INTERNATIONAL LAW AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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EFFECTIVENESS OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS OF DEFENSE SECTOR IN THE SYSTEM OF GLOBAL SECURITY: IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The beginning of the Russian aggression in 2014 was one of the preconditions for rapid changes in the understanding of national security and the importance of the communication component to achieve an information advantage over the enemy. Using the experience of the world's leading countries and their own unique knowledge, the system of strategic communications was introduced in Ukraine as one of the vital tools in the information confrontation. As strategic communications are to achieve the goals of the state, one of which is the security of its citizens, the article was to study the efficiency of strategic communications, one of the indicators of which is the public support of decisions made by high command. One way to test this hypothesis is the prevalence of key themes of the strategic narrative among domestic and national channels of communication, as well as the synchronization of this activity. This article uses methods of monitoring information messages and subsequent content analysis, which showed us a number of problematic issues and the inconsistency of the evaluation of its effectiveness with the criteria. Since any action or inaction has a communicative effect, it is necessary to take into account the development of technology and experience of both partners and opponents to develop preventive actions, predict communication outcomes and adapt to future challenges in order to gain an advantage in the information space. Along these lines, today, strategic communications of the defense and security sector as one of the tools to ensure the security of citizens require greater study, systematization and synchronization of communication components, as well as clear planning of communication activities with measured objects to determine overall effectiveness. The unification of the system for assessing the effectiveness of strategic communications remains a problematic issue.

Keywords: strategic communications, efficiency, communication, national security, defense and security sector.

Problem formulation. Global security has undergone significant changes since 2014, including the escalation of the situation in the Middle East: ISIS, the Kurds, the outbreak of terrorism in Iraq and Syria. The United States and Europe also suffer from terrorist acts, where, according to a report by the UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTED)[1] the number of terrorist acts increased by 320%[2]. Terrorism remains one of the factors of migration in the world, so according to the migration portal there are currently 280.6 million migrants[3].

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[1] UN Security Council (2020). *CTED Trends Alert*. <https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CTED_Trends_Alert_Extreme_Right-Wing_Terrorism.pdf?fbclid=IwAR29lbJEUl36eddFUgBJ4FMAagjyrMEDdYULn30ohcwhCjvQEZXam5uryYk> (2020, April, 20).

[2] Сокуренко, Є. (2020). За п'ять років у світі на 320% зросла кількість терактів з боку ультраправих – огляд звіту Радбезу ООН. *ZMINA* <https://zmina.info/articles/u-ssha-ta-yevropi-na-320-zrosla-kilkist-teraktiv-z-boku-pravoradykalnyh-ruhiv-korotko-perepovidayemo-zvit-rady-bezpeky-oon/> (2020, April, 13).

[3] Migration Data Portal (2020). *Migration Statistics* <https://migrationdataportal.org/data?i=stock_abs_&t=2020> (2021, January, 26).

In addition, the system of international relations has faced the aggressive foreign policy of the Russian Federation, which only in the "years of independence" became the cause, participant or sponsor of about twelve armed conflicts[1]. All these issues have led some researchers to argue about the dismantling of the existing system of international relations and the threat to global security.

Ukraine, as the bearer of a unique experience of hybrid warfare, has been resisting regular Russian troops and powerful information aggression by the Kremlin since 2014. Most European partners, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, in particular due to geographical proximity, are actively involved in resolving the Ukrainian crisis. However, recent world events and the inactive phase of the armed confrontation in Donbas have forced the Western world to reconsider its attitude to the situation in Ukraine. Thus, the experts of the International Crisis Group (ICG) in the report "Peace in Ukraine: European War" call for a review of the sanctions regime against Russia and emphasize the importance of establishing relations between the world and Moscow for global security[2]. Such rhetoric affects Ukraine's national security today, as the Kremlin's information strategies exploit the weaknesses of European democracy and focus on destroying self-identification, identifying with the nation, destroying state-building narratives, and weakening national security. Among the many tools, Russia's influence in the communication space is based on mis- and disinformation, the spread of fakes, appeal to the sensative sphere of the individual, which constantly manipulates public opinion.

A striking example is the story of the "crucified boy" who appeared in the Ukrainian Donbas[3], and had a sequel in Germany under the guise of a little girl kidnapped by migrants from the Middle East[4]. This is a case of how the actors of the information space (in this case, the Kremlin's information strategies), using the current situation of a particular country, gaps in the security system, the susceptibility of society, derive the emotional component over cognitive, where the order of the second and third effects are changes in society and support for concrete actions. That is why, when considering strategic communications, we must take into account the latest trends in the information space, such as mis- and disinformation, manipulation of facts, the post-truth era, the use of frames, myths etc. to predict the effectiveness of communication and its proactive action.

Scientists such as P. Cornish, K. York, J. Lindley-French, E. Goldman, and others studied strategic communications at different times. The formation of a modern vision of the role of strategic communications in the public administration system was facilitated, in particular, by the works of such domestic scientists as S. Gutsal, D. Dubov, O. Kushnir, V. Lipkan, G. Pocheptsov, T. Popova, A. Barovska, O. Salnikov, L. Kompantseva, T. Dziuba and others. The issue of communication efficiency were studied by V. Rizun, V. Ivanov, T. Sivak, O. Voitko and others.

The purpose of this article is to study the impact of strategic communications on national security and the effectiveness of their activities in promoting the goals of the state and ensuring their support by society.

Presenting main material. Today communications have become an integral part of world political processes and the security system. After all any action, and especially inaction, necessarily becomes public through the media or social networks, even in closed bureaucratic systems such as the security institution.

Referring to researchers from the Emerson think tank, David Patrikarakos writes that about 3.4 billion people now use the Internet. This is another planet where seven hours of video are uploaded to Youtube every second, active Facebook accounts exceed China's population (1.7 billion), and 59% of Americans follow real-time news on Twitter[5]. Of course, the presence of Ukrainians on these platforms is much lower.

[1] Wikipedia (2020). *Список війн за участю Росії* <https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Список_війн_за_участю_Росії> (2020, November, 08).

[2] Шейко, Ю. (2020). Для завершення війни на Донбасі ЄС має переглянути санкції щодо РФ – доповідь ICG. *DW.* <https://www.dw.com/uk/dlia-zavershennia-viiny-na-donbasi-yes-maie-perehlianuty-sanktsii-shchodo-rf-dopovid-icg/a-53263724> (2020, April, 28)

[3] Мусафирова, О. (2015). «Мальчика» не было, но он живет. *Новая газета.* <https://www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2015/07/15/64898-171-malchika-187-ne-bylo-no-on-zhivet>(2015, July, 15).

[4] Meduza (2016). *Распятый мальчик, часть вторая Первый канал показал странный сюжет об изнасиловании несовершеннолетней девочки мигрантами* <https://meduza.io/feature/2016/01/18/raspyatyy-malchik-chast-vtoraya> (2016, January, 18).

[5] Патрикаракос, Д. (2019). *Війна у 140 знаках. Як соціальні медіа змінюють конфлікти у XXI столітті.* Київ: Yakaboo Publishing, 106, 21.

Thus, according to the State Statistics Service as of January 1, 2020 in Ukraine there were 28 million 787 thousand Internet users[1]. At the same time 15 million people use the social network Facebook[2].

Traditional media are adapting to rapid changes and moving to the Internet, creating full-fledged information resources, often with relevant pages on social networks, which can be used as an additional channel for disseminating information or as a separate media. With this in mind, recent years have shown the effectiveness of social media as a platform for addressing global international issues in politics and diplomacy; also in the last decade they have become the engine of social change in an evolutionary or revolutionary way.

For instance, Twitter has become one of the many tools of public diplomacy (a component of strategic communications) and introduced researchers to the phenomenon of Twitter-diplomacy. It is no longer possible to imagine world leaders without pages on social networks. And former US President Donald Trump is one of the most illustrative examples of political activity through a page on this social network (Twitter). Analyzing the latest posts of the politician, according to the founders of the network, they became the impetus for mass riots in the United States, which blocked the politician's account[3].

Websites and social media are now seen as an alternative to traditional media in the production, dissemination, exchange and retrieval of information, which helps to optimize and improve the usual tools of the political and diplomatic apparatus, making it more flexible and able to respond quickly to challenges of time and place[4]. However, this accessibility and massiveness is a threat to national and global security, as evidenced by the events of the Arab Spring in 2011, where Twitter acted as a catalyst for the protest movement. Especially given the access and interactivity of this communication channel used to disseminate narratives and engage society in dialogue.

Russia is actively present on the Internet all over the world and has chosen such information tactics, where social media are used to nurture and hold attention in the right way on the topics of language, history, identity and religion. The content of messages is focused on meanings, new presentation formats are created, there is an appeal to emotions and mass reproduction of key ideas. According to Georgy Pocheptsov, so-called virtual interventions are carried out with the help of social media, where the emotional role of presenting information plays a significant role, and not the fact itself. Thus, it is more profitable to transfer not information, but meanings, where something is emphasized, and the rest is taken out of consideration[5]. That is today the issue of security should be reviewed in strategic security documents and include in the description of the content of information flows, as a creative way of promoting ideologies / topics / messages, etc. in the information space through dynamic formats of content flows, which are aimed at focus direction[6]. This will allow to analyze the information space not only by the usual monitoring methodology with an emphasis on negativity, positivity and neutrality, but to capture the meanings and trends.

The presidential elections in Ukraine in 2019 witnessed a pan-European trend of non-professional politicians coming to power. Commenting on the first round, former head of the Ukrainian state P. Poroshenko said: " ... first mistake was communication – Strategic communication was completely destroyed, decisions are taken behind the scenes, and even if they were absolutely right, they have not caused trust in society"[7]. These are two important points – publicity and trust – the key components of strategic communications[8].

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[1] Денисюк, В. (2020). Скільки українців користуються Інтернетом і скільки дивляться телебачення: статистика. *24 Новини*. <https://news.24tv.ua/skilki_ukrayintsiv_koristuyutsya_internetom_i_skilki_divlyatsya_telebachennya_statistika_n1285720> (2020, February, 22).

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[3] BBC (2021). *Twitter окончательно заблокировал аккаунт Трампа* <https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-55597815> (2021, January, 08).

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[6] Любовець, Г., Король, В. (2019). *Комунікаційно-контентна безпека: гібридно-месіанські агресії. Україна: 2014-2017 рр.: Тренінговий посібник для фахівців з питань комунікаційно-контентної (інформаційної) протидії.* Київ: ФОП Лопатіна, 315-316.

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The issue of strategic communications, as a set of communicative means to achieve the goals of the state in a hybrid war, shows us the importance and feedback between institutions of power and society, which is provided by the content of attention; defense of the information space as a component of the global security system; synchronization of information perception and political actions. Openness and publicity today should be used as an opportunity, not an obstacle. We see this in the example of social media, which has become a testing ground for the latest strategies and tactics of information confrontation, on the other hand provided an opportunity to expand the system of strategic communications in accordance with the goal and target audience. Strategic communications are, first of all, preventive actions, modeling of scenario decisions, which just create additional opportunities to ensure trust and support management activities.

Therefore, strategic communications, in our opinion, are the basis of any global process in the public sphere. After all, without an effective combination of existing communication capabilities, especially the arsenal of new formats in the media, social networks and messengers in recent years, it is difficult to reach target audiences and provide them with support for decisions.

We see the task of Ukrainian strategic communications as the formation of the agenda, which would be implemented through the terms of reference of the media in accordance with the strategic narrative. If we talk about the security and defense sector, we understand that it is particularly sensitive to communication problems. Because the power structures are quite closed and do not tend to publicity. However, the level of trust in them is the indicator that indicates the effectiveness of the proposed narrative and communication in general.

We have already said that strategic communications should reflect long-term effects and be based on an in-depth study of existing and potential target audiences and their cultural differences[1]. The planning and implementation of communication activities requires as a result of adequate evaluation and interpretation of the results of such activities. According to the "Doctrine of Strategic Communications"[2] (hereinafter – the Doctrine) of October 12, 2020, each communication activity must be accompanied by an information effect, which must be accompanied by a measurement technique. Accordingly, the question arises of assessing the effectiveness of strategic communications in dynamic information flows. Clause 4 of this Doctrine states that only what is really important is subject to evaluation. That is, this document conceptually moves from the issue of purely quantitative monitoring to qualitative analysis of the information space. The same paragraph (4.3.) defines indicators and criteria for assessing the effectiveness of strategic communications of the Armed Forces of Ukraine:

– interaction of subjects of strategic communications of the Armed Forces of Ukraine;

– capabilities of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on strategic communications;

– correspondence of actions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to the formed narratives, argumentative subjects and messages;

– effectiveness of information campaigns of the Armed Forces of Ukraine;

– attitude to the Armed Forces of Ukraine within the state and abroad;

– the effectiveness of identifying information threats to the Armed Forces of Ukraine;

– adequacy of forecasts of information environment development;

– interdepartmental cooperation on strategic communications in the security and defense sector;

– cooperation with governmental organizations and institutions on strategic communications in the security and defense sector;

– meeting the needs of the audience to obtain information about the activities of the Armed Forces of Ukraine;

– accuracy of information provision and its adequate interpretation by the recipient.

Currently, there is no single tool for assessing the effectiveness of strategic communications, so for a more detailed and qualitative analysis of the effectiveness of communications uses a combination of different methods, most often PR methods . These may include: information space scanning, monitoring, content analysis of the media text, surveys and focus groups, etc. Performance is best measured by having a communication plan and identifying key messages and target groups[3].

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[1] Ділай, А. (2019). Проблема становлення стратегічних комунікацій української армії в контексті документів НАТО. *Наукові записки Інституту журналістики*, 1 (74), 21-29.

[2] Навчально-науковий центр стратегічних комунікацій у сфері забезпечення національної безпеки та оборони (2020). *Доктрина зі стратегічних комунікацій 2020. (Управління стратегічних комунікацій апарату Головнокомандувача Збройних Сил України)* <http://stratcom.nuou.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Доктрина-зі-стратегічних-комунікацій.pdf> (2020, October, 10).

[3] Королько, В., Некрасова, О. (2013). *Связи с общественностью. Научные основы, методика, практика: Учебник для студентов высших учебных заведений*. Киев: Киево-Могилянская академия, 444.

Thus, to study the effectiveness of strategic communications in the field of national security of Ukraine as a global security actor, we used research methods such as monitoring of news agencies (NA) and content analysis as a quantitative and qualitative tool for analyzing information publications of two state news agencies in 2020 – "Army Inform" (internal communication channel of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine) and "Ukrinform" (national communication channel). Since NA data are state-owned, we have assumed that information policy and the dissemination of strategic narratives should be common, and that their activities should be accompanied by interaction and cooperation in assessing the effectiveness of strategic communications.

According to the aim of our study the importance is to test this hypothesis and analyze the spread topics related to national security through mass media selected on civil society to determine the effectiveness of strategic communications in the country.

As a result of studying strategic documents (National Security Strategy of Ukraine[1] and the Doctrine of Information Security of Ukraine) and monitoring of certain news agencies, we identified key topics that affect the concept of national security: threats to national security, military training of the Armed Forces, reform and development of Ukraine's defense industry and cooperation with strategic partners / NATO. Accordingly, we have identified the following keywords and phrases: national security, terrorism, military exercises, armaments and equipment, cooperation, NATO. As national security is also negatively affected by corruption as a deterrent to the successful implementation of reforms, we have also included it in the list of studies.

On average, the Army Inform news feed has ten articles per day, while Ukrinform has about fifty. Thus, the "Army Inform" promoted the topics of development of the defense-industrial complex and training of servicemen the most, while "Ukrinform" covered the topic of terrorism and the fight against it in Ukraine the most (Table 1).

Table 1

Content analysis of state news agencies

Research markers	Army Inform	Ukrinform
National Security	17 (0.5%)	21 (0.11%)
Weapons and equipment	420 (11.5%)	58 (0.3%)
Cooperation	80 (2.2%)	27 (0.14%)
Terrorism	8 (0.2%)	80 (0.43%)
Corruption	11 (0.3%)	35 (0.2%)
Military exercises	356 (9.8%)	24 (0.13%)
Total	24.5%	1.31%

Source: developed by the author

We can conclude that strategic defense communications do not meet the criteria for assessing effectiveness, as only a small percentage of materials meet the given parameters, reflecting the hypothesis of the need to improve interaction between state communication channels as one of the criteria for assessing the effectiveness of strategic communications.

The visible result of reducing the effectiveness of complex strategic communications is to decrease the percentage of Ukrainian who support joining NATO as the guarantor of national security. Thus, at the end of 2019, this percentage was 50%[2], while in 2020 this figure decreased by almost 10%[3].

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[1] *Указ про рішення Ради національної безпеки і оборони України від 14 вересня 2020 року «Про Стратегію національної безпеки України», 2020* (Президент України). *Офіційне інтернет-представництво Президента України* <https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/3922020-35037>. (2020, September, 14).

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[3] Європейська правда (2020). *Підтримка вступу в ЄС знизилась до 46%, у НАТО – майже до 42%* <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/news/2020/06/5/7110767/> (2020, June, 05).

Conclusion. To conclude, when measuring the effectiveness of strategic communications, a qualitative tool will be the percentage of target audiences involved and the growth of their support for the state strategic course. Accordingly, the strategic communications of the defense sector should be synchronized with the overall strategy of the state, systematically explore the information space and plan communication activities with the allocation of measurable strategic objectives and evaluation of intermediate results. Therefore, the analysis of the media should be conducted not taking into account the prevalence, likes, etc., but taking into account the coordinated and systematic promotion of the strategic narrative and the community engagement.

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