelle (FH) which teamed up with the UN to set up Radio Okapi, over two decades ago, staff were regularly trained to improve their competencies. However, with the withdrawal of FH a few years before, and with no further funding, the training of staff had slumped. [86] The Division had since then been providing annual training locally for both journalists and the technical staff. Much more was, however, required in the area of new technology and new media, including social media [87].

Capacity-building for MPIOs was said to be rather more challenging. As already intimated, not everyone who came into military PI had the requisite background and expertise. Even for those who had, mission peculiarities could often be different and demanding. It was therefore imperative

[85] Interview with the Director SC-PID on 03 May 2019 @1521.
[86] Interview with IIOG on 07 May 2019 @1531.
[87] Interview with Civ2 on 07 May 2019 @1531.

to assist such people enhance their skills so they could perform their assigned tasks and functions efficiently. New MPIOs arriving in the mission often had some induction orientation provided by the SC-PID. Depending on the time available this could last up to two weeks. This, however, did not extend to all the military personnel deployed at lower levels of the military PI ladder, some of whom were said to have no practical knowledge or background in PI or communication. For example, an MPIO in a Sector HQ admitted to having no such knowledge or expertise. Moreover, there was often little time for handing over responsibilities and no opportunities for in-mission training either. This researcher is familiar with the case of Ghana where military personnel soon to embark on staff officer and military observer duties in peace operations undergo pre-deployment training in PI, media relations and communication in peace support operations. In-mission capacity-building for MPIOs, both military and civilian respondents said, was crucial. This, however, was often hampered by the wide nature of the deployments in MONUSCO, the frequent and short turn-around of military staff and budgetary constraints. Addressing these, there was a general consensus that the following would be helpful:

a. Encourage TCCs to provide timely pre-deployment training in PI and media relations to prospective MSOs using a standard generic module provided by the UN.

b. Institute an effective in-mission induction training and orientation programme for all MPIOs, just as done for newly arriving MSOs and Milobs.

c. Through the Military Training Cell, arrange routine competence-based training for MPIOs.

d. Provide online training on specific topics for all PIOs.

e. Institute arrangements for timely sharing of field experience by all PIOs, in-person or online, whichever is feasible and cost-effective.

To sum up the discussion for RQ2, it seems there was so much done in MONUSCO to ensure the optimum performance of the PI component. There have been efforts to restructure and improve the coordination and integration of assets and functions; and attempts to improve the capacity of PI staff and functionaries. There, however, seemed to be more requirements to significantly improve the efficacy of PI in MONUSCO. The next section discusses the findings in respect of RQ 3.

5.4 MONUSCO's public information strategy and whether public information activities were consistent with the strategy

This section answers the question of whether MONUSCO's public information activities were consistent with its public information strategy. The intention is to see whether some of the mission's PI activities were consistent with the strategy and whether these activities could have met the expected outcomes. Here, two of the mission's communication strategies are broadly discussed to provide these answers. The purpose is not to discuss specific activities per se, as this researcher did not have the opportunity to look through particular programmes carried out by the PI Components. It is rather to look broadly at how some PI objectives could have been effectively met.

The major finding was that MONUSCO did not have a mission-wide public information strategy, as provided for in the DPI/DPKO 2006 Policy and Guidance for Public Information in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (p.19). It rather had several communication strategies aimed at guiding the communication for specific programmes or activities. Even here it did not have a mission-wide composite communication strategy, which was also required in line with the new DPI/DPKO/DFS 2016 Policy on Strategic Communications and Public Information (p14). In this section, nonetheless, one of the several communication strategies is looked at, its

dissemination, and whether PI activities of mission components were consistent with it to answer the research question. The first subsection, however, first determines what ought to be the case.

5.4.1 What is it: Communication Strategy or Public Information Strategy?

Of the two approved documents referred to above, while the first used the term "public information strategy", the second used "communications strategy". Both documents as far as possible were effective, the latter just being an amendment of the former. What kind of strategy was therefore most appropriate and why? While a communication strategy might not be different from a public information strategy, by their structure, elements, tools and analyses, among others, both are distinct. Public information is a form of public communication (Chapter Three). So are propaganda, psychological operations, information operations, public relations etc. In a peace operation, it was therefore not a communication strategy but rather a public information strategy that was required. The overall purpose of a PI strategy is to ensure that a mission's PI activities fully and appropriately support clearly identified key PI objectives and tasks of the peace operation. The importance of such a strategy is that, while linking the communication activities to policy results (Weiss & Tschirhart, 1994), all communication activities should be consistent with it.

MONUSCO's choice of communication strategy may have been informed by the second policy document, which recontextualised PI in peace operations to strategic communications and PI, which seems to place priority on communications rather than PI. The following were the communication strategies listed:

a. MONUSCO Communication Strategy for Resolution 2463. This was prepared following the successful presidential election of 2018 and the renewal of MONUSCO's

mandate up to December 2019 by the Security Council. It was provided to the researcher by a senior PIO in Goma, not by the SC-PID HQ.

b. Media and Communication Strategy – Deployment of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB)/MONUSCO New Mandate. This was developed in 2013 to cover the deployment of the FIB and the renewed mandate of MONUSCO. Provided by the Director SC-PID.

c. Strategy on MONUSCO's use of Social Media. Drafted May 2013. Provided by the SC-PID.

d. MONUSCO Crisis Communication Plan. Developed in 2018. Provided by SC-PID.

e. Concept Note: Communication Alert Unit in anticipation for the December 2018 Elections. This was a communication strategy specifically prepared for the 2018 Elections. Provided by SC-PID.

f. Communication Strategy for DR Congo Elections 2018. Provided by SC-PID.

g. Directives issued by the Force Commander portions of which cover public information and communication by the Military Component. Provided by the CMPIO.

There was an attempt to develop a composite communication strategy. This was titled "MONUSCO Communication Strategy". It was still a draft at the time of the study and incomplete. The draft copy was provided to the researcher by the Director of the SC-PID. Although the document provided was incomplete, it provided some critical information that made it useful for this study, such as those on public information strategies. It would have been most appropriate to rely on the draft composite communications strategy for analysis. However, because the copy

given to the researcher was still a draft, unsigned and undated and probably not formally released, it may therefore not be appropriate to use it.

In view of this, the MONUSCO Communication Strategy for Resolution 2463 was used to tease out the answers. The choice of this was because it was fresh and current and more mission-wide. The communication activities outlined in the implementation plan (Table 5.2) were relied on to determine whether one particular communication activity was consistent with the strategy.

5.4.2 MONUSCO Communication Strategy for Resolution 2463

MONUSCO's goals as contained in Resolution 2463 were the Protection of Civilians (POC) and the Stabilisation of the conflict environment. The Mission among others were therefore to neutralise the armed groups to the east of the country and following the 2018 presidential elections and installation of a new government, to assist return democracy and stable governance to the DR Congo. The PI strategy was expected to be all-encompassing and guide all public communication around the new mandate. The key elements of the strategy were the following:

a. PI Objectives. General and specific PI objectives were the following:

i. *General:* Give visibility to mission activities and raise awareness and understanding about UNSCR 2463

ii. *Specific:* To *explain and sensitise* all MONUSCO's stakeholders and partners on the mandate as follows:

(a) Explain, and sensitise all stakeholders on POC.

(b) Explain, and sensitise all stakeholders and partners focusing on support to stabilisation and strengthening of state institutions and key governance and security reforms.

(c) Explain, and sensitise all stakeholders focusing on good offices.

(d) Explain, and sensitise all stakeholders focusing on mission efforts to monitor and document violations of IHL and abuses of human rights.

(e) Explain, and sensitise on MONUSCO DDR activities.

b. **Key Messages.** Key messages were itemised. The following are summaries of their themes:

i. *General messages*. Focusing on the government's responsibilities and MONUSCO's support; the country's progress in respect to the peaceful transfer of power; and the SRSG's engagement with all stakeholders, including opposition political elements.

ii. *Political messages*. Focusing on the history-making peaceful transfer of political power, the need to strengthen existing democratic and state institutions and the SRSG's role in minimising differences and disputes among political actors and efforts to win development challenges.

iii. *Security and POC messages.* Focusing on MONUSCO's responsibility to provide effective, dynamic and integrated protection for civilians under threat of physical violence; its support to create a conducive environment for peace and security; its efforts with local mediation initiatives to prevent the escalation of violence, paying attention to IDP and refugee camps; the responsibility of the Congolese security forces and the collaboration of the local population.

iv. *Human rights messages.* Focusing on the UN's duty to report on human rights violations and abuses; the government's obligations to promote human rights in the country; encouraging continued efforts to protect the rights of citizens and holding human rights violators to account.

c. **Target Audiences.** Audiences were listed under the following categories:

i. Local population

ii. Political leaders

iii. Enablers --- religious leaders and civil society activists

iv. Women leaders and organisations

v. Youth and young people organisations

vi. DR Congo Security forces

vii. Media (national and international)

viii. International community

d. **Media and communication tools.** The communication channels and platforms earmarked for use in this strategy were the following:

i. Media – local, national and international. Leading radio channels (Radio Okapi, RFI, BBC, and Top Congo FM); Leading online platforms (actuality.cd, 7sur7.cd, politico.cd, CAS-info.cd and afrik.com); TV (RTNC, Digital TV, Tele 50, Antenna A, RTG@, France24, Africanews, TV5, SABC, etc; Newspaper (L'Avenir, Le Phare, L-Observateur, La Templete des Tropiques, La Reference Plus, Le Potentiel, Jeune Afrique, La Libre Afrique, le Monde, Times)

ii. MONUSCO Social media networks. Facebook, Twitter (now X), monusco.org, Okapi.net, Flickr, and YouTube.

iii. Sensitisation sessions (with various identifiable groups, including the media).

iv. News magazines, leaflets, posters, cartoons,

v. Video productions

vi. Photo du jour (a digital photo magazine)

vii. Press releases

viii. Press conference (bi-monthly)

ix. Good offices (mainly SRSG and DSRSGs)

e. **Spokespersons**. The Mission's official spokespersons were to be the SRSG, Deputy SRSGs, FC and DFC (only for POC issues); Director SC-PID; Director Political Affairs (only for political issues); Director UNJHRO (only for human rights issues); Heads of Offices in the provinces (only for issues relevant to their provinces); and the Mission spokesperson.

f. Implementation. Table 5.2 presents the implementation plan.

In the implementation plan, the stack omissions were that the internal audience (troops, civil police and civilian staff) was not mentioned as a target audience; the SC-PID had not been given direct responsibility for the internal audience; and the specific responsibility of the Military Component, and in particular the contingents, for example, also not stated. To that extent, how were the public information activities undertaken in the Mission in conformity with this strategy?

Table 5.2: Action plan to implement the strategy

Serial	Activities	Responsibility	Frequency
1.	Press release	Mission Spokesperson	When required
2.	Interview with media	Spokespersons	When required
3.	Sensitisation programmes	Outreach Unit, in collaboration with Mission substantive components and UN agencies, when possible	Bi-monthly in Kinshasa and the sectors where PIOs are present
4.	Video programmes on specific issues and Mission's activities	Multimedia Unit/PID	Every 1 week. Production should focus on the mandate
5.	Production of Magazines	Publication Unit/PID	Every 2 months, with content focusing on the current mandate
6.	Production of leaflets/brochures	Publication Unit/PID	June leaflet on the mandate
7.	Press conference	Mission Spokesperson	Bi-monthly
8.	Articles on the web site on the Mission's activities	Sector PIOs in collaboration with substantive sections	Daily
9.	Publication of *Photo du jour*	Multimedia Unit/PID	Daily. Photo should show the Mission in action around the mandate
10.	Specific programmes on Radio Okapi (interviews with SRSG/DSRSGs/FC)	Radio Okapi	When required

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019. Credit: MONUSCO

5.4.3 Example of public information activities not in conformity with the strategy

The implementation plan would normally link the message to a target audience while specifying the communication approach to employ to reach the audience, the specific communication tool/channel/platform best to use, the particular communication activity to undertake and how and when to implement the activity (timeline). Table 5.3 presents a matrix of this linkage and key elements of the implementation plan.

Table 5.3: Key elements of the implementation plan

Communication objective	Message	Target Audience	Communication Approach	Communication Tool/Channel	Communication Activity	By whom	Timelines
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)
Explain what the Force does to protect civilians in the Beni area		General public	Television broadcast	RTNC	Good Morning Congo	MPIO	
		General public	Publication	News Magazine	Echos de la MONUSCO	SC-PID	

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019.

In Table 5.2, the SC-PID, in particular the Publication Unit, had a responsibility to use publications to convey messages. The assumption may be that no other entity in the Mission may use this approach to convey messages to its intended audiences. The responsibility was the SC-PIDs. On the ground, however, it was found that the Military Component published its newsletter and other informational products for public communication. For example, the first edition of the newsletter *Nguvu* was published in late 2018. The Military Component also published other print materials targeting specifically the local population [88] and created its online portals for public communication. Additionally, military contingents were communicating public information directly to their home countries. [89] There was no evidence to suggest that all these were in line with the Mission's Communication Strategy and/or authorised by the SC-PID.

Late November 2018, the FHQ issued a directive outlining a separate communication strategy for the Force, that,

> …. the Force must communicate better. That can be understood from two perspectives: first, information about our mandate and the good things that the Mission, in particular the Force, has done for the locals, not only in terms of security, but also the various support that has been provided to the Congolese population; second, a campaign that make possible to win the mind and hearts of the mentioned population. That campaign should be prepared by Information Operations Cell (DCOS OPS) in close coordination with Military Public Information Cell. [90]

[88] Interview with KEI 2A.
[89] The researcher sighted the following: *MONUSCO/FIB Newsletter*, published by the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) with Issue No. 1 in April 2019; *Mbote Congo*, news magazine published by the Ghana Battalion.
[90] Force Commander's directive.

The "Military Public Information Officer and the Information Operations Officer/DCOS OPS" were directed to get together with the Mission's Public Information Officer to develop a series of activities to implement the plan. According to the directive, this was to build confidence between MONUSCO and the local population, including ostensibly the armed groups. *Nguvu* was therefore not only for internal distribution. It was extended to the local population. It was therefore being published in English and selected local languages, in particular Swahili, the predominant language of the local population. Military experts were also tasked to work on the Force's social media handles.[91]

Were these activities and channels formally sanctioned by the SC-PID and consistent with the Communication Strategy for Resolution 2463? While going by the PI objectives listed above, it may have been appropriate to undertake the activities lined up by the Military Component, who was authorised to do so? Two clear reasons were given for the Military Component's actions: the need for the Force to reach out more directly to the local population; and to project the activities of the Force more forcefully and adequately.

In the first instance, it was explained that there was the need to make the local population understand what the Force was doing, and what kind of support they could provide it. As it was articulated during one interview, the Military Component's communication objectives were,

> … to show them (the local population) what we are doing, which is public information, and then the other is to send in between messages that are important for us, in order to build confidence that they can count on us, that they can call us, that we are not there seated waiting (for) things to happen.[92]

[91] Aside the FHQ, there were other publications published by the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) and some contingents, in particular the Ghana Battalion and the Indian Battalion. These were supposedly for internal distribution and sharing with the TCC.

[92] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.

It is not by any means to suggest that the Mission, in particular the SC-PID, was not communicating with the local population. But it was probably the case that more was expected from the SC-PID. As the activities listed above show, this was being done through a variety of platforms and outlets, including Radio Okapi and the Mission's dedicated online outlets. However, there seemed to be some gap in how effective this could be. Though the Force's effort was not explicitly captured in the Mission Communication Strategy and the Force particularly not entrusted with that responsibility, the Director SC-PID acknowledged these efforts. But while he admitted that the military was the biggest component of the Mission, he bemoaned that communication-wise its impact was still low[93], probably recognising the need for multiple mission publications by various components, which had a higher probability of reaching out to more audiences than a single publication[94].

It was intimated that the Mission's monthly flagship news magazine, *Echos de la MONUSCO*, was hardly available to the local civilian population.

> Even this Echos magazine, I never saw anybody from the civilian population with one of those magazines. And it's a beautiful magazine. But I believe that the target is not the civilian population of the country, but some, the mission itself and the UN HQ, New York, the member states; they are the targets for that magazine. Maybe some authorities here in the country, but it's not the normal people, the people who are in the streets, and who are suffering a lot from this insecure environment. …. We try to develop a small booklet to communicate with this civilian population in the country to send them some message about what we're doing and what they can expect from us and the confidence that we need to build on that.[95]

Echos is average a 28-page colourful magazine.[96] It is an expensive publication. Circulation is very limited. About 15,000 copies, average. Distribution regularly targets the diplomatic missions,

[93] The Force had also launched an online news magazine which was being published on the Mission intranet. Even though its production was not professional, the Director SC-PID said that it was nevertheless welcome because the military was trying to share information.
[94] This was a view of one senior military officer.
[95] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.
[96] One edition was focused on the Force and another on UNPOL.

government departments, universities, the Mission's official partners and the like.[97] For internal distribution, complementary copies are given to the different sections in the headquarters and MONUSCO sites in the sectors/provinces. Because so-called ordinary citizens may not read it if they were given[98], the civilian population was not considered to benefit from it. But *Echos* was probably the most graphic presentation of the activities of the Mission, even though Radio Okapi may have had the ability to reach more people. As one interlocutor argued, *Echos* shows rather than tells what the Mission was doing[99]. It was therefore stressed that the people who ultimately benefit from the activities and operations of MONUSCO and who could provide it the needed support, the local population, should be prime targets of the Mission's PI campaigns and all available channels should be used to reach them.

In terms of the second reason, the understanding was that the Military Component was not being adequately projected. It was doing so much, yet not enough of that was visible. It therefore seemed important for it to project itself. The example was given of a very significant activity undertaken by the Force which remained unexposed for a long time and which was essential to tell a great story. In the last three years, more than 6000 children were freed from the armed groups and returned to their villages. This did not happen in one go. Smaller groups were released at different times as reported in the Force's situation reports (sitreps). This was a big achievement. What was more significant was the fact that F R D C[100] had immediately stopped recruiting children just seven hours after the release of the child soldiers in 2016. Additionally, every month the Force deploys over 2000 static and mobile patrols across its area of operations, thus providing

[97] Interview with the IIPK on 30 April 2019 @ 1059.
[98] Interview with the IIPK on 30 April 2019 @ 1059. It was demonstrated in UNMEE around 2004, that even pictorial publications such as calendars help enhance understanding and acceptance of the local population when they have access to them (Atintande, 2019)
[99] Interview with interlocutor INT 4 on 17 May 2019 @ 1124.
[100] The national armed forces of the DR Congo.

security to the population. All of these, the public was not aware. Were these massive efforts to be projected in the local media, which was monitored by the UN Security Council, the permanent representatives of the UN, and the local population, it would have attracted positive responses in terms of support from the international community and the local population would not have been assured of protection, since they will be confident in the ability of the Mission to meet their expectations.

The Force's initiatives were therefore to answer to these gaps. One senior military officer, however, explained that this was not to be independent of what the SC-PID was doing; rather it was to contribute to the strategic goals of the Mission, and that with more and different platforms, visibility would be expanded. There was this view that "the Mission cannot dovetail all information coming from the bottom…, they will prioritise it. But the Force is doing a lot of things…. There are a thousand things that the Force is doing which probably may not find priority in the Mission's channels."[101] This position has been corroborated by Autesserre (2014) who investigated widely into the nature and effectiveness of bottom-up peacebuilding. So, more platforms meant more visibility as more people would be seeing what was put out in the public domain.

Moreover, as was evident, the majority of the military contingents were English-speaking.[102] That was a sizeable number of MONUSCO personnel. However, most of the communication platforms were in French. It meant that the majority of the mission could possibly have been sidelined by these single-language publications and platforms. It was stressed that the troops themselves also needed to be well-informed of things happening around them.

[101] Interview with KEI 3A on 18 May 2019 @ 0927.

[102] MONUSCO's troops contributing countries as at April-May 2019 were: Ghana €, India (E), Bangladesh (E), South Africa (E), Malawi (E), Tanzania (E), Uruguay (Sp), Pakistan (E), Egypt (A), Nepal (?), Morocco (A), Indonesia (A/E), Legend: E-English; A-Arabic; Sp-Spanish.

Concerning contingents forwarding public information material directly to their TCCs, it was explained that by the nature of their deployments, contingent PIOs were expected to feed the home audience with information on the activities of their contingents. Contingent PIOs were publishing contingent newsletters/magazines and running their own contingent social media accounts, for that purpose, because it was the TCC's right to know what was happening to their contingents and how they were faring in the Mission.[103]

UN policy on PI in peace operations recommends that to be most effective, PI activities in mission areas "must be coordinated with complementary efforts directed at the wider international audience. The Chief of SCPI should ensure that the components' efforts are coordinated with communications strategies …." (United Nations, 2016c, p.19). From all indications, there may be communication activities going on at various levels and by various actors that may not be consistent with the Mission's Communication Strategies. While these efforts outside the established norm, going by the Communication Strategy, were not entirely unacceptable, it goes to say that such complementary efforts should be encouraged and supported. Nevertheless, all these efforts ought to be captured in a composite Public Information Strategy that was holistic, comprehensive and elaborate enough to avoid confusion and unnecessary and unproductive duplication of effort and contribute more effectively towards achieving the SC-PID's communication objectives and meeting the Mission's strategic goals.

In summary, various communication strategies could be developed for specific goals (United Nations, 2006a). It was incumbent on MONUSCO to develop a comprehensive and overarching strategy encompassing its major strategic goals which could be adapted to particular situations (IAEA, 2015). But as the purpose of PI was much more than how to communicate and

[103] View expressed by KEI 3C on 18 May 2019 @ 0927.

with whom, one suggests that MONUSCO should not only have a communication strategy but more appropriately a public information strategy. PI is strategic communication, meaning that it is communication for a purpose. A PI strategy should therefore be the most desirable and it should be comprehensive and elaborate enough to capture all that needs to be done and give the appropriate responsibility for effective public communication in the Mission. What would be the significance of such a strategy if it was not encompassing and if communicators were not guided by it? The suggestion to integrate the PI components in a unified structure and institute more credible coordination and cooperation approaches to PI management should help to make the SC-PID more proactive and responsive to the Mission's needs.

5.5 Military public information and conflict management

The military was the largest single component in MONUSCO at the time of the study. It numbered 62,408 personnel, out of the total Mission population of 85,448 (United Nations Fact Sheet June 2019). It was widely dispersed; but with a concentration of forces in the eastern provinces particularly North Kivu and South Kivu. The major finding was that there was an elaborate Military Public Information system that was widely diffused throughout the Military Component. There were MPIOs at the FHQ, the Sector HQs and individual Contingents. Another major finding was that this system was completely autonomous of the SC-PID. It worked through a separate chain of command and communication. One other major finding was that there was comprehensive and encompassing guidance on PI in the Military Component, SOP 518.

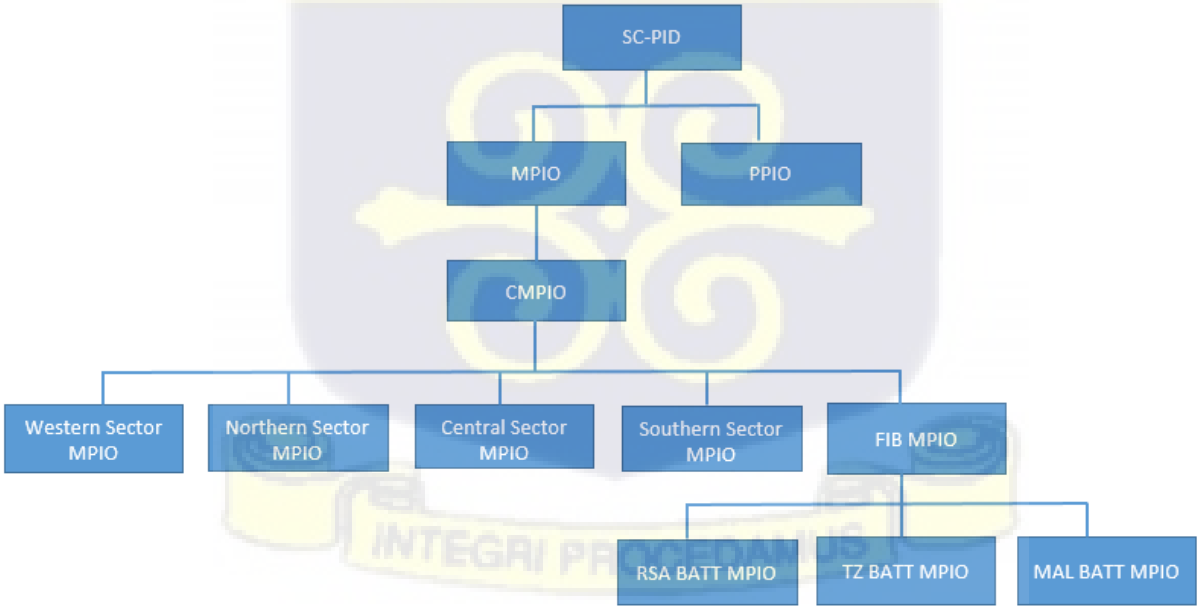
UN policies (DPI/DPKO 2006 Operational Policy Guidance on Public Information in UN Peacekeeping Operations; DPI/DPKO/DFS 2016 Policy on Strategic Communications and Public Information) fully recognise the place and role of military PI in the scheme of things in peace operations and allows it priority of practice. This section looks at military PI in MONUSCO and

whether this contributed anything to achieving MONUSCO's mandate. This analysis and discussion shall cover the organisation of the Military PI system, its responsibilities, and how military PI could contribute to the management of the conflict in the DR Congo. Although MONUSCO was a multidimensional mission with distinct components, including the Civil Police, undertaking PI activities, the choice of the Military Component for this analysis is borne by the fact that it was the largest, had a well organised, widely-diffused and elaborate PI system. Moreover, there was no opportunity to engage the Civil Police and the other major components in this study. I start with the MPI Branch.

5.5.1 The Military Public Information Branch

Figure 5.5 is the organisational structure of the Military Public Information Branch. The system is headed by the CMPIO at the FHQ[104]. It consisted of the FHQ MPIOs, MPIOs at the Sector

Figure 5.5: Organisational Structure of the Military Public Information



Source: Author's Field Research, 2019. Credit: MONUSCO

[104] At the time of the study the head was Lieutenant Commander Nabil Cherkaoui of Morocco.

and Brigade levels as well as MPIOs at the contingent/battalion level. Though the FIB battalions were the only ones indicated in the chart to have MPIOs, this also referred to other contingents in all the sectors[105]. At the time of the study, the Force had started to draw down and some elements were relocating to the east of the country or repatriating home. This affected some staff officers at the various Sector HQs, including MPIOs. Even though by this structure, the MPI Branch is subordinate to the SC-PID, as indicated, it has a separate channel of command and communication that does not come directly under the Director SC-PID, but answers to the FC.

MPIOs are essentially military staff officers (MSOs). Staff officer appointments are usually country-specific; with the officers posted directly into their positions from their countries. At the FHQ, the Office of the CMPIO had two staff officers. It was pointed out that sometime in the past there were three. As per the establishment, the CMPIO was in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel or equivalent. The other was a Grade 2 staff officer, in the rank of Major (or equivalent). [106] At the time of the study, the post of CMPIO was specific to Benin with the Grade 2 officer provided by Kenya. There was, however, at the FIB Brigade Headquarters in Beni, a Nigerien MPIO in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, something on the surface that looked odd, since the CMPIO at the time was a subordinate in the rank of major. This oddity was understandable.

At the Sector HQ level, there was usually a single Grade 2 staff officer in the rank of Major as MPIO. At the Western Sector, the stand-in MPIO was from India, of the rank of Major; while at the Central Sector the substantive MPIO was also an Indian of the rank of Major. As already mentioned, at the FIB HQ, the MPIO was in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. The picture seems different at the unit or contingent level. Here, in some cases, staff officers are selected by the

[105] The Ghana Battalion in the Western Sector had a well-established and -resourced PI Detachment.
[106] At the UNMEE Force Headquarters in Asmara where this researcher served in the Military Public Information Branch in 2003/4, there was additionally another Lieutenant Colonel as deputy to the CMPIO (Atintande, 2019).

Commanding Officer/Contingent Commander to play that role. Rank is not an issue here, but most MPIOs are in the rank of Captain (Atintande, 2019). The MPI offices are normally small and do not have means. MPIOs, it was observed, were not necessarily people with professional competence in communications or public information, even though there was an express requirement for such expertise.

5.5.2 Responsibilities and duties of MPIOs

SOP 518 prescribes the responsibilities of the MPI Branch, as a whole, and the specific duties and functions of MPIOs. MPIOs are part of the military chain of command. They nevertheless should operate a parallel information chain to facilitate their tasks. Even if the information chain is not a chain of command, a direct link was to be established between MPIOs at Force, Sectors and Contingents. The SOP also outlines the responsibilities of other entities in the Force as far as these enhance the performance of the functions of MPIOs. For example, MPIOs must have free access to their commanders and military operational information at all levels, be the command's spokespersons and must be integrated into the operations planning process.

MPIOs were entrusted with advisory and operational functions. Their roles and responsibilities are adapted and summarised in Appendix XIII[107]. These essentially cover the areas of media relations, relations with local authorities, the chain of communication in the Force, coordination with the civilian public information component, and their role in military operations. The duties and functions of the MPIOs at the FHQ are in Appendix XIV. Generic job descriptions for public information officers in field peace operations sourced at http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/field/Puhlic_Info_Profile.htm are also presented in Appendix XV. By and large the function of the MPIO is to generate and share content as appropriate and as

[107] Adapted from SOP 518.

required and engage in other activities to be determined by command. These include, but are not limited, to the following: full coverage of the Force's activities and operations; projection of the Force; winning the hearts and minds of the local population; and intelligence gathering[108].

In all probability, operating under a distinct command and control structure in the Mission, the MPI Branch functions separately from the SC-PID. The chain of command and information were articulated as follows. The individual soldier worked towards the unit goal, while the unit worked towards the sector goal. The sector worked toward the force goal and the force toward the mission goal. In that vein, the unit/contingent/battalion MPIO works towards the Sector MPIO who in turn works towards the Force MPIO and the Force MPIO works in tandem with the Director SC-PID. There was a filtration process along the chain where at each level the information received from the lower echelon is filtered and whatever has been selected is passed up the chain. The chain of command and information is rigidly followed. There are no civilian PIOs at the unit/contingent level; only at the sector level. The sector MPIO however does not formally share information directly with the PIO in the sector. The CMPIO or his staff at the FHQ may share information with Mission HQ. The soldiers take direct instructions and orders from their superiors only.

However, in line with UN policy, and notwithstanding the unique and hierarchical nature of the Military Component, the MPI Branch was expected to work closely and coordinate with the SC-PID in matters relating to public communication within and by the Force[109]. So, though the MPI Branch seems distinct, it should not work independently of the SC-PID. As was intimated, there is coordination, collaboration and cooperation among the various MPIOs and PIOs at the various levels. And there was some sharing of information. But usually the military respects and follows its chain and this often restricts the smooth flow of information between the Force and the

[108] Interview with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 @ 1049.
[109] Interview with the Director SC-PID on 04 May 2019 @ 1535.

SC-PID, something the authorities at the SC-PID bemoaned, wishing that definite steps could be taken to rectify and speed up information sharing between the two.

Part of the functions and activities of MPIOs was the sharing of information with their TCCs. In one view, contingents were obliged to inform the home audience of what their troops were doing in the DR Congo and how they were executing the TCC's commitment to the UN operations[110]. This was because they had the right to know. However, the information they pass on to the TCC is usually already passed on to the Mission HQ. The contingents had created their own communication tools, such as Facebook, Twitter, the contingent news magazine or newsletter for this purpose. In principle, the SC-PID is also expected to provide information to countries contributing troops and police personnel to the Mission. However, the SC-PID does not have direct communication with any such country. Contingent MPIOs sharing public information with their TCCs may therefore not be at variance with the Mission's Communication Strategy.

5.5.3 Military Public Information's contribution to conflict management

MONUSCO was essentially in DR Congo to manage the conflict and PI was one of the means of doing so (Kyrke-Smith, 2007; Cain, 2010). Generating and disseminating reliable, accurate, and factual information to the population and other stakeholders about MONUSCO and its operations was therefore expected to contribute to it delivering its mandate (United Nations, 2006a; United Nations, 2016c).

Public Information would make MONUSCO visible and transparent, and establish it as a credible, impartial and trustworthy intervener (Lindley, 2006; United Nations, 2006a). If delivered and/or shared with the relevant stakeholders in a timely and proactive manner, it increases confidence in the peace process, builds trust among the parties and helps to secure and maintain

[110] Interview with KEI 3A on 11 May 2019 @ 1007.

public support for the Mission. Transparent PI was therefore a means to promote peace through information (Lindley, 2006; Jacob, 2017). To that end, the PI activities and programmes by the MPI Branch complement efforts in other areas to make MONUSCO succeed in its conflict management role and responsibility.

In this section, some military PI functions and activities are looked at, some of which have been captured in SOP 518, and along the line of the findings on RQ4, discuss how MPI could contribute to conflict management. These areas are: media monitoring and analysis; projection of the Force; timely release of information to the local media; and enlightening the population.

a. Media monitoring and analysis

There are several methods in peace operations to generate feedback. For example, scientific research or formal and informal methods to source information from a variety of stakeholders. By far, however, the usual and most cost-effective means is media monitoring. Outfits such as the JMAC and the SC-PID, among others, engage in media monitoring. A major finding was, however, that MPIOs could facilitate media monitoring and analysis to provide real-time results and credible information for detailed planning and operations.

Notwithstanding that this was one of the functions of MPIOs captured in SOP 518 (Appendices XIII and XIV), respondents were of the view that it was MPIOs who were to be the most effective means of generating that information from the frontline communities and in a good position to analyse public opinion and the local press, to identify issues and trends and advise the most appropriate response. Media monitoring by MPIOs, it was explained, could benefit the Force in several ways, as part of efforts to contribute to achieving MONUSCO's mandate. Chief among these were the following:

Early warning

Early warning allows the Mission to predict threats, challenges and trends and assess what action might be taken by the UN to address these (African Union, 2008; Tiruneh, 2010). There are many reasons for relying on the media for early warning indicators. Two views were advanced. Firstly, the media are often the first port of call for raising citizens' concerns. De Vreese (2005), for example, highlights the preference of millions of citizens turning to the media daily to raise their concerns, while the media in turn attempts to frame these issues for public attention. Turning to the media therefore offers analysts and PIOs the opportunity to be apprised early enough of what bothers the population and what may be portended.

Secondly, media have been found to be used to inflame passions and promote violence. For example, they could be used as a centrepiece of propaganda and hate speech, and in some contexts going so far as to call upon populations to take up arms against other civilians, or even the peacekeepers as the Rwanda experience in 1994 presented. Additionally, they could be seized by local actors to pursue their own political ends (Kyrke-Smith, 2007; International Association for Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (aisbl), 2007-2008). Therefore, having a sense of what local actors and others, including the media, do on the ground will serve a very useful purpose.

Media monitoring and analysis by MPIOs would provide probably the most readily and easily available source of early warning information to complement other results to provide the HOM and Mission Leadership with an improved understanding of issues and trends to inform mission planning and decision-making at the strategic level (United Nations, 2006a). Local media in particular are essentially primary carriers of information in the given society. For the simple reason that they could be influenced by authorities opposed to the mission's mandate (Kyrke-

Smith, 2007), monitoring and analysing their publications at the local level could provide a far better opportunity for planning and response at subordinate levels of the Force, notwithstanding that media reports may sometimes have to be verified to be useful, as open sources. Issues the public is concerned about could be published, discussed or highlighted in the local press, including social media. Such issues at the local level could often threaten the ability of the Mission to successfully undertake its tasks. Especially where the armed groups could exploit them.

In carrying out its mandate, as it was advanced, the Force had to have the ability to deploy quickly to contain such occurrences and protect the civilian population. Events or circumstances which very often trigger major conflicts tend to come from obscure and unforeseen or unpredictable sources (Adekanye, 1999) and could be exploited by spoilers of the peace process. Early warning therefore seems a reasonable resource to enable the Force to react promptly and effectively. One Media Monitoring Report (MMR) by frontline MPIOs, for example, captured the following:

> **Assessment**
>
> The main (concerns) of the population are safety and health. By attacking public and private health facilities, perpetrators may have three intentions: supply the (armed group) with drugs; for commercial purposes; and discouragement of health agents of practicing. Thus, the fight against ebola and other contagious diseases will struggle to succeed. Failure resulting from the authorities' inability to cope with health problems would serve as an excuse to turn people against the state and the security forces.
>
> **Recommendation**
>
> Concerning (name withheld) populations being beaten and stripped of their property, at a time the president is visiting the city (name withheld), it is advisable to avoid the haste to lay anathema on the FARDC. A similar case occurred in the past (…camp attack during the day in the presence of a senior military official who came to visit). The security of health structures is the responsibility of the national security forces. In the absence of security, a great number would significantly reduce the reaction time of forces in the event of attacks on health facilities.[111]

[111] Media Daily Report in …… Region on April 17, 2019.

MONUSCO was said to have developed a simple early warning system, whereby the population could call in by phone, for example, any time of the day and based on that information the troops could deploy quickly. This was mainly about the activities of the armed groups. Not all issues could be communicated in this manner, and not all concerns could attract such attention.

As effective and successful conflict management benefits from early warning, monitoring especially the local media, to include community media, effectively and efficiently, to complement other measures, could, therefore, provide the Force with the capacity to predict in a rather timely fashion what needs to be attended to. There is however the challenge of building a media monitoring and analysis system which could make this possible; a system with the requisite resources such as easy and regular access to local media products, and the means to gather and analyse the data.

Timely feedback

MONUSCO was said to lack a formal system of feedback.[112] Some areas that were, however, said to be relied upon to gain feedback from the community included forums or meetings, outreaches, formal reports from the field by MONUSCO staff, and operational reviews. Feedback is a very useful tool in conflict management. While it could be positive or negative, instantaneous or delayed, it is often used to gauge the effectiveness of a particular message or activity.

The Force conducts numerous activities (patrols, escorts, quick-impact projects, offensive action against the warring groups, and the like). There should not be any

[112] This could not be verified by the researcher.

Figure 5.6: Media report on a MONUSCO policy

May 15, 2019
Author :Writing
SOCIETY

Media: Angry Radio Okapi!

To share

RADIO OKAPI

The UN radio has been broadcasting for two days (Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 May) in minimum service. No flagship programs broadcast live: Okapi service, Word to listeners and Dialogue between Congolese… Instead, old programs are broadcast. No press review, no news bulletins after every hour, nor the 3 p.m. newspaper. No newspapers in national languages, no magazine broadcasts. The antenna is occupied with abundant music. And for good reason, the journalists of this radio, considered as officials of the United Nations, obeyed the slogan of the National Staff Union which decreed a work stoppage of two days. It is to protest against the abusive abolition of national posts.

Indeed, to avoid sinning against the United Nations regulation which does not authorize the strike of agents, the Union, which wanted to make its voice heard, bypassed this obstacle by asking all national agents to all benefit from the same. time of two unjustified days of absence monthly. This provision of absence of two unjustified days each month is statutory and does not call for any sanction. And this movement can happen again next month.

But it is for the first time since its existence 17 years ago that Radio Okapi deprives its listeners of spoken word programs and newspapers because of social discontent. The elimination of more than 550 positions announced in June, also concerns the staff of this radio whose workforce has already been reduced to more than a third.

Weak leadership of IRS director

Of all the directors of the Public Information Division (PID) that Monusco has known, the poor and incompetent of all is the Burkinabé Charles-Antoine Bambara. For five years that he has been at the head of this key and strategic department of the UN mission in Congo, this former BBC has been unable to plead administratively the cause of the staffs under his supervision, nor to improve their conditions of service. job. It was under Charles-Antoine that Radio Okapi especially saw its staff reduced even though William Swing and Martin

Source: Agnelo Agnade. Accessed at https://scooprdc-net.translate.goog/2019/05/15/medias-radio-okapi-en-colere/?

assumptions about what the Mission is doing. There are a variety of means of eliciting the right feedback from the local communities. The media generally offers a good platform for timely feedback. The screenshot below (Figure 5.6) is a report of the reaction of the internal audience to a MONUSCO policy. At the time of the study, MONUSCO national staff were up in arms. There may have been perhaps an official complaint on the issue lodged at MONUSCO. The strong reaction, however, presents the core reasons for their reaction.

Timely feedback was therefore said to afford MONUSCO to measure the effectiveness of its programmes and activities and to assist in its better planning and engagement.

Sensing the mood of the population

The population is the reason why MONUSCO was in DR Congo. This is the largest constituency of the Mission. Its mood should therefore be of priority. Being oblivious to what the population thinks and feels could undermine the Mission's chances of success. The media could give the Mission the opportunity to have a sense of the mood of the population. What do the people think about MONUSCO? What do they think about what it does and how?

Public opinion is the dominant viewpoint of the majority of the population on an issue, idea, activity or occurrence in a given area at a given period. The opinion often levels off, evolving into an ordered state within a short time. Once it stabilises, it becomes difficult to change. It is the more reason why real-time monitoring of the media is key. As Dallaire (2007, pp16-17) reminds us, "When news reaches the general population, it shapes public opinion."

Why is gauging the population's mood important? Managing the perceptions of the population has been found to be critical in how a peacekeeping mission could control the information environment and influence the behaviour of the public. Robinson (2014) notes that, by perception management, a peacekeeping mission can influence and shape the attitudes of people or audiences in the conflict zone. General Romeo Dallaire thought that part of the challenge to UNAMIR in managing the expectations of Rwandans was its inability to gauge the mood of the populace. Many editors and journalists in the media in Rwanda were militants of the feuding parties (Higiro, 2007). The newspapers, for example, were published mainly in the local language Kinyarwanda. The major radio stations also broadcast mainly in the local language. According to Dallaire (2007),

> … my mission, especially in those early days, was ill-equipped to monitor what was being broadcast in the local media.
>
> A great handicap for UNAMIR (in effect the representative on the ground of the world community) was our initial ignorance of what was really happening and of the mixed media

> messages. We had so little capacity to monitor broadcasts, particularly those in the local language, Kinyarwanda. For a long time, we didn't notice the difference in tone between RTLM[113] broadcasts in French and those in Kinyarwanda. We missed this vital early-warning sign of what was to come because, in effect, we weren't listening properly to local media and what it was telling people in January, February and March 1994.
>
> I still believe it would have made a significant difference if we had had the capacity to monitor local media comprehensively from the outset. This was one of the lessons learned from Rwanda – that part of the role of an international force is to get the whole picture, to realize the importance of media messaging. (Dallaire, 2007, pp. 16-17)

By being ignorant of what was the dominant viewpoint and interest of the population, UNAMIR missed the greatest opportunity to shape that perception and to redirect it to doing what was to be done to avert the bloodbath. Over several years now, Congolese have been angry with MONUSCO because it has been unable to effectively protect them from repeated attacks by armed groups. As these moods swell, they become like a powder keg, ready to go off. Therefore, gauging the mood of the population by effectively and timeously monitoring the local media should help the Mission to be proactive and plan the most appropriate operations or interventions to contain or respond to such aberrant behaviour.

b. Timely release of information to the media

Irrespective of the fact that the media could be used negatively, they have also been found to contribute to conflict management and nation-building (Eze, 2017), shape public opinion (Xiong & Liu, 2014) and expand democracy (Orme, 2020). The media are therefore not necessarily foes. Their role in public enlightenment and education is legendary. Melone, Terzis and Belele (2002), quoting McNair (1999), ascribe five roles/functions to the media in their potential to transform conflict: inform citizens of what is happening around them; educate them as to the meaning and significance of the 'facts'; provide a platform for public political discourse that must include the

[113] Radio Television Libre de Milles Colline.

provision of space for the expression of dissent; give publicity to governmental and political institutions; and serve as a channel for the advocacy of political viewpoints.

To the extent that a core communication objective in the MONUSCO Communication Strategy is to "explain and sensitise" the population and stakeholders on the Mission's mandate and activities, among others, the first two roles should be exploited as far as possible. This is in the belief that it is through the media that peacekeepers can better explain their mandates to wider audiences. The issue of source-media relations is central to this effort (Atintande, 2008). However, several respondents, both uniformed and civilian, noted that palpable delays in releasing information to the media negatively affected the credibility of the Mission. For example, the Director of the SC-PID made the point that, it was not just putting out information; but releasing it timeously. This was because, one, the media often want the information as and when an event happens rather than hours or a day after; and two, the media were everywhere; and because they see and hear everything, once "the information is distorted, it could lead to the destruction or even the failure of the Mission."[114] Delaying to release information to the media should therefore be worrying.

> I believe that there is a need really from the military side to be a little bit flexible in terms of sharing information. It's too based on hierarchy and even if there is something known they need the green light from the general, the Force Commander, etc. and we need also to be able to speed up the reaction.
>
> Of course, it needs to be cross-checked, but we need it somehow, we are in the information field and sometimes information one hour late is too late. No one will still listen with enthusiasm to information one day late. Because all other broadcasters or media will talk about it, …. waiting for the clearance of your boss or the general, I think, you'll miss an opportunity to talk to your audience and other people will be feeding the media. So we need to, as I said, if it is possible, to speed information sharing (from) the military…[115]

[114] Interview with the Director SC-PID on 03 May 2019, @ 1644.
[115] Interview with the Director SC-PID on 03 May 2019, @ 1644.

At the press conference attended during the field study, for example, the Mission did not take advantage of releasing critical information to the public. About the incident involving a reporter as described above, the reporter wanted information about child soldiers that had been reported in her community. It was important for the CMPIO, as the Military Spokesperson, to answer that question and provide more credible information on the issue. As the earlier example of the release of child soldiers sought to paint, there were misconceptions about these rescue efforts and they needed to be corrected. Releasing that information timely would have had a great advantage.

MONUSCO officials might not be the only people at any particular location. There may be others, probably witnessing what was going on since the media were everywhere and delaying to release the information might therefore be counter-productive. The Mission's story could only be told by what its members do on the ground[116], and that information has to be brought out forcefully to the public. The Force generates a lot of information about their activities and operations which needs to be published. With the dwindling staff of the SC-PID and the low presence of PIOs in the sectors,[117] MPIOs could fill the gap and provide PI timeously to the media. Rleasable information needs to be accurate, factual and credible; therefore, it must be cleared before release. But the idea is not to refuse to disclose information; it could only warrant the need to be circumspect rather than secretive (Annan, 1999). The timely release of information to the media was therefore essential in the Mission being perceived as proactive and a credible and authentic source of information to the public.

[116] Interview with KI H(1) on 07 May 2019 @ 1359.for M
[117] Interview with KI H(1) on 07 May 2019 @ 1359.

c. Projection of the Force

A major finding was that the Force was not projected enough. The position of a top military officer, in particular, was this:

> …I'm not at that time and I'm still not, … happy with the communications and the information that we're providing about what we're doing. If we do what we are doing and nobody knows, it does not make sense. Even the host country, I have the impression that they are not aware of what we are doing here. We are supporting their institutions. But when they are discussing at the highest level, we always receive complaints about what we are doing.[118]

Though some respondents recognised the commendable relationship between the Military Component and the SC-PID, it was nonetheless pointed out that there was an inadequate projection of the Force in mission outlets. The Mission's PI outlets included Radio Okapi, *Echos de la MONUSCO*, Mission social media accounts, multimedia products such as ONU Hebdo (short 15-minute video documentaries on selected activities) aired weekly on local TV under contract and others shared on social media and UNIFEED[119] periodically, and photo displays especially on social media and the online UN library, and especially the flagship photo album Flickr titled Photo Du Jour (Photo of the Day). A 15-minute corporate video documentary on the Military Component and the edition of *Echos* specially dedicated to the Force were under production at the time of the study. There was also the bi-monthly press conference and MONUSCO intranet. All these were managed solely by the SC-PID.

While respondents acknowledged the SC-PID's efforts to publicise the Force, among other components including the Mission's political activities, they still felt there was not enough projection of the Force. And it was especially in adequately projecting the activities of the Force that confidence of the local population in the peace process could be built and the required support

[118] Interview with KI 2 E (3) on 15 May 2019 @ 0906.
[119] This is the international broadcast channel for UN video products.

from the international community elicited. MONUSCO had launched a strategy called "Protection by Projection" which sought to project the visibility of the POC mandate, mainly a security responsibility, but not much exposure of this had occurred.

Projecting the Force entailed, for example, increasing coverage of the activities and operations of the Force, providing ample information on its non-classified activities and operations to the public at large, including the internal audience, and expanding the publicity platforms available to Force elements. It was a general consensus of the military leadership that POC did not only mean static or mobile security duties. This also included providing adequate information to those who should be protected.

It was contended that the MPI Branch adequately projecting the Force beyond what was presently the case would bring along with it many benefits. The first was that, it would build the confidence and resilience of the local communities. The local population should have full confidence in the peace process and in the ability of the Force to deliver to their expectations. This statement by one key research participant reflected the consensus viewpoint:

> We are fighting an asymmetric war. We are fighting armed groups who are during the day within the village with the population and at night, in the evening, they are fighting our troops. So, one of the most important requirements is exactly to build confidence among the population. If you don't build the confidence among the population you will be in trouble. You would be in a big disadvantage to fight this war.[120]

To build this confidence in the local population, aside from the Force being able to deploy quickly and to fight the armed groups, to protect civilians, the support of the population was imperative; and it was PI that could help to build the people's confidence.

> … to really protect the civilians of this country, we must understand that there are two different, two main ways. One is to be able to deploy (relatively). And the other one is to fight the armed groups who are imposing threats on the population. But to do both, I need the

[120] Interview with KEI 2B(2) 11 May 2019 @1515.

> support of the population and of the institutions, of the national institutions of the country. And that is built based on confidence and the confidence is built based on public information.[121]

Unfortunately, it was pointed out, that the population, including the authorities, even in the remote areas, for example, lacked knowledge about what the Force was doing in the DR Congo and how. Some of them were said to have no clue about what the blue helmets were supposed to do in the country. "So, we had to explain our mandate and what the troops can do and that the troops cannot go beyond certain lines because DR Congo is a sovereign country and they have to respect that."[122]

So, MPI projecting the Force could generate trust between the troops and the population, keep them informed and educated on and increase their understanding of what the Force was doing to protect them, and also occasion better interaction between the troops and the population. The troops could be efficient but if the population did not know that, then the Force would not have their support in terms of being able to face future challenges or face different threats.

The second benefit of the MPI Branch projecting the Force was that it would motivate the troops to give their best. It was explained that the troops themselves were not wholly benefiting from what SC-PID was doing. For example, they could not benefit from the Mission's flagship PI products, as they were mostly in French, whereas most troops were English-speaking. Moreover, troops could not have individual copies of the Mission magazine, for example. It was therefore expected that PI should as well be providing the troops with what they should know and what was relevant to their setting.

While the troops could be informed about the activities of the Mission's political actors, e.g. the SRSG and others, and the high command, which was very necessary and motivating, they were also very interested in events immediately around them and in a language they would

[121] Interview with KEI 2B(2) 11 May 2019 @1515.
[122] Interview with KEI 2B(2) 11 May 2019 @1515.

understand. Some respondents felt that even though language should not be a barrier to humanitarian assistance, PI should not necessarily just be for the local population. Publications, for example, that were understandable to the soldiers were more motivating, especially where they could make the home audiences happy to see that their kith and kin were contributing selflessly to the development of a country in conflict.[123]

So, it was to increase the projection of the Force to encourage troops to do their best while in MONUSCO to contribute to the mandate that the Force was employing these initiatives: producing their print publications, creating their online accounts and generally increasing their visibility. But what was found was that the Force's activities in this direction were largely the responsibility of the Information Operations Cell, rather Military Public Information Branch. This cell was part of the Operations Branch and under the direction of the Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations) (DCOS OPS) at the FHQ. This branch was said to have the requisite expertise to produce and distribute these informational products. It had staff officers throughout the chain. *Nguvu* for example was being published by this cell. In the Volume 1 Issue 7 edition, it was reported that "the IO Cell has been working closely with and supporting the DDR/RR-CVR office in several operations and campaigns. The objective of these joint operations is to disseminate influence material to the illegal Armed Groups, their dependents and to the local civilian population." This meant that there were two systems in the Military Component that handled its public information: Military Public Information and Information Operations.

To sum up, MONUSCO Military Component had a well-structured Military Public Information Branch that had priority of practice. Even though the MPI Branch was subordinate to the SC-PID, it nevertheless operated a parallel information chain to facilitate its tasks. MPIOs have

[123] Interview with KEI 1A on 11 May 2019 @ 1007.

a role to play in meeting the needs of the Mission and contributing to the attainment of its objectives. Their functions and tasks have been spelt out in SOP 518. Ways MPI could contribute to conflict management were in the area of media monitoring and analysis; timely release of information to the public through the media, gauging the mood of the population and projecting the Force. All these were aimed at making MONUSCO visible and transparent, establishing it as a credible, impartial and trustworthy intervener, increasing the local population's confidence in the peace process, building trust between the peacekeeping troops and the local population, helping to secure and maintain public support for the Mission, and motivating the Blue helmets to give of their best.

It was nevertheless observed that the military's public information was a joint responsibility between the MPI Branch and the Information Operations Cell under the Operations Branch. The next section looks at the findings of RQ 5.

5.6. MONUSCO's public information activities and situational and audience expectations in the conflict area.

In this section, situational and audience expectations are isolated and identified to see whether MONUSCO's public information activities or programmes were informed by them. This is, however, drawn from the point of view of the researcher's understanding of what the audience and situational expectations were rather than eliciting these directly from the public, as the study was not extended to the local population. In answering this research question, the objective was therefore not to evaluate the PI campaigns, programmes and activities of the Mission. This is an area for further research. The intention was to find out whether audience and situational expectations were factored into designing and implementing some PI activities or products.

The two major findings for RQ 5 were: one, there were multiple content creators of PI; and two, situational and audience expectations may not have been fully considered in designing some public information products. In this section, these two findings are discussed by covering the following: reflections on situational and audience expectations, the content creators and likely considerations in the design of a couple of PI strategies or products.

5.6.1 Reflections on the Situational and Audience expectations in the MONUSCO area of operations

DR Congo has been in conflict for two decades. The situation nevertheless is about stabilising, with the historic change of government following successful elections in December 2018.

Figure 5.7: News report on the security situation in DR Congo

UN mission in DR Congo appeals for calm as violent protests continue

25 November 2019
Peace and Security

The head of the UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has met with national authorities in the wake of an attack against its headquarters in Beni on Monday, which left the building badly damaged.

An angry crowd set fire to the UN office and the town hall in the eastern city to protest failure by Government troops and peacekeepers in preventing a deadly weekend attack by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group, according to media reports.

As protests continue, staff at the UN mission, which is known by the French acronym MONUSCO, have been redeployed to other areas for their safety.

MONUSCO chief Leila Zerrougui participated in a National Security Council meeting chaired by the country's President, UN Spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric told journalists in New York.

"She stressed that she understood the people's anger and frustration of the population after further deadly attacks by the ADF", a large locally-based rebel group which originated in neighbouring Uganda. "The Mission will work closely with the authorities to jointly find solutions for the people of Beni", he said.

Source: https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/11/1052151.

Notwithstanding this, the east of the country is still wrought with activities by numerous armed groups. These, while battling each other also attack civilian populations (Chapter Two). The security situation in the east at the time of the study was precarious, particularly in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces.

Throughout 2019, there were several attacks on civilians by the armed groups. For example, on the night of 13 May 2019, the researcher, while in the town of Beni, witnessed an armed group, suspected to be the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), attack a village on the outskirts of the town. Citizens especially in the affected areas were often disenchanted with MONUSCO for apparently being unable to rein in the armed groups. The core concerns of the local population in the MONUSCO areas of operations, especially in the east, were therefore security and safety. That is not to discount the need for development and social interventions. Figure 5.7 paints this picture adequately.

In the particular area of media and communication, increasing national stability has led to a growing media and telecommunication landscape. There is media diversity and plurality. According to Mushizi (2020), as of January 2020, there were 627 radio stations, 571 print media and television channels listed across the 26 provinces, with an undetermined number of online media. There are community radio and television stations in most provinces. The most developed newspapers are, however, Kinshasa-based. Only five newspapers are dailies. A few commercial media (e.g. Radio Top Congo FM), with live programmes, are popular. But most programmes broadcast by all these stations are opportunistic. Despite the growing media industry, local media and journalists do not enjoy sufficient protection from public authorities and institutions. They work and live permanently in fear of closure, prosecution, administrative hassle and even acts of politically-motivated violence. The media has almost nil impact on the population.

Under these circumstances, in light of its main tasks being POC against armed attacks and to help stabilise governance towards a return to a normal situation, public expectations of MONUSCO have been very high. These were, however, undermined by the apparent inability of the Mission to deliver to these expectations. As discussed in Section 5.5 above, MONUSCO was doing much with respect to POC, but the population was not well informed of this. The ultimate response to these expectations would not just have to be more protection, but also more information. In respect of the latter, MONUSCO would have had to direct effort to fill the information void, the aim being to engage those who must be engaged so that they change their behaviour (Garcia, 2012).

Ross (1992) argues that audiences are not passive. They are very active, could be individuated and in most cases segmented. They are aggregates of dispersed individuals without mutual ties (McQuail, 2000). As consumers of media products, audiences therefore have their preferences and seek gratification from their media of choice. It may therefore not be the case of one shoe fits all. Audience expectations should therefore factor in the communicator's choice of media to serve audiences. For example, what are the information needs of the armed groups and how does one reach them? What about the internally displaced persons? And what about MONUSCO's internal audience? Or the T/PCCs? To what extent have these factors been considered in planning the Mission's PI activities and designing the communication tools?

5.6.2 The content creators of public information in MONUSCO

A major finding was that the release of public information seemed to be tightly controlled. First, there was insistence that all public information, even from the Force, ought to be routed through the SC-PID. Second, there was also the case that, Mission authorities were cautious about releasing information to the public, largely because of national sensitivities and operational security and

especially the fact that all information has to be cleared before release. And third, even with the SC-PID, and in particular Radio Okapi, which had been touted as a national voice, sometimes there was resistance to what was to be broadcast. It was therefore sometimes not clear who should do what. This obviously hampers the speedy release of public information and this may have its drawbacks.

In addition to the above finding, it was also found that there were multiple content creators of public information active in the public information space. Firstly, there were the SC-PID and the Military Public Information Branch.

Table 5.4: public information products in MONUSCO

Serial	SC-PID	Target Audience	Military	Target Audience	Remarks
1.	Radio Okapi	General public	*Nguvu*, published by Force Headquarters	Troops, selected distribution	Radio Okapi is a general purpose station with nation-wide reach
2.	Press releases (PR)				PR as and when necessary
3.	Press conference (PC)				PC held only at Mission HQ level. Now reduced to once/month
4.	Facebook	General public	*MONUSCO-FIB Newsletter*	Selected distribution	
5.	Twitter	General public	Contingent news magazines/newsletters	Contingent members	
6.	Video documentaries	Selected distribution	e-newsletter	Internal distribution	e-newsletter published by Force Headquarters
7.	ONU Hebdo	General TV audience	Force Twitter	General public, accessible only to Twitter users	ONU Hebdo is a 15min episodic video story aired on local TV
8.	Photo du jour (PDJ) On flickr.	General public	Force Facebook	General public, accessible to only Facebook users	PDJ is included in the Mission's online photo gallery
9.	Town halls	General public			
10.	Website	General public			
11.	YouTube	General public			
12.	*Echos de la MONUSCO*	Selected distribution			*Echos* is Mission Magazine
13.	Selected pamphlets	Selected distribution			
14.	Outreach	Selected communities			Organised as and when opportune

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

Though these were expected to collaborate in public information delivery, they seemed to be independent of each other and there was no indication that the SC-PID had any input into the products created by the other. Their target audiences were also not the same, even in some cases

the general public was common to both. Table 5.4 presents a summary of the key PI products produced by the two entities. There were other independent actors as well, such as DDR that directly communicated to the population. DDR which, as already mentioned in Section 5.5.3c, sometimes targeted armed groups with messages and were said to even possess their radio broadcast equipment and capability[124].

Second, in the Force itself, there were also two strands creating content: Public Information and Information Operations. Many PI products in the Military Component were in the main created by the IO Cells at the FHQ and Sector HQs. The FIB, under the authority of its separate communication strategy, created its content targeting certain audiences with different messaging and through different communication tools.[125] During the visit to Beni, there was no indication that the armed groups were, however, systematically targeted with crafted messages or specific communication products. This was confirmed by a senior military officer in the brigade.

There was therefore clear evidence of multiple communicators creating and disseminating PI content, virtually targeting the same audiences, even down to the brigade and contingent levels. Even though, as it was mentioned above, multiple communication products could mean more people were receiving PI (Section 5.4.3), multiple communicators targeting the same audiences with separate and sometimes contradictory information was eventually counter-productive.

As far as it was possible, audience and situational expectations were to be considered in designing messages and communication products such that the right audiences would be targeted with the right messages; but as McQuail (2000) advises, audiences are not there just to receive

[124] The researcher did not have the opportunity to speak to DDR which was said to communicate with and to ex-combatants. The Director of the SC-PID confirmed this.
[125] Media and Communication Strategy – Deployment of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) – MONUSCO New Mandate May 06, 2013.

communication. They are also active in the generation and distribution of content, as targets, participants and spectators, no matter their demographics.

5.6.3 Likely considerations in the design of some public information products

These factors may have been considered at one phase or another of the planning process, in particular during the research phase, even though not probably articulated in writing. To the extent that the Mission was thinking of "communicating better" and adopting a "comprehensive approach" to messaging, it was indicative that there was some awakening to improve its manner of communication and to consider the people who matter most in the peace efforts.

This researcher was not able to have access to some communication tools and products, such as radio spots and/or television interview clips. Accessing these was not possible for want of time to look around everywhere and look for everything. Nonetheless, three types of publications were available to the researcher, copies of which were freely provided. These are the Mission news magazine, *Echos de la MONUSCO;* the Force newsletter, *Nguvu*, and the newsletter of the FIB, *MONUSCO-FIB Newsletter.* In this section, I look at two of these and argue that situational and audience considerations were not seriously factored in designing some of their messages.

News magazines and newsletters constitute an effective communication tool or platform. They may be classified simply as publications of special or general interest (Wilson, 1993). Special interest when they target audiences with special interest; and general interest when they target a wider audience. While all the three publications may seem to be of special interest, in that they covered essentially issues about and relating to MONUSCO and the UN, they also seemed to be of general interest, since they were also concerned with people and places in DR Congo in general. But as publications with very limited circulation[126], they may have had far less appeal to a wider

[126] There was no data on the circulation figures of the Force publications. They were start-up publications. The first edition of *Nguvu* was published in October 2018 and that of *MONUSCO-FIB Newsletter* in April 2019.

audience. Moreover, they had a limited readership and less direct reader involvement, with contributors from a limited selection of writers. They nevertheless seemed to capture the interest of some specific audiences. This is reflected by the presentation of special columns. For example, *Echos* has a "Protection" column to cater to efforts in support of MONUSCO's "protection of civilians" mandate, and a "Human rights" column to highlight that area of interest. Much of the projection in the magazine was however on political issues, with activities involving or surrounding the leadership of the nation and MONUSCO. The two other publications focused on the activities of the Force and its units and sectors with columns dedicated to these areas.

Mencher (1991) identifies the values of news to include impact, timeliness, prominence, proximity and currency. This involves presenting and projecting issues that have relevance to many people, issues which have occurred in the immediate past, involve well-known persons and institutions, are largely in the circulation area and cover issues that are talked about. To this extent, these publications may have considered some situational and audience issues in their content. However, by and large, the interests of such audiences as the armed groups, and certain segments of the larger population may not have been given some consideration in either the messaging or the selection of the platforms.

For example, in the November 2017 edition of *Echos de la MONUSCO, Vo. IX-No.75*, pages 16-17, which featured an article to mark Universal Children Day titled "*La RDC fait des progress dans la Protection de l'Enfant"*, one will consider that the interest of child soldiers was not taken into consideration. In that article, notwithstanding that readers were exhorted to remain committed to protecting children in a banner, Figure 5.8 accompanying the write-up painted a different picture.

The accompanying article may have said otherwise, but it seems evident that these were children who as far as was possible were not under duress and, from the look of it, seemed to enjoy being drilled in military fatigues. These could even be school cadets who often undergo such training as part of growing their confidence and resilience as future leaders. Other children

Figure 5.8: Child soldiers in training?

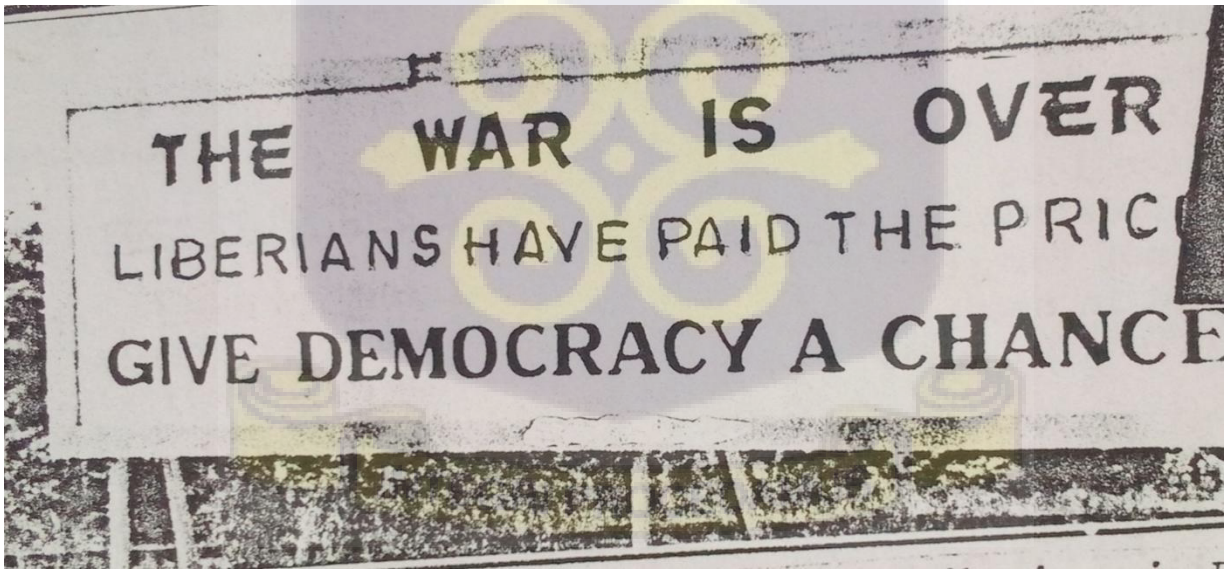
Source: Author's Research, 2019. Photo Credit: MONUSCO

watching this photo may also be looking forward for such opportunity: to do what they admire or would eventually like to be. An appropriate photo that would have spoken to the interest of children and in support of the exhortation to "reaffirm our obligation and commitment to do everything in our power to protect children from recruitment and use in armed conflict" as captured in the

banner, would have been one showing former "child soldiers" handing in their weapons or being demobilised. As one key research participant highlighted, protecting civilians was not only a matter of using a military tool, which was important, but also using public information to support that effort.[127]

As already mentioned, the target audience of MONUSCO's flagship publication, *Echos de la MONUSCO*, seemed to be the local population, because it was published mainly in French. However, the simple fact that circulation was only 15,000 every month, meant that its target was rather a narrow segment of the population. Going by the poor picture of the media and information environment painted above (Section 5.6.1) and the fact that there would have been the expectation that MONUSCO and its PI would aim to fill the information gap and meet the information needs of the local population, in considering what platform to create, one believes that a high-circulation newspaper rather than a magazine would have been the choice. The magazine could still have been published, anyway, but the newspaper would have been the most appropriate if the local population

Figure 5.9: A public service hoarding in Monrovia, Liberia, during ECOMOG Operations



Source: The Author's Field Research, 2019. Credit: Exodus 2 Vol. 2 No.2 Jan-Mar 1991

[127] Interviews with KEI 2A on 11 May 2019 and KI 1C on 03 May 2019.

were the target. Though radio may be the most effective platform for public communication in peace operations (Orme, 2010), a high-circulation newspaper that can be read over and over again and move around widely, would rather provide the greatest opportunity to educate and sensitise the local population and therefore be more effective in projecting the Mission.

At the time of the field visit, the researcher did not see one outdoor hoarding conveying MONUSCO's messages to the population. The UN shies away from commercial advertising. However, in planning how to effectively reach the target local population considering the demographics of the population, an outdoor hoarding carrying simple and easily understandable information would have been useful and effective. In Liberia in the 1990s during the civil war, ECOMOG used this medium to great advantage as Figure 5.9 depicts.

To sum up the issues with respect to the research question, there were efforts to factor situational and audience issues in crafting communication tools and platforms. It was nevertheless indicated that more work remained, especially if the target of MONUSCO's messaging was the local population.

5.7 Summary

In this chapter, the research findings to answer the five research questions have been discussed and analysed. The searchlight has been on public information in MONUSCO and its efficacy in delivering its mandate, as a means of exploring the role of communication in international conflict management. The results are situated within the understanding and experiences of respondents. These findings have confirmed earlier findings in similar case studies.

However, in the case of MONUSCO, while it had a well-functioning public information component, the structure, organisation and functions and the coordination of its activities with other components left much to be desired. Its organisation structure was found to be inadequate. It

did not seem that the design of the structure was informed by the composition of the mission and other related dynamics; many of the outfits seemed to take care of their public information, without any noticeable input from the SC-PID as an integrated component would have. It was suggested to have a fully integrated Strategic Communication and Public Information Component that incorporated all the major components and also to establish a central coordinating mechanism which included all these components in a Joint Public Information Coordinating Centre.

These systems, it was expected, would standardise the structures of PI to the greatest extent possible; facilitate critical decision-making; prevent duplication of jobs, functions and responsibilities; and lead to full and judicious use of resources. They would also lead to a greater impact on PI as they would improve functional relations between the practitioners across the divide, effective coordination of PI activities, higher professional performance, effective diffusion of the relevant guidance and direction to practitioners and efficient capacity-building.

It was also found that MONUSCO did not have a comprehensive mission-wide communication or public information strategy that should provide overarching guidance and direction for PI. It was therefore suggested that MONUSCO develop a comprehensive and overarching PI strategy that was elaborate enough to capture the needs of all its components and their responsibility to communicate effectively and greatly help in ensuring that all PI activities were consistent with it. The next chapter concludes the thesis.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This qualitative study explored the role of communication in international conflict management by case-studying public information in MONUSCO. The study was conducted in the mission area of the DR Congo from 29 April-20 May 2019. MONUSCO was in its 20th year at the time of the study. It was important to find out if, for all that while, it had the wherewithal to conduct PI, which, it was expected, could contribute to it managing the conflict successfully.

To investigate the phenomenon, mixed qualitative methods were employed, with in-depth interviewing being the primary data collection tool. Almost anyone who mattered in MONUSCO was interviewed and these included policy-makers and practitioners, military and civilian. The findings have been discussed and analysed in the previous chapter. In this chapter, the implications of the study, recommendations for MONUSCO, suggested direction for future research and conclusion are presented.

6.2 Summary of the findings

The study established that MONUSCO had a well-functioning mission-wide Public Information Component – the Strategic Communication and Public Information Division (SC-PID). Its mandate and activities were nevertheless being affected by the following:

a. There were multiple content creators of Public Information (PI) and in many instances, situational and audience expectations were not fully considered in designing some PI products. There did not seem to be a unified understanding of PI amongst senior leaders at

MONUSCO. While the key respondents acknowledged the SC-PID as a desirable outfit and PI as a necessity, some, however, saw the PI as a tool and others as a function. Yet others saw it as a forum. PI practitioners themselves had similar varied views.

b. There was a capacity-building gap that could affect the professional capacity of PI practitioners across MONUSCO. This was largely a result of budgetary constraints, the wide dispersal of mission personnel, including Military Public Information Officers (MPIOs), and the inadequate competencies of especially the MPIOs.

c. MONUSCO did not have a mission-wide PI strategy, as provided for in the Department of Public Information/Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPI/DPKO 2006) Policy and Guidance for Public Information in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (p19). It rather had several communication strategies aimed at guiding communication for specific programs or activities. Even here it did not have a mission-wide composite communication strategy, which was also required in line with the new Department of Public Information/Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Service (DPI/DPKO/DFS 2016) Policy on Strategic Communications and Public Information.

d. The release of PI seemed to be tightly controlled**.** Regular instructions and directives from the right sources on PI were often not passed down the line and sometimes those who required certain information had to personally contact sources anytime for them. There was nothing written and disseminated.

e. Some public information products did not seem to consider the situational and audience expectations in the conflict area in their crafting and dissemination, thus affecting their implementation and impact. It did seem, overall, that there was more needed to be done if PI was to confidently contribute to MONUSCO realising its stated goals and objectives.

6.3 Implications for Public Information Theory

Firstly, the current study has implications for theory in the area of PI modelling. The PI model in practice across peace operations, as demonstrated in the literature, has been confirmed. Policies from the UN HQ, in particular those issued in 2006 and 2016, transplanted the PI model of the UN HQ, based on its own dynamics, to peace operations. The dynamics and circumstances in a serene and peaceful UN Secretariat in New York are different in all respects from a field peace operation. As the study has shown, a peace operation is confined to a conflict setting where parties and other players, including the local population, may not necessarily play by the rules willingly in the peace process. The PI model in a peace operation should be the one that seeks not only to project the peacekeeping mission but primarily, and most importantly, influence the behaviour of conflict actors to contribute actively to the peace process. Such a model would have to be sensitive to the situational and audience dynamics in the conflict area and also recognise the role and contribution of other communication models that it has to collaborate and cooperate with in delivering its mandate.

Secondly, the study has exposed weaknesses in the current structure of the SC-PID. Similar to the above, a governmental organisation, a profit or even no-profit organisation are different from a peace operation. How a PI component in a peace operation should be organised and structured must be informed by its constituted components which must be incorporated into its structure. As currently organised, the SC-PID has been unable to meet the needs of the Mission and key audiences in the mission area largely because of the defects and internal inconsistencies in its structure. This has compelled MONUSCO to want to replace it with a more representative and effective public information structure.

Finally, the local population and the internal audience were to a great extent not fully considered in designing some PI products and activities. The local population in particular is why a peace operation intervenes in conflict. The international community at large and troop or police contributing countries are important to the success of a peace operation. However, the local population is the most critical. To the extent that a peace operation may no longer remain in place when consent for it is removed by the host country and/or its population (Kuhne, 1999, p.362; Piccolino & Karlsrud, 2011), the local population must be viewed as the most prominent motive for a PI intervention in a peace operation. Similarly, the internal audience plays a critical role in how the Mission must approach its tasks. They are the ones who carry out the peace operation's tasks. PI must recognise the internal audience as a principal tool and factor it into its work.

These unique dynamics must be recognised in theorising PI. Theory explicates these to inform a better approach to PI in peacekeeping, where the peace operation is intervening in a conflict situation as a neutral and impartial third party working to return peace and normalcy to the conflict area.

6.4 Implication for Public Information Practice

The study also has implications for PI practice. Since the early 2000s, PI has been considered a political and operational necessity (United Nations, 2006a). This characterised how important it was to the success of peace operations. Since then, UN peace operations have assumed more direct combat missions as part of their main tasks, especially from 2013 with the introduction of the Intervention Brigade concept. In 2016, the UN reconceptualised its public communication in peace operations to play two critical functions in relation to the new dynamic. This was when it re-designated public information units into strategic communication and public information units, to

combine the need to publicise the activities of the UN presence and also to attempt to influence behaviour and attitudinal change in conflict actors.

Public Information, in the understanding of the big players in MONUSCO, was to be the vehicle through which the Mission could inform its numerous stakeholders across board on what it was doing, much like public relations and/or advertising, by providing them timely, accurate and credible information and empowering them to actively contribute to the peace process. There were no specific targets; just about anybody, in and outside the Mission, including the internal audience. As the study has revealed, PI has not been able to deliver to that expectation. In its current structure, organisation and functions, it has not been able to answer the needs of the Mission and certainly not the local population, who must be the ultimate beneficiaries of the success of a peace operation.

In the light of current dynamics in peace operations, the Mission in general and particularly the Military Component, which is the main tool for prosecuting the peace operation, does not only inform on what it is doing for the people in the conflict, but most importantly to win them over. Win their hearts and minds. Peace operations are military-heavy. The military dominates and they do what they know best, whether in Operations other than war (OOTW) or in war. Their informational and operational needs must therefore be factored into the Mission's PI. The UN has finally realised this. This has informed its reconceptualisation of public communication in peace operations by re-designating the hitherto public information into strategic communication and public information, to cater directly to the political and operational needs of peace operations. It might seem that the UN adopted PI as its form of public communication from its successful practice in WWI without its second prong (Chapter Two). If PI is still necessary for the political and operational dimensions of peace operations, then it has to be sensitive to other forms of public

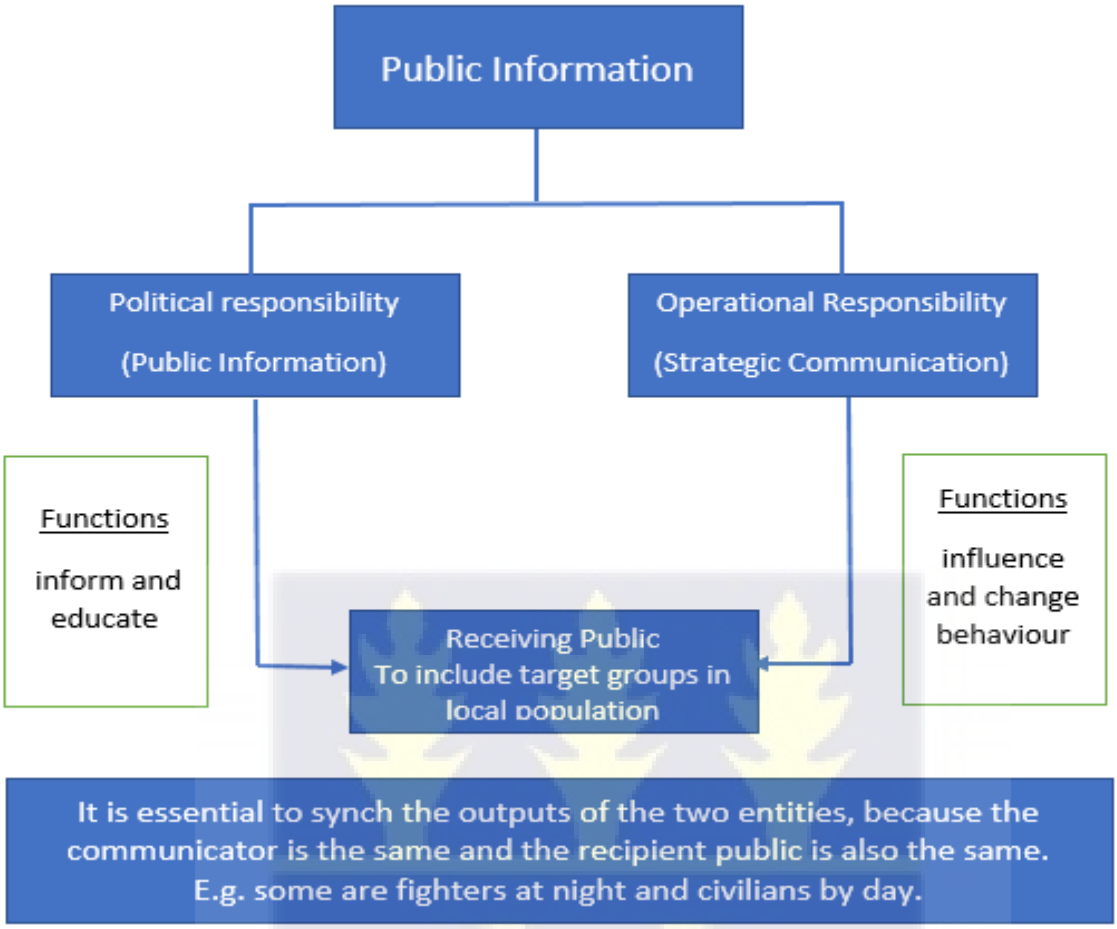
communication by the peace operation with which it should team up so the Mission can successfully deliver its mandate.

Public Information in the confines of a serene UN HQ New York is far different from what it should do in the hostile environments of peace operations. After 70 years of practice in environments of crisis in which it often discounted the realities (Report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the UN during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, 1999; Brahimi Report, 2000; Dallaire, 2004), the time has come to rethink the PI practice in peace operations. There is need also to reorient PI practitioners in the field. PI should not be business as usual, oblivious to the essential need to win the hearts and minds of conflict-prone communities and in particular those affected by your actions and activities.

Additionally, it is necessary to reorganise PI in peace operations to recognise these political and operational requirements of the operations. While this was recognised in the study, it was obvious that there was a problem of who to do what. With the adoption of the concept of strategic communication and public information in peace operations, it is to recognise the strategic nature of PI in a conflict situation, not a normal peacetime environment. There is therefore need to clarify the functions of PI, given its two-pronged role – political and operational. These are PI on the one hand and IO on the other. It then requires that PI must work together with IO and maybe other forms of public communication so they do not undermine each other, because, essentially the communicator is one and the target audiences are the same. Otherwise, as has been evident in MONUSCO, the Mission would be pouring water into a leaking basket, which is saying so much and not making any impact.

It may, however, be necessary to maintain the same designation for the practice in peace operations. Information operations, to be conducted as the operational responsibility of public

Figure 6.1: Crystalising PI's functions in the new dynamic



Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

information, should not necessarily connote an evil practice; but that the motivation for the communication is different from that of outright public information. It does not seek to counter but rather complement PI. Only that it aims, in addition to informing, to genuinely win hearts and minds and influence directly the behaviour of target audiences to positively contribute to the peace efforts; however, it has to be effective. But as the UN is still shying away from connoting elements of manipulation in its workings, it prefers "strategic communication" to "information operations", because the latter, as pointed out in Chapter Three, was often associated with war information. It may therefore be ideal to call the second function of public information strategic communication

rather than information operations. Figure 6.1 crystalises the new dynamics of public information in peace operations.

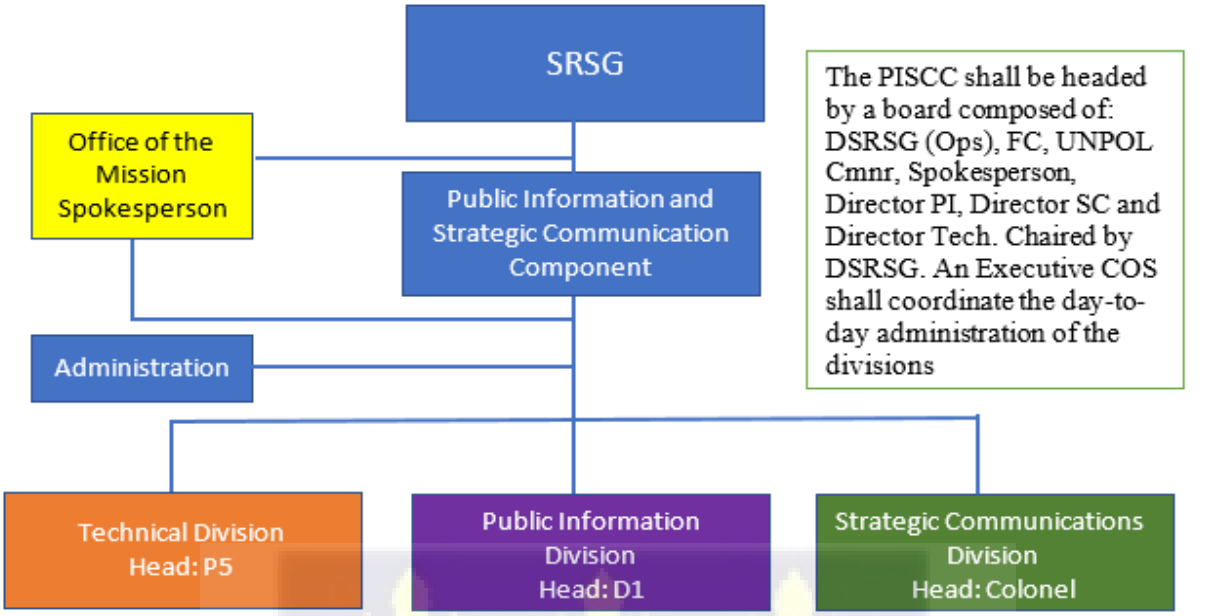
6.5 Recommendation for MONUSCO

The new policy direction on PI in peace operations was issued by the UN Secretariat in 2016. By the date of my fieldwork in DR Congo, it seemed nothing concrete had been done by the Mission to actualise the policy change. Even in the so-called new Strategic Communication and Public Information Division, some of its documents and informational products still bore the old name. According to a senior official, the Mission was yet to hire an expert in the specific area of strategic communication to handle that aspect of the Mission's public communication. It was probable that a strategic communication unit had been created and was to start work in three to four months of my visit, with a focus on a comprehensive approach to communication where all relevant stakeholders would be involved in its work, but without the involvement of the Public Information Division[128]. But it seemed that what the Military Component was doing was not part of the activities of this new unit.

Public Information should not be discredited nor discounted. There is a good reason why it was selected in the first instance as the UN's main form of public communication. It still has relevance and has to be roped firmly into the activities of the new dynamic. Drawing from Figure 6.1, the suggestion is that that new unit should incorporate public information into it and the suggestions in Figures 5. 2 and 5.3 be factored into designing its organisation and structure.

[128] Interview with KEI 1B on 03 May 2019 @ 1644. Except this official, no one else mentioned it in our interviews.

Figure 6.2: Suggested organogram of the new Public Information and Strategic Communication Component



Technical Division	Provide common-user platforms and tools for the other divisions. Staffed by video/ photographers, specialists in IT, multimedia, imagery, map source, etc. Operate printing, publishing, language support etc. sections. Tech Archives. Small offices in sectors.
Public Information Division	News service, media relations, outreach, advocacy, internal communication, public affairs, gov't relations, international relations, public education. Staffed by staff writers, information officers, language assistants. Maintain public information offices in sectors
StratCom Division	Influence ops, reputation management, social responsibility, public speaking. Staffed by liaison officers, info analysis officers, etc. Maintain offices in the sectors.
Office of the Spokesperson	Staffed by Mission and Military spokespersons. May be others where required. Maintain offices at the Mission and Force HQs.

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

Inspired by Figure 6.1, the new unit should ideally be called the Public Information Strategic Communication Component (PISCC), to fully recognise public information as still relevant in peace operations. A suggested organisational structure is presented in Figure 6.2.

The divisions of the PISCC are to be semi-autonomous. The PISCC will maintain offices in the sectors where the various entities contained in it will be co-located. At the MHQ/FHQ level,

the Component will be chaired by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Ops) but at the Sector level, it will be headed by the Sector Public Information Officer. It is advised that these offices should be staffed by both civilians and uniformed personnel as much as possible. The civilian staff would obviously provide consistency in practice and continuation of programmes, so that they do not become just one-off events and stability in the component.

Secondly, the new unit be provided with an adequate budget. There were indications that the PI components were grappling with resource constraints that negatively affected their work and impact. Additionally, there should be continuous capacity-building of its practitioners as part of addressing the resource constraint.

Thirdly, as uniformed personnel will be included on its staff, it is suggested that such staff have longer tenures, of up to two years of continuous service, with the Mission in order that their professional contribution will be effective.

Fourthly, a Joint Public Information Coordinating Centre (JPICC) or Joint Public Information and Strategic Communication Coordinating Centre (JPISCCC) as the case may be, or of a different name, should be created to complement efforts at effective integration of and coordination of the component. This will facilitate effective sharing of information, expertise and experience and efficient coordination of PI programmes across the various components. If the unit is still structured without recognising the various components that must contribute to its working, nor it does not have an established mechanism for coordination, liaison and cooperation, it will be bedevilled with the working challenges that have faced its other self.

Fifthly and finally, there should be a comprehensive, elaborate and focused PI Strategy to guide the workings of the new unit. This should be informed by the new dynamics to include situational and audience expectations.

6.6 Directions for Future Research

The researcher set out to establish whether PI in MONUSCO was capable of delivering its mandate to contribute to the success of the Mission. The findings established that the SC-PID is deficient in its structure and efficacy and has not been able to deliver to the expectations of the Mission and possibly its publics. It is the more reason why there were steps by the Mission to set up another unit ostensibly to provide better services.

The study was limited to MONUSCO. It would be most enriching to explore the views of the local population to confirm these findings and establish the real impact of the Mission's PI activities and indeed their relevance. Was PI in MONUSCO more like pouring water into a leaking basket? The researcher would also have wished to compare these findings with findings from another UN peacekeeping mission in Africa and to confirm whether these findings were peculiar to MONUSCO. A senior leader in the Mission indicated that the new unit to be put in place of PI was unique to MONUSCO. Are other missions thinking similarly?

Military staff officers (MSOs) seconded to PI from troop contributing countries (TCCs) were said not to have the requisite expertise in that field. Reasons suggested for this state of affairs included TCCs not having enough experts to continuously deploy to these missions. What is the actual reason and could the TCCs be receptive to the idea of extending the tour of duty of such MSOs as a principle?

A possible topic for future research may well be "Communication in international conflict management: Exploring the perceptions of the local population in the DR Congo of MONUSCO's public information campaigns."

6.7 Conclusion

This thesis explored how public information (PI) in MONUSCO could contribute to the achievement of its mandate. It set out to establish this by looking at the efficacy of the Strategic Communication and Public Information Division (SC-PID), whether it was structured for purpose, and if it was imbued with the right and appropriate garb to enable it to deliver its mandate. MONUSCO's example is that, while PI components may exist in the mission, they are unable to deliver their mandate largely because they remain unconnected to their constitutive parts and discount the role of other important communication forms that operate side by side with it. The findings not only confirmed findings in the literature but also revealed some of the factors that hinder the effectiveness of the division and have addressed how this could be rectified to enable PI delivery. The study has implications for both the theory and practice of PI in peace operations, providing an opportunity for further research to establish the true relevance of PI practice in UN peace operations.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

PROFILE OF MAJOR ARMED GROUPS IN DR CONGO

March 23 Movement (M23)
M23 takes its name from the 23 March 2009 peace treaty signed between the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) and the DRC government. Failed attempts to reintegrate the CNDP forces in the FARDC (the Congolese army) and poor living conditions and pay provoked hundreds of mainly mutinous ethnic Tutsi soldiers in the army in 2012 to break away to form the M23 Movement (Barrera, 2015; Andrews, 2017).

Despite the presence in the city of 1500 UN peacekeeping troops and 7000 troops of the national armed forces, Forces armees de la republic democratique du congo (FARDC) (Cammaert and Blyth, 2013). The FIB's objective is to "neutralise" and disarm the rebels and to protect civilians. It is composed of fighting troops from the regional Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries - Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania - with the sole aim to engage in offensive operations but under the UN flag.

Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR).
The group was formed by Rwandan Hutu elements linked to the 1994 genocide. Routed following the genocide, they regrouped in the DR Congo. The elder Kabila's government entered into an alliance with the FDLR to counter the influence of Rwanda in 1998 with some members of the group joining the DR Congo army.

Allied Democratic Forces/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF/NALU).
This is a Ugandan Muslim rebel group formed in the early 1990s. It operates inside and outside Uganda. Under pressure from the Ugandan Army, the group crossed into the DR Congo and has remained in the North Kivu area.

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).
This group was formed in northern Uganda in 1987 by Joseph Kony with the objective to establish a Christian-inspired theocracy in Uganda. The LRA operates mostly in the DR Congo's Garamba National Park. But smaller pockets of the group operate in the Uélés districts of North-Eastern Congo, the east of the Central African Republic (CAR) and parts of southern Sudan.

Raia Mutomboki.
The group is believed to be the largest in South Kivu. It was formed in 2005 in the province's Shabunda territory by Congolese Army Defector Pastor Jean Musumbu. It is made up of various groups headed by local leaders and Congolese national army deserters. It operates across large parts of North and South Kivu.

Mai-Mai Sheka (Nduma Defence of Congo-NDC).
This group was formed in 2009 by a businessman, Ntabo Ntaberi Sheka, in North Kivu's Walikale Territory. It has 150-180 men, mainly army deserters and youths. It is allied with M23 and operates in parts of North Kivu's Masisi Territory.

Mai-Mai Kifuafua.
The group consists of fighters drawn mainly from the Batembo, Bahunde and Bayanga communities. It claims to be protecting "*indigenous*" interests from "*foreign Rwandophone groups*". It is active in southern Masisi Territory of North Kivu. During the 1998-2003 civil war it fought the Rwandan- backed Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD) and its successor the pro-Tutsi Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP). The RCD-Goma ruled North Kivu as a proxy of the Rwandan govenment during the civil war period.

Source: **(IPSTC-K, 2014)**

Members of these armed groups have linkages with actors both in and outside DR Congo, including government forces. Andrews (2017) argues that these warlords and rebel commanders have often been allowed to join the national army while still keeping their illegal money-making networks. They are often in civilian social networks and receive crucial inputs from elites and communities necessary for their survival. Many officers in the national army, the FARDC, maintain close ties with these armed groups for various reasons

APPENDIX II

TABLES 3.1-3.6

Table 3.1. Psyops products in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Srl	Mission	Operation	Psychological Operations Objective	Remarks
1.	SFOR	Operation Lancelot	Promote good works of IFOR/SFOR	
2.	SFOR	Operation Galahad	Promote role in democratisation and reconciliation	
3.	SFOR	Operation Dynamic Reserve	Ran SFOR's stories on trusted local television networks	SFOR retained editorial control
4.	SFOR	Operation Excalibur	Mine awareness for both locals and NATO troops	
5.	SFOR	Operation Harvest	Mines and explosives ordnance amnesty designed to get people to turn in these ordnances	While CJICTF published posters, pamphlets, articles, radio and TV spots, PIO covered the operation in press conferences and releases
6.	SFOR	Program Orion	Designed to de-link SFOR from NATO's operations in neighbouring Kosovo in the mind of Bosniaks	
7.	SFOR	Operation Dynamic Response	Designed to ensure SFOR spoke with one voice, by coordinating CJICTF and PIO messages	
8.	OSCE	Operation Camelot	Voter education	SFOR also disseminated its own products on this
9.	OHR/ UNHCR	Operation Roundtable	To overcome official bureaucratic blockages in promoting the return of refugees and internally displaced persons	

Table 3.2. MIST operations in Haiti in support of various operational contingencies

Srl	Operational Contingency	MIST Operation	PsyOps Objective	Challenges
1.	Pre-deployment operations	Setting up of Radio & TV Democracy with 3 FM bands broadcasting messages from ousted Pres Aristide in exile	a. Discourage illegal emigration from Haiti b. Prepare people for return to civil rule c. Legitimise intervention	Cultural insensitivity
2.	Operation Uphold Democracy	a. Leaflet drops b. Radio democracy broadcasts c. Electronic warfare transmissions	a. Inform public on reasons for US military intervention b. Minimise criticism of US actions c. Discourage hostility towards US forces	a. Poor Inter-agency coordination b. Failure to accommodate nuances of Haitian society c. Inability of US troops to intervene to stop police brutalities
	evacuation operations			
4.	Migrant interdiction operations			
5.	Civil-military operations	Publicity of the contributions of the multinational forces in the area of infrastructural projects (restricted to only those that could have a military payoff)	Promoting Haitian support for the intervention	a. Severe infrastructural needs – water, electricity, roads etc b. High public expectations
6.	Disarmament Operations	Broadcast of surrender appeal messages	Weapons for cash	

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019. Adapted from various sources.

7.	Transition support operations	a. Publicity for National Police reforms and assistance to Police establishments b. Promote outreach to support remote communities c. Campaign highlighting UN positive image worldwide	a. Support the transition process from US-led forces to UN phase, b. Acceptance of new and newly-trained professional police forces, c. Increase public support for UNMIH and d. set conditions for successful elections

Source: Author's Field Research 2019. Adapted from varied sources

Table *3.3* Media tools used by UNMIK

Srl	Information Needs/Challenges	Methods/Means	Communication Tools	Comments
1.	Direct communication to local population urging tolerance, restraint and cooperation.	a. Establishment of Radio-TV Pristina (RTP) to broadcast to the Albania population. b. Establishment of Radio Korona to broadcast to the Serb population.	Radio/TV	a. UNMIK used these tools to sell its messages to the local population and others, combat state media and other propaganda and enabled open dialogue and democratic discussions between and among all sections of the population b. UNMIK PI accessed private newspapers and television channels. c. During all these forums UNMIK communicated with the local population. d. UNMIK PI also engaged in media monitoring
2.	Develop vibrant free, independent, responsible and peace-oriented local media to cater to the broad needs of all sections of the society.	a. Resurrection of Radio-TV Kosovo (RTK). b. Establishment of Blue-Sky Radio in collaboration with Fondation Hirondele, to broadcast to all the ethnicities --- Serbs, Albanians and Turks.	Radio/TV	
3.	Improve and protect the various information systems in the country to make them accessible to all.	Supporting the local media with revenue allocation	Advertising	
4.	Create platforms/forums to ensure and encourage a two-way information flow between UNMIK and the population.	a. Establishment of UNMIK TV. b. Creation of the UNMIK website, a cost-effective medium and which afforded the population quick access to UNMIK's information. c. UNMIK attended citizen's town hall meetings. d. UNMIK assisted in staging cultural events.	a. TV/Website b. Town hall meetings c. Cultural events	

Source: Author's Field Research 2019.

Table 3.4 Media tools used by UNMIL

Srl	Information Needs/Challenges	Methods/Means	Communication Tools	Comments
1.	Undeveloped media landscape with degraded local media, untrained media practitioners and inaccessible rural areas	UNMIL support to rural community radios, by adopting solid capacity-building strategy for local media	1. Training for media 2. Advertising 3. Direct logistical support 4. Providing editing and auditing services to local media	
2.	Dwindling revenue for media			
3.	Lack of public trust in the local media			
4.	No 24-hr electricity in most rural areas	Community outreach	1. face-to-face communication 2. Friendly meetings with significant local groups.	
5.	People unable to afford television sets and computers	a. Publication and Print Unit intervention b. Adopting 2-way interpersonal communication. c. Collaboration with Search for Common Ground NGO d. Community outreach	3. UNMIL Radio 4. Posters, stickers, fliers, brochures, newsletters, newspapers. 5. Radio drama 6. Social discussion and children's programmes. 7. Community outreach centres	
6.	Feedback (direct/indirect) from the population to inform mission activities	a. Community outreach b. Media monitoring c. Interpersonal communication.	1. Media monitoring and analysis 2. Meetings of mission leaders with media representatives at mission localities 3. Providing access to rural media by mission personnel 4. Radio UNMIL, incorporating live call-ins	
7.	Illiteracy, rumours, and false information	Awareness-raising	1. UNMIL Radio	UNMIL SW Radio

	which served to confuse the minds of the population	2. Radio drama 3. Social discussion programmes. 4. Children's programming. 5. Arts and culture activities – music, concerts, quiz competitions, theatres, football tournaments	started broadcasts at the inception of the mission and surpassed coverage of local networks. Incorporated live call-ins
8.	Peace and reconciliation between different groups, e.g., ex-combatants.	Arts and culture activities - music and concerts, quiz competitions, theatres, football tournaments	

Source: Author's Field Research 2019.

Table *3*.5 Media tools use by UNMEE

Srl	Information Needs/Challenges	Methods/Means	Communication Tools	Comments
1.	Low literacy rate	a. Small groups training where they become conduits for development messages b. Media coverage of UNMEE activities	1. Events 2. Meetings of local authorities/tribal leaders 3. Quick Impact Projects 4. Word-of-mouth	
2.	No independent Radio/TV in Ethiopia	Outreach	1. UNMEE Radio 2. UNMEE News	
3.	Strict state controls on primary radio and television broadcasts		UNMEE Radio	
4.	Tight control on access to information by the public	Outreach	Outreach centres in sectors	
5.	Polarised media			Reporters on both sides peddled hate propaganda against respective governments
6.	Hostile local			Media hostile to UN
7.	Crippling limitations of UNMEE activities			
8.	Limitations on UNMEE radio broadcasts and outreach activities	Routing limited broadcasts through the UN's Dubai SW hub.	Radio	
9.	Screening of UNMEE publications			

Source: The author's field research 2019.

Table *3*.6. Generic activities of Public Information in UNAMSIL and UNMIL

	UNAMSIL			UNMIL		
Srl	Unit	Activity/Focus	Tools	Unit	Activity/Focus	Tools
1.	Media & External Relations	a. Facilitating interaction with & representing UNAMSIL to local & international media b. facilitating informational needs of TCCs. c. Maintaining partnership with international media	1. Provide journalists and partners up-to-date information 2. arrange visits to media facilities 3. provide journalists access to mission personnel and communities 4. issues press releases & statements 5. manages advisories in PI and other components 6. coordinates across the PI section PI events, campaigns, announcements & all other PI-related activities 7. providing news compilations on mission activities distributed to both local & foreign news agencies	Media & External Relations	a. interactions with local and international media b. provide up-to-date info on mission activities c. arrange visits to UN facilities or rural Liberian communities d. coordinates the activities of PI staff e. improve access to accurate information, f. reduce misunderstanding & promote transparency	1. press releases and statements 2. press briefings
2.	Media monitoring	a. inform forward thinking PI component b. provide an overview of in-country events, the peace process, regional security and perceptions of	1. daily summaries and analyses of local and foreign media	Radio UNMIL	a. Fill information gap b. speak to the Liberian people c. offers people the	1. Radio UNMIL 2. news casts 3. radio programming 4. provide relays for local

		the mission & its work c. update PI strategy for dealing with bad press & media spoilers d. help maintain climate of security for the mission			opportunity to phone in to ask questions d. provide mission access to the airwaves e. encourage greater stakeholder participation in discussions of national issues f. civic education for the elections g. serve as UN's mouthpiece h. strengthen community radio stations	stations programming 5. provide contracts with the stations for airing UN programmes, e.g., election announcements
3.	UNAMSIL Radio	a. Provide fast, effective & economical medium for disseminating information over large geographical area b. overcome earlier unsatisfactory results to air programmes on local radio c. to reach refugee populations across borders in negihbouring countries with credible information	1. UNAMSIL Radio 2. targeted programming around listening patterns & behaviour of local populations, including ex-combatants 3. increase in programming to community radios 4. providing non-battery wind-up radio sets from other sources	Communit y outreach	a. community mobilization b. public sensitisation c. reaching large illiterate population d. transcend some of the infrastructural challenges e. spreading UN messages nation-wide f. education on good citizenship g. counteract negative stereotyping h. puts a human face to the peacekeeping operation & its engagement with civil society	1. humorous skits to purvey important messages 2. drama 3. roundtable talks with local community elders 4. SMS-text messaging on mobile telephony targeting younger audiences 5. activating a 'rapid deployment force' which goes into a community and prepares the ground for

						mission-wide initiatives regarding controversial and/or acts, e.g., rape & gender-based violence 6. road shows
4.	Community liaison and public outreach	a. reach out to remote and/or inaccessible audiences b. offset radio deficits in transmission or access to other media products c. to break tension between actors – government, RUF & UNAMSIL d. elicit appropriate community feedback	1. flyers 2. billboards 3. theatre groups 4. traditional dance troupes & musicians 5. comedies 6. peace concerts 7 football tournaments with ex-combatants 8. reconciliatory music albums 9. quiz competitions & high school debates 10. cartoons 11. souvenirs – t-shirts, key holders etc	Publications	a. inform various audiences of the activities of UNMIL b. explain & gain consent & support for UNMIL's work c. training for young locals with journalistic aspirations d. develop readership & an informed public e. prevent conflict behaviour through responsible journalism	1. flyers and posters 2. *UNMIL Focus* news magazine 3. *UNMIL Today* news magazine intended for UNMIL staff 4. direct support to *The Sentinel* newspaper 5. *Bomi* journal, a sector publication
5.	TV and video	a. target video clubs beyond the reach of existing TV networks b. intersperse viewing with UN PI products c. encourage healthy community discussions on the issues shown and engender dialogue	1. educational cartoons and shows 2. civic education documentaries 3. public service announcements on certain themes 4. video and photographic	Media monitoring & development	a. keep UNMIL chain of command informed of media reporting on developments and events in the country & editorial opinions b. gain insight into how UNMIL is perceived	1. daily analyses of local media output 2. mentorship, or micro-level capacity building through one-on-one training for local journalists 3. assistance for restructuring and capacity

d. involve people throughout the country in debate on the peace process

e. keep the international community up-to-date on mission developments

f, provide TCCs of footage of troops for domestic media

g maintain international political support

footage of mission activities

c. stage non-intrusive media

interventions

d. protect UNMIL from unjustified criticism &

misinformation

e. counter propaganda, false information & hate messages harmful to UN & the peace process

f. reveal need for responses on peace process

g. blend typical military intelligence tasks within the

scope of a civilian unit working transparently without the secrecy many still

associate with the term 'information management'

h. strengthen local media actors/outlets & make up skills deficit'

building of active & potential media practitioners, & media foundations (e.g., partnership with 'Partnership for Media & Conflict

Prevention in West Africa' NGO)

4. panel discussions on media laws

5. media workshops to review progress & shortcomings of media oversight bodies

6. organising

community radio stations into an effective association

7. assist community stations to network & link up with international media

organisations for support, & to circumvent

financial sustainability challenges

8. provide media transportation to & protection at more remote &

						insecure areas, to report the news 9. transportation for distribution of newspapers outside Monrovia 10. Creation of a Media Centre in Monrovia, where journalists could come use equipment and telephones in their work, free of charge 11. Creation of 'County Information Centres' as community hubs to promote local media (projected)
6.	Publications & print	a. convey concrete evidence of the mission's presence for the local population b. produce outputs for other sections of the mission c. support other sections of the mission d. highlight what the mission is doing and its impact	1. photo features 2. billboards 3. stickers 4. flyers/posters 5. specific publications for military, police and other components	Regional & sector PIOs	a. facilitate events and initiatives with a specific focus on particular areas of the country b. represent focal point for communities with UN radio programming, arrange community outreach and video club events c. provide regional media monitoring d present human face of UNMIL	1. distribute sector-specific publications 2. facilitate media coverage of special events

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

APPENDIX III

Table 4.1: Full details of sampled research participants interviewed in the field study

Serial	Area/ Category	Component	Interviewees	Total
			IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS	
			Senior Civilian & Military Officials	
1.	Mission HQ	Civilian	SRSG, COS, Commissioner UNPOL, Political Advisor	4
2.	Force HQ	Military	FC, DFC/CMO, FCOS, G3 Ops, DCOS PET, Military Observers Team Leader	7
3.	Sector HQ	Civilian	HoO, Dep HoO, Acting HoA, C&D Officer	4
		Military	3xSector Commander, Chief Operations Officer	4
4.	Contingent HQ	Military	2xCommanding Officer	2
Sub-category total				**21**
			Other Civilian & Military Officials	
5.		Civilian	Archivist	1
6.			Interlocutors	5
7.			Civil Affairs Officer	1
8.			Journalist	1
9.		Military	Military Observers	2
Sub-category total				**10**

Public Information Practitioners

10.	Mission HQ	Civilian PI	Chief PID, Spokesperson, 3x Head of Division, Head of Radio Okapi	6
	Force HQ	Military PI	Chief MPIO, 1 x MPIO	2
11.	Sector	Civilian PI	Sector PIO, 3 x senior staff, 3 x junior staff	7
		Military PI	3xMPIO, 3 x junior staff	6
12.	Contingent	Military PI	2Xmpio	2
Sub-category total				**23**

Others

13.	TCC		Director General IPSO	1
14	TCC		Director Public Relations	1
15.	TCC		Former Military PI staff	6
Sub-category total				**8**

QUALITATIVE SURVEY

16.	Contingent	Military	Mixed (Officers/Soldiers)	**15**
Grand Total				**76**

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

Legend:
SRSG – Special Representative of the Secretary General; COS – Chief of Staff; UNPOL – UN Police; FC – Force Commander; DFC – Deputy FC; CMO – Chief Military Observer; FCOS – Force COS; DCOS – Deputy COS; HoO – Head of Office; HoA – Head of Administration; C&D – Conduct and Discipline; PID – Public Information Division; MPIO – Military Public Information Officer; TCC – Troop Contributing Country; IPSO – International Peace Support Operations.

APPENDIX IV

Table 4.2: List of research participants interviewed in the field study

Serial No.	Name	Position	Remarks
1.	Leila Zerrougui	Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG)	
2.	Awale Abdounasir	UNPOL Commissioner	
3.		Mission Chief of Staff	
4.	Moudjib Djinadou	Director Political Affairs	
5.	Charles Antoine Bambara	Director Strategic Communication and Public Information (SC-PID)	
6.	Florence Marchal	Spokesperson	
7.	Theophane Kinda	Coordinator SC-PID	
8.	Martin Sebujangwe	Chief Radio Okapi	
9.	Lt Gen E. R. Martins Filho	Force Commander	
19.	Brig Gen S. A. Akesode	Force Chief of Staff	
11.	Lt Col V. Moshakga	Chief Operations Officer FHQ	
12.	Col Felix P. Basse (rtd)	Senior Communication Advisor to DSRSG Operations/Rule of Law	
13.	Lt Cdr Nabil Cherkaoui	Chief Military Public Information Officer	
14.	Brig Gen Y. Sangwan	Sector Commander West	
15.	Maj S. Thebe	Sector Military Public Information Officer	Acting
16.	Brig Gen D. S. Bisht	Sector Commander Central	
17.	Maj Vijay Singh	Sector Military Public Information Officer	Stand in
18.	Lt Col	Commanding Officer Ghana Battalion	
19.	Maj Akakpo	Contingent Military Public Information Officer	
20.	Brig Gen Patrick Njabulo Dube	Commander Force Intervention Brigade	
21.	Lt Col T. Sekgobela	Commander Officer RSA Battalion	
22.	Lt Col Samba Gagara	FIB Beni Military Public Information Officer	
23.	Lt (SAN) O. R. Medupe	MPIO South Africa Battalion	
24.	Rosemary Oyoko	Chief Information management and Reproduction Services	Archives
25.	Maj Gueye Papa Arona	FIB-MONUSCO Liaison officer to FARDC	
26.	Yachim Maiga	Head Multimedia SC-PID	
27.	Aissatou Laba Toure	Chief Publications SC-PID	
28.	Adam Salami	Chief Civil Affairs South Kivu	
29.	Julius N. Fondong	Acting Head of Office Goma	Senior PAO
30.	Omar Aboud	Head of Office Beni	
31.	Josiah Orbat	Deputy Head of Office Beni	
32.	Maj Buddha K. Thebe	Military observer	
33.	Michael Ali	Senior Photographer	

APPENDIX V

Table 4.3. Documents selected for analysis

Srl.	Document Title/Subject	Type/ Edition	Contents/ Focus	Comment
1.	Policy and Guidance for Public Information in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. Operational Policy	July 2006		
2.	Profile of MONUSCO Strategic Communication and Public Information Division (SC-PID)		General information on SC-PID.	Found in MONUSCO website prior to field study.
3.	PIO Profile General		General information on SC-PID	Provided at the field site
4.	MONUSCO Communication Strategy		Details MONUSCO's broad communication strategy	Provided at the filed site. Draft
5.	SOP 518 Military Public Information Office (MPIO)		Standard operating procedures for military component public information	Provided at the field site
6.	MONUSCO Communication Strategy for UNSC Resolution 2463		Strategy for communication in respect of UNSC Resolution 2463	Provided at the field site
7.	Media and communication Strategy – Deployment of Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) May 2013		Communication strategy for deployment of FIB	Provided at the field site

8.	Strategy on MONUSCO use of social media – May 2013		Strategy for use of social media in the mission	Provided at the field site
9.	Concept Note – Communication Alert Unit in anticipation for the December 2018 Elections		On the establishment, organisation and functions of the Communication Alert Unit in preparation for the elections and election communication strategy	Provided at the field site
10.	Rules on Mission personnel interacting with Media and sharing sensitive information with external sources		Interoffice Memo	Provided at field site
11.	Strategic Communications and Public Information		DPKO Policy 2016.23. Outlines new policy on public information in UN peacekeeping. Sequel to 2006 policy.	Provided at the field site
12.	MONUSCO-FIB Newsletter	Issue No. 1, April 2019	Newsletter of the Force Intervention Brigade	Provided at the field site
13.	NGUVU	Vol 1 Issue 2; 15 October 2018	MONUSCO Force Newsletter. 8 pages.	A4 tabloid. Published in English by the Force HQ Information Operations Team. First edition launched on 18 September 2018.
14.	NGUVU	Vol 1 Issue 5; 15 January 2019	MONUSCO Force Newsletter. 8 pages	
15.	NGUVU	Vol 1 Issue 7; 15 March 2019	MONUSCO Force Newsletter. 18 pages	

16.	NGUVU	Vol 1 Issue 8; 30 April 2019	MONUSCO Force Newsletter. 16 pages	
17.	MBOTE CONGO	Vol 30; April 2019	News magazine of the Ghanaian contingent (Ghanbatt 14)	Published by the Public Relations Cell of the battalion.
18.	ECHOS de la MONUSCO	Special Edition on 15th anniversary of Radio Okapi	News magazine of MONUSCO (in French)	Published by the Mission Public Information Division in French
19.	ECHOS de la MONUSCO	Vol IX-No 74; October 2017		
20.	ECHOS de la MONUSCO	Vol IX-No. 75; November 2017		
21.	ECHOS de la MONUSCO	Vol X-No. 80; April 2018		
22.	ECHOS de la MONUSCO	Vol X-No. 85; September 2018		
23.	ECHOS de la MONUSCO	Vol X-No. 85; September 2018		
24.	ECHOS de la MONUSCO	Vol X-No. 86; February 2019		
25.	MONUSCO Social Media Report	September 2018	Details on information dissemination on various social media. One sheet, diagrammatical.	Publication of the SC-PID, in English
26.	Monitoring et performances des plateformes web de la MONUSCO	Semaine du 07 au 13 Janvier 2018	Report on PID Multimedia Unit activities on MONUSCO's web-based platforms	Published by SC-PID, in French. 25 pages

27.	MONUSCO Leadership @ April 2019	As at April 2019	Profile of mission senior leadership	In MONUSCO website before field trip. Noted that TCCs figures covered as at June 2013.
28.	MONUSCO Contact for Public Information		Contact details of PID key staff (Director PID, Mission spokesperson, military spokesperson and head of media relations) as well as general contact information	In MONUSC website before field trip
29.	MONUSCO Crisis Communication Plan		Includes information flow chart for crisis communication	Provided at the field site
30.	Public Information Division Daily Report	December 30, 2018	Media Monitoring Report of the Communication Situation Room	This edition highlighted issues surrounding the elections in several cities and recommends the use of social media and Radio Okapi to dispel rumours about MONUSCO's role in the elections. In English
31.	Public Information Division Weekly Report	8 Mars 2019	Media Monitoring Report of the Communication situation room	This edition reported on the public perception of MONUSCO. In French

32.	Media Daily Report in Beni Region on April 17, 2019			Prepared by the MPIO Staff Officer in Beni
33.	Special security report to Chief MPIO in Goma	10 October 2018		Prepared by MPIO Staff Officer in Beni
34.	Proposition d'actions de communications	Undated	Proposed MONUSCO communication plan during the Ebola crisis in the Beni region	Prepared by the MPIO Staff Officer in Beni
35.	Communication Strategy for DRC Elections 2018		Outlines MONUSCO responsibility	Prepared by the SC-PID. Draft.
36.	Documentaire: Forces MONUSCO		Synopsis for 8-15 minutes documentary on the MONUSCO force	Prepared by the Multimedia Unit. Draft
37.	Updated Work plan for the Multimedia Unit	For period 2018-2019		
38.	Internal UN webmail memo on International Day of UN peacekeepers celebration in May 2019	2 documents		Communication between staff at UN HQ, MONUSCO PIO
39.	PHOTO-OF-THE-DAY CHARTER	Undated	Outlines procedures for selection and publication of Photo De Jour (PDJ).	Prepared by the Multimedia Unit of SC-PID
40.	MONUSCO MISSING SOLDIERS card	Undated	Provides photos and details of two Malawian soldiers missing in the Beni area. A5 pocket card fully laminated. At the time of the field work in April-May	Message in French, English and Swahili. The latter is widely spoken in the area. No copyright information included. So, it is

2019, the soldiers were still missing.	not clear who is putting this out.

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

APPENDIX VI
– QUALITATIVE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

S1

ID CODE:

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

PHD RESEARCH SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Title of Study:	Exploring Communication in International Conflict Management: A Study of Public Information in Military Contingents in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Africa
Principal Investigator:	M'Bawine Atintande
Certified Protocol Number	ECH:195/17-18
Key Activity	

Section A – SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. Who is your major source of information about the UN in general here in the mission? (Tick those that apply)

   a. The Commanding Officer
   b. My immediate superior officer
   c. Another officer
   d. The Contingent Public information officer
   e. The Sector military public information officer
   f. The public information office at the Mission HQ
   g. Other (specify)

2. Who is your major source of this information on this peacekeeping mission? (Tick only one).

   a. The Commanding Officer
   b. My immediate superior officer
   c. Another officer
   d. The contingent Public information officer

e. The sector military public information officer
f. The public information office at the Mission HQ
g. Other (specify)

3. Who is your major source of information on your contingent? (Tick only one).

a. The Commanding Officer
b. My immediate superior officer
c. Another officer
d. The contingent Public information officer
e. The public information officer at the Mission HQ
f. Other (specify)

4. By what means do you get information about the UN mission and your contingent? (Tick those that apply)

a. Unit Routine Orders, for example Part 1 Orders.
b. Durbars/company meetings
c. Through a colleague
d. Through the contingent news magazine/newsletter
e. Through mission public information products/platforms (select those applicable – Mission news magazine, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, mission website, mission radio, flyers)

f. Others (specify)……

5. Which of the above listed means do you find most effective? ……

6. State your reason (s) ……

7. Which of them do you find more useful? ……

8. What is your reason? ……

Section B – RELATIONS

9. Do you know if your unit/contingent/detachment has a public information officer?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

10. If your answer to Q9 is "Yes", is the person the only one who has this responsibility as far as you know?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

11. If your answer to Q9 is "No" or "I don't know", do you know if there is someone else who is responsible for providing the relevant information to the public?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

12. If your answer to Q11 is "Yes", what is/are this other person's other responsibility (ies)?

……

……

13. Which of them takes priority (the public information responsibility or the other one)?

……

……..

Section C – IMPACT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

14. How will you rate the information you get from the public information officer? (tick only one from the scale below, with 1) being "least important" and 5) being "most important")

1) 2) 3) 4) 5)

15. How does this information help you understand your roles and functions/duties in this peacekeeping operation?

……

……

16. How does the information help you understand the conflict and what is required of you?

……

……

17. How does the information help you maintain healthy relations with people in your area of responsibility?

……

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!!

APPENDIX VII
– Qualitative Survey Information Sheet

FORM: A

ID CODE:

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

PHD RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR QUALITATIVE SURVEY

Section A- BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of Study:	Exploring Communication in International Conflict Management: A Study of Public Information in Military Contingents in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Africa
Principal Investigator:	M'Bawine Atintande
Certified Protocol Number	ECH:195/17-18
Key Activity	

Section B – GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT RESEARCH

Dear Respondent,
I am a doctoral candidate at the Department of Communication Studies of the University of Ghana. I am conducting this study on Public Information in Military Contingents in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Africa for my doctoral thesis.
The objective of the research project is to establish the importance of public information by military contingents in peacekeeping operations.

I have a brief questionnaire that asks a variety of questions about your perspectives on public information practice in this peacekeeping mission. I invite you to look over the questionnaire and, if you choose to participate, we can proceed with you answering the questionnaire. You don't have to write anything on it. I will ask the questions and also complete the questionnaire.

Your responses will not be identified with you personally, nor will anyone be able to determine which mission you work in, unless you would not mind disclosing your identity. Nothing you say will in any way influence your present or future employment with the mission or the United Nations.

Without the help of people like you, it may not be feasible to understand public information practice in United Nations peacekeeping. Your participation is voluntary and there is no penalty if you do not participate.

If you have any questions or concerns about us completing the questionnaire or about you participating in this study, I will try addressing them. And if you are satisfied I will appreciate we continue with the interview.

After the interview, should you have any further issues to raise you may contact me through the following contact information:

Name: M'Bawine Atintande
Address: C/O Department of Communication Studies, University of Ghana, P.O. LG53, Legon, Accra, Ghana
Telephone: +233(0)277605516 or +233(0)243535167
Email: mbat75@yahoo.com; mbawine.atintande@gmail.com; mbatintande@st.ug.edu.gh

You may also contact my lead supervisor via the following contact information:

Name: Professor Audrey Gadzekpo
Address: School of Information and Communication Studies, University of Ghana, P. O. Box LG 53, Legon, Accra, Ghana
Email: audreygadzekpo@gmail.com
Telephone: +233(0)244462652

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Ghana Ethics Committee via the following information:

Name: Administrator, Ethics Committee for Humanities,
Address: Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana
Email:ech@isser.edu.gh / ech@ug.edu.gh
Telephone: +233(0)303-933-866.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. I hope you will take a few minutes for us to complete this questionnaire.
Sincerely,

M'Bawine Atintande

Section C - **PARTICIPANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

"I acknowledge that I have read and understood the contents of this Information Sheet."

_____

Name of Respondent

_____ _____

Signature or mark of Respondent Date

_____

Name of Researcher

_____ _____

Signature or Mark of Researcher Date

APPENDIX VIII

Participation Observation Checklist

During the course of the study, the researcher intends to participant observe joint interactions by members of the two components – civilian and military – during events, meetings/conferences and other structured engagements. The researcher will also observe the workings of the public information staff of the different components in their natural setting. During the observation, the researcher will be looking out for cues, signs, indicators and evidence of the following, among others:

1) Integration
2) Efforts at cooperation
3) Efforts at collaboration
4) Individual competencies in carrying out assignments/tasks
5) Staff usage of doctrines/guidelines in their work
6) Efforts at coordination
7) Indications of information dissemination – who by, how and to what audiences
8) Use of tools of information dissemination – what, who by, when and how
9) Sharing of information, experience and expertise
10) Coherence in public information activities and programmes across all components
11) Personal relations between members
12) Reactions by members to events and ideas
13) Scrutiny of relevant documents to identify any linkages between theory and practice

APPENDIX IX

– In-depth Interview Guide

KI1AU

ID CODE:

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

INTERVIEW GUIDE 1 – MISSION HEADQUARTERS

SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL (SRSG)

General Information

1. What do you understand by public information? How will you explain it?
2. How important is public information overall in this mission?
3. How convinced are you that public information can contribute to the success of your mission's mandate?
4. How important is it in the military component in particular?

Organisation and structure of public information

5. What is the authorised organisational structure of the public information component in this mission?
6. How satisfied are you with this structure?
7. To what extent is the civilian public information component distinct from the military public information component?
8. How does this distinction affect public information functions and campaigns in the mission overall? In particular, how has this affected the requirement for the mission to speak with one voice?
9. How does the SRSG maintain system-wide coordination and cooperation between the civilian and military public information components, bearing in mind that various components tend to aggressively guard their own turf?
10. What specific binding institutional frameworks (criteria) guide the functions and activities of the public information components in the mission?
11. How effective have these criteria been and how have the respective public information components adhered to them?
12. What influence do the Department of Peace Operations and Department of Corporate Communication at the United Nations Secretariat have on the mission in relation to public information?

13. How much do you agree with the viewpoint that there should be one uniform set of guidelines and procedures for all public information components in a peacekeeping mission, going by the "One United Nations" policy adopted by the UN in 2001? How feasible is this?
14. The UN Secretariat has called for greater integration of mission components. How do you understand this call?
15. How integrated are your civilian and military public information components in this mission?
16. The military elements in the mission rotate more frequently than the civilian elements. How have you been able to maintain consistency in the activities of the military public information components in line with the mission guidelines?

Strategic communication and communication strategy

17. How satisfied are you with the role of public information in this mission?
18. What would like to see change and why?
19. How has the mission been able to avoid duplication of effort by the various components in public information?
20. How aware are you of how public information is carried out in the military contingents?
21. What is the mission's communication strategy like; and how far has it been implemented?
22. There is a call for greater expertise and professionalism in public information practice. What is the level of competence of your public information staff – both civilian and military?
23. How can the mission ensure professionally competent military public information officers are deployed to this mission?
24. Have you ever addressed a central meeting of all your public information officers in this mission?
25. Budgetary allocation is seen as one drawback in the performance of public information components. How has this mission addressed this for all the separate public information components?
26. What are the challenges facing public information practice in this mission?
27. How familiar are you with these two documents - "Policy and Guidance for Public Information in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations" adopted by both the DPO and DGC in 2006 and
"Guidance to Special Representatives of the Secretary General on Public Information and Media relations in United Nations Peace Operations" adopted in 2002?

Response to situational and audience needs

28. How effective have the mission's public information campaigns been?
29. In particular, how effective have been the strategies, tools and channels used in the campaigns?
30. How often has public information practice in this mission been evaluated?
31. If there was ever any such evaluation, what was the objective and what followed the evaluation?
32. What lessons can we learn from the mission's public information practice?
33. Is there anything else you would like to share about your impressions of public information's role in peacekeeping missions?

APPENDIX X

– Participant Information Sheet

FORM: B

ID CODE:

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

PHD RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Section A - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of Study:	Exploring Communication in International Conflict Management: A Study of Public Information by Military Contingents in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Africa
Principal Investigator:	M'Bawine Atintande
Certified Protocol Number	ECH:195/17-18
Key Activity	

Section B - GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT RESEARCH

I would like to invite you to take part in the above named study but before you decide, please read the following information.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have been identified as a key research participants in view of your wealth of experience, expertise and authority in the subject area.

This research is a case study of communication in United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa. Its purpose is to determine the extent to which military contingents in the peacekeeping operations have complied with a United Nations policy in 2006 for them to deploy with competent public information capabilities. The study will also seek to identify the relationship between the civilian and military public information components in the missions, determine how military contingents carry out public information and to what extent their public information campaigns sync with the UN doctrine on public information practice. It will also seek to establish doctrinal issues relating to public information in the field.

I will appreciate about 30 minutes to one hour of your time to discuss a few issues regarding the research. Depending on our interaction, if it is necessary to extend the time I will seek your consent to proceed further.

I will start by asking you a few questions. I will appreciate your candid answers. Should you have any documentary evidence to support your statements, I will be glad to have them, if that is allowable. Should there be the need for any follow-up questions after the interview, I will appreciate you give me the opportunity to ask them.

Benefits/Risks of the study

Your participation in this research is voluntary. The United Nations is challenged to develop robust and credible public information capability. Your contributions could help to provide useful guidance on how military forces in UN peacekeeping operations can use public information to good effect in their day-to-day operations in support of the UN's mandates.

The study, as academic work, will not pose any risks to you. It will also maintain the anonymity of your responses.

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Confidentiality

You are assured of the confidentiality of your person and statements/records. You will have full protection, as far as possible, in respect of your participation. Your name and identity shall not be used in the final report and your responses will be evaluated anonymously, unless you wish otherwise.

This project is authorised by the University of Ghana. The university, as well as those persons in the University who have responsibility for evaluating my work, shall therefore have access to the research report. This is required for the purpose of awarding me a doctoral degree.

As the study might serve as a credible means of evaluating the performance of public information in military contingents in peacekeeping operations, the United Nations Secretariat might also have access to the report. This is because it could assist in the UN's capacity-building and effective operations. The entire report or parts of it could also in the future be developed into an academic publication or a book, aimed at expanding public knowledge and understanding in this area of peacekeeping operations.

Your completion of the attached consent form therefore gives me the permission to share the research report with these organisations and for these useful purposes.

Compensation

There shall be no compensation or monetary reward for participation.

Withdrawal from Study

As your participation is voluntary, you may, if you so wish, withdraw from taking part in the project at any time during the course of our interaction.

Your voluntary withdrawal from the project shall not attract any penalty or adversely affect you in any way. As the project may help in public good, I will crave your indulgence to stay with it to the end.

For further assurances, your legal representative, if you have one, shall be informed in a timely manner if information becomes available that may be relevant to your willingness to continue participation or withdraw.

The research is expected to come up with factual, objective, impartial and relevant information. If you consistently provide any information that may jeopardise the results of the study, I will humbly request that we discontinue the interview.

Contact for Additional Information

(1) Student Investigator

Name: M'Bawine Atintande
Address: C/O Department of Communication Studies, University of Ghana, P.O. LG53, Legon, Accra, Ghana
Telephone: +233(0)277605516 or +233(0)243535167
Email: mbat75@yahoo.com; mbawine.atintande@gmail.com; mbatintande@st.ug.edu.gh

(2) Lead Supervisor

Name: Professor Audrey Gadzekpo
Address: School of Information and Communication Studies, University of Ghana, P. O. Box LG 53, Legon, Accra, Ghana
Email: audreygadzekpo@gmail.com
Telephone: +233(0)244462652

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant in this study, you may also contact the following:

Name: Administrator, Ethics Committee for Humanities,
Address: Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana
Email:ech@isser.edu.gh / ech@ug.edu.gh
Telephone: +233(0)303-933-866.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Section C - PARTICIPANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

"I acknowledge that I have read and understood the contents of this Information Sheet."

_____

Name of Participant

_____ _____

Signature or mark of Participant Date

APPENDIX XI

– Informed Consent Form

FORM: C		ID CODE:

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

PHD RESEARCH INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of Study:	Exploring Communication in International Conflict Management: A Study of Public Information in Military Contingents in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Africa
Principal Investigator:	M'Bawine Atintande
Certified Protocol Number	ECH:195/17-18
Key Activity	

Section A – CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I confirm that I have read and understood the information about the project as provided in the Participant Information Sheet (Form A).

I confirm that that I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and the researcher has answered them to my satisfaction.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, without having to give a reason and without any consequences.

I understand that I can withdraw my data from the study at any time.

I understand that any information recorded in the investigation will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available, unless I desire otherwise.

I understand that the data can be used in research, publications, sharing and archiving as explained in the Participant Information Sheet.

I understand that my audio interviews are being recorded as part of the project.

I understand that I will not have waived any of my rights by consenting to participate in this study and signing this consent form.

I understand that upon signing this consent form, I will receive a copy of the transcript for my personal records.

Section B – **PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT**

Having read and understood the requirements, including benefits, regarding my participation in this study, as well as the purpose and nature of this study, I hereby:

Voluntarily agree to take part in the study as described (tick as appropriate).

Yes ☐ No ☐

Grant permission for the data generated from this research to be used in the researcher's publications on this topic (tick as appropriate).

Yes ☐ No ☐

Grant permission for the research to be recorded and saved for purpose of review by the researcher, supervisor / principal investigator, and ethics committee (tick as appropriate).

Yes ☐ No ☐

Grant permission for the research recordings to be used in presentations or documentation of this study (tick as appropriate).

Yes ☐ No ☐

_____

Name of Participant

_____ _____

Signature or mark of Participant Date

_____

Name of Researcher

_____ _____

Signature or mark of Researcher Date

APPENDIX XII
– DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHEET

(To be signed in duplicate – one copy to be returned to the researcher and one copy to be retained by the participant.)

FORM: D1

ID CODE:

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

PHD THESIS PROJECT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Section A- BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of Study:	Exploring Communication in International Conflict Management: A Study of Public Information in Military Contingents in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Africa
Principal Investigator:	M'Bawine Atintande
Certified Protocol Number	ECH:195/17-18
Key Activity	

Section B - GENERAL INFORMATION

The University of Ghana extends its compliments to you.

Thanks for accepting to be part of this academic research project. Your demographic details are very important for this study. The details will help the researcher to match your statements appropriately and enhance the analysis of the findings. Your identity would remain anonymous, unless you desire otherwise. We will therefore appreciate your candid responses to these requirements.

Sincerely,

M'Bawine Atintande

Section C - **DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS**

1. Gender (Tick only one): **a. MALE** ☐ **b. FEMALE** ☐

2. Age (Tick only the range that fits your profile): **a. 25-35:** ☐ **b. 36-45:** ☐ **c. 46 and above:** ☐

3. Your highest educational qualification (Tick one): **a. Diploma:** ☐ **b. Bachelor's degree:** ☐

c. Masters degree: ☐ **d. Doctorate (PhD):** ☐

4. Nationality: .....

5. How many tours have you made all together in all the UN peacekeeping operations you have taken part in, including the current one? (Tick only one):

a. One-Two: ☐ b. Two-Three: ☐ c. Four and above: ☐

6. Name the UN peacekeeping operations you have served with so far, including the current one:

.....

7. If you have served in more than one peacekeeping operation, have you always held this same position you are holding now?

a. Yes: ☐ b. No: ☐ c. Don't Know ☐

8. How many times have you held this position if you have served in more than one peacekeeping operation?

a. Once ☐ b. Twice ☐ c. Three or more ☐

9. What is your Rank/Grade? Specify .....

10. Is this temporary or substantive? Specify .....

11. If temporary, what is your true Rank/Grade?
Specify .....

12. Do you have any experience in public information or

dealing with the media? Yes: ☐ No: ☐

13. What is your core competency? Specify ……

_____ _____
Signature or mark of Respondent Date

_____ _____
Signature or Mark of Researcher Date

APPENDIX XIII

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF MILITARY PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICERS
(adapted from SOP 518)

1. Press officer of the command

a. Contribute information for publication in MONUSCO public outlets.

b. Advise the chief as part of preparations for press conferences and media interviews.

c. Be the command's spokesperson.

d. Be the focal person in each sector to initiate daily tweets to highlight significant socio-professional activities and to regularly monitor their twitter account.

e. Be able to seize communication opportunities in respect of ceremonies, CIMIC operations and incidents that could attract the civil press.

f. Highlight major preoccupations of the population and the local press and transmit the command's concerns to the military spokesperson.

g. Analyse the perception of the press of the command, to correct possible error of interpretation.

2. **Liaison with local authorities**

a. Create a relational network with the local authorities in their provinces.

b. Contacts should enable the population's perception of MONUSCO to be developed.

c. Use these contacts to educate the population on and explain MONUSCO's actions.

3. **Relations with the media**

a. Be the only entry point of the media in their sphere of responsibility.

b. Establish relations with the local media based on trust

c. Give permanent access to local journalists

d. Organise the reception of journalists within their units.

e. Answer journalists' questions, limited this to facts about their unit's operational activities.

f. Organise bi-weekly press conferences or information sessions in liaison with the Mission Spokesperson to allow the Force to present its missions and assessment of situation to the population.

g. Regularly inform local journalists about the command's activities and peculiar incidents that concern MONUSCO in their area of responsibility.

h. Meet on weekly basis journalists who wish to be informed of the situation in each command's zone of operations.

i. MPIOs are not authorised to give recorded interviews to local and international media (including their local correspondents)

4. **Coordination with the Public Information Division**

a. Maintain permanent exchange with the PID and Radio Okapi station chief.

b. Assist MONUSCO communicants participate in military missions.

c. Contribute articles and high quality photos weekly to MONUSCO website and regular publications.

d. Make a weekly appearance on Radio Okapi, even if must be in English.

e. Connect with the Mission Spokesperson for the information of the population through the press.

5. **Military chain of communication**

a. Provide talking points to military actors in the field, particularly military observers.

b. Be privy to all reports issued by different offices in their zones of action and be up-to-date about events that concern their unit.

c. Analyse the G3 (operations) daily reports and submit a weekly report to highlight outstanding facts and points of the command to Force Headquarters PIO for use in the MONUSCO regularly-held press conference.

6. **Role in military operations**

a. Be integrated in the operational planning process

b. Be apprised of the commander's intent and desired effect.

c. Advise command on the need to communicate prior to operations and/or accompany the operation.

d. Advise command on variable themes

e. Counsel the operations cell on names to be given to operations to make them easily understandable by everyone and be exploitable in communication terms.

f. In the case of special operations or events conducted in reaction heightened insecurity, explain the level of insecurity considered in launching the operation or event and the factors informing MONUSCO's preparedness and status of reaction.

g. Know the development of all operations conducted by the command.

h. Be kept regularly informed on the conduct of operations by G3 (operations) on the launching of any operations or incidents happening in their area of responsibility.

i. Report on major operations launched to Force Headquarters PIO.

j. Inform, within the public information relationship, the civilian PIO and Radio Okapi about operations being conducted, limited only by operational secrecy.

k. In coordination with the Information Operations cell, prepare specific talking points for each operation and send up the chain of command in order to sustain coherent communication through all levels.

l. Report to superior level PIOs (i.e. Force Headquarters) about planned operations if there is special interest in the communications area or a particular risk for MONUSCO units.

m. Establish the appendix "Communication" of operational orders, following the prescribed model.

APPENDIX XIV

JOB DESCRIPTION OF MILITARY PUBLIC INFORMATION BRANCH AT THE FORCE HEADQUARTERS[129]

1. **Chief Staff Officer Public Information[130]**

a. Advise the Force Commander on all matters regarding military press and public information

b. Analyse military missions, unit policies, and relationship with population of local communities to determine requirements for communication.

c. Preparation and distribution of publication information.

d. Direct preparation of graphic and narrative presentations.

e. Initiate programmes to earn community respect and confidence.

f. Prepare public affairs annexes to operational plans.

g. Prepare or supervise preparation of information relative to unit participation in military operations, world events, environmental matters, and national and local affairs, through news releases, special activities, photographs, radio and television programmes and other informational material.

h. Plan communication strategies to correct misunderstandings, problems, or friction that may develop.

i. The Force Commander's spokesperson.

j. Develop working relationship with media representatives.

k. Develop and maintain liaison with representatives of civilian organisations, governmental agencies.

[129] Contained in official recruitment vacancy announcements issued by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, (now Department of Peace Operations) as at 2018.
[130] Current appropriate designation – Chief Military Public Information Officer (CMPIO).

l. Plan communication programmes to ensure military and civilian members are informed about current issues and policies of the local installation, major command and Force Headquarters.

m. Research, prepare and disseminate news releases on Force personnel and activities.

n. Develop plans and operational procedures for communication about accidents, natural disasters, environmental incidents and other spot news evens concerning Mission/Force activities.

o. Schedule and assign personnel to arrange photographic coverage of events in which Force personnel participate.

2. **Staff Officer Public Information**

a. Escort press correspondents on visits to contingents.

b. Arrange press conferences as directed by the Senior Staff Officer PIO

c. Prepare information relative to unit participation in military operations, world events, environmental matters, and national and local affairs, through news releases, special activities, photographs, radio and television programmes, and other informational material.

d. Prepare communication strategies to correct misunderstandings, problems, or friction that may develop.

e. Prepare plans and operational procedures for communication about accidents, natural disasters, environmental incidents, and other spot news events concerning Mission/Force activities.

APPENDIX XV

GENERIC JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICERS IN FIELD PEACE OPERATIONS

1. Track, research and analyse information on assigned topics/issues; gather information from diverse sources and help to assess news value and other potential impact, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of information campaigns.

2. Draft/edit a specific type or types (e.g. print, broadcast, etc.) of information communications products for target audiences, to include news releases, media packets and reports, brochures, briefing, video clips, newsletters, websites, etc.

3. Respond to a variety of inquiries and information requests internally and externally; prepare related correspondence.

4. Ensure the implementation of information programmes to publicise priority issues and/or major events, to include drafting information strategies, coordinating efforts, monitoring and reporting on progress, taking appropriate follow-up action, and analysing the outcome.

5. Monitor and analyse public opinion and press, identify issues and trends, and advise management on appropriate action/responses.

6. Undertake activities to promote media coverage (e.g. press conferences, interviews, press seminars and other special activities) of priority issues and/or major events, to include development of a media strategy and action plan, initiating pro-active media outreach efforts, proposing and arranging press conferences/media coverage, disseminating materials and consulting with press on approach/story angle and other information requests, undertaking appropriate follow-up action and analyzing and reporting on the impact of coverage.

7. Produce/oversee/assess production of a specific type or types (e.g. print, broadcast, etc.) of information communications products (e.g. press kits, press releases, feature articles, speeches, booklets, brochures, backgrounders, audio-visual materials, radio spot programmes, etc.) to include proposing topics, undertaking research, determining appropriate medium and target audience, preparing production plans, writing drafts, obtaining clearances and finalizing texts, and coordinating design approval, printing procedures and distribution.

8. Initiate/sustain/assess professional relationships with key constituencies.

9. Conduct/manage special events, give interviews to media, deliver briefings/presentations to correspondents and visitors on specific issues.

10. Act as focal point on specific issues, monitoring and reporting on developments, responding to inquiries, etc.

11. Participate in selecting the information transmitted to key constituencies.

12. Conduct sensitive political liaison work, create and maintain networks of high level communications contacts.

13. Serve as lead spokesperson for the public information programme, develop and disseminate best practices.

14. Provide guidance to, supervise or direct more junior staff/lead and direct a team of public information officers, plan and allocate work assignments, coach, mentor and evaluate staff of the unit/section.

(These duties are not all inclusive, nor are all duties listed performed by all public information officers. Duties, accountabilities and competencies will vary depending on the level of the position and the complexity of the operation. At the senior levels, the accountability will include managing the design and delivery of major communication campaigns and ensuring the effective design and delivery of information products in accordance with the organisation's overall objectives and policies. Additionally, senior public information officers will be expected to serve as an effective spokesperson and form strong partnerships with relevant parties involved to engender support for and advance the organisation's public information agenda.)

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[i] These were joint patrols with the local police, protection of life and property and the maintenance of the continued operation of essential services.

[ii] M23 takes its name from the 23 March 2009 peace treaty signed between the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) and the DRC government. Failed attempts to reintegrate the CNDP forces in the FARDC (the Congolese army) and poor living conditions and pay provoked hundreds of mainly mutinous ethnic Tutsi soldiers in the army in 2012 to break away to form the M23 Movement (Barrera, 2015; Andrews, 2017).