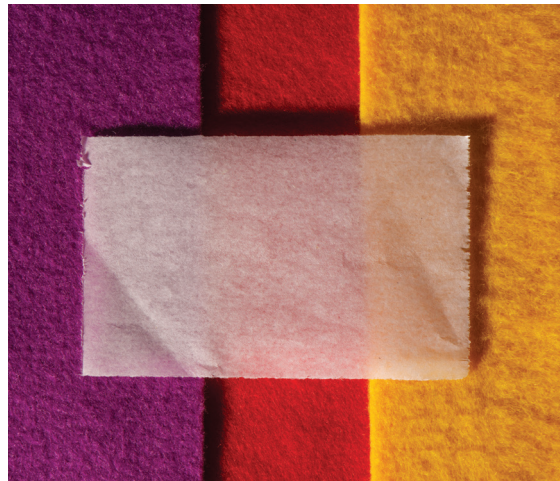




PSRP RESEARCH REPORT



# Peace Agreements, the Media, and Communication

Tim Epple



This research draws on the PA-X Peace Agreements Database ([www.peaceagreements.org](http://www.peaceagreements.org)), a database of all peace agreements at any stage of the peace process from 1990 to 2021. The database is fully searchable and supports both qualitative and quantitative examination of peace agreements.

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## Key Findings

- ▶ The media and communication play important and ambivalent roles in conflict and peacemaking. Free and open media are a cornerstone of democracy, but also can be abused to spread misinformation or hate speech which can ignite violent conflict. Peace agreements address positive and negative roles of media and communication.
- ▶ Out of the 1868 peace agreements signed between 1990 and mid-2020, 487 agreements include provisions on media and communication.
- ▶ The detail with which these agreements deal with media and communication differs significantly - just over half merely mention media and communication and do not provide any substantive treatment of the issues.
- ▶ Among the media types referred to in peace agreements, the most frequently referred to are: radio (98 references), television (62), and newspapers (33). Social media are only referred to a total of ten times.
- ▶ Peace processes in Colombia (15 agreements with detailed provisions on media and communication), the Philippines/Mindanao (7), and the Central African Republic (6) stand out in terms of the number of peace agreements with detailed provisions on media and communication.
- ▶ Media and communication provisions are most likely to occur in comprehensive peace agreements, with almost two out of three comprehensive peace agreements containing such provisions.
- ▶ Peace agreements highlight the risks and opportunities associated with the media both during and after armed conflict. In agreements, the media are commonly ascribed the following roles:
  - ▶ Promotor of rights and values
  - ▶ Tool for inclusion
  - ▶ Watchdog
  - ▶ (Mis-)Information platform
  - ▶ Vehicle for propaganda

- ▶ Peace agreements also seek to reform the media and the way they are governed, including in legal, institutional, and technical terms, and include practical provisions on media logistics.
- ▶ Beyond the media's roles, governance, and logistics, peace agreements touch on communication, mainly with regard to communication infrastructure and equipment as well as communication modalities and arrangements.
- ▶ Mediators and conflict parties should examine the roles of the media and communication during and after armed conflict and explore opportunities for leveraging the media and communication tools in support of their peacemaking efforts.

## Introduction

The media and communication play important and ambivalent roles in conflict and peacemaking. Free and open media are a cornerstone of democracy, but can equally be used to spread misinformation or hate speech in ways that risk conflict. This PSRP Research Report provides a brief overview of how peace agreements deal with the media and communication. The goal of this Report is to shed light on how conflict parties address the ambivalent roles of the media and communication in peace agreements.

Out of the 1868 peace agreements signed between 1990 and mid-2020, 487 agreements include provisions on media and communication. The PA-X Peace Agreement Database divides these provisions into four categories: media roles (333 references), media governance (51), media logistics (69), and a residual category 'other' that captures peace agreement provisions not relating to any of the other categories.

The detail to which these agreements deal with any of these media and communications-related issues differs significantly. Just over half (253) of these agreements feature references that merely mention media and communication and do not provide any substantive regulations. 118 agreements provide substantive provisions on media and communications, and another 116 agreements delve into greater detail.

Among the media types referred to in peace agreements, radio (98 mentions), television (62), and newspapers (33) were most frequently named. Social media were referred to a total of ten times (see Box 1 for an example).

This Report uses example peace agreement provisions on media and communication to illustrate the different ways in which conflict parties portray the media, how they seek to reform them, and what role communication provisions play in peace processes. To provide a general overview, the second section briefly shows in what geographic contexts and at what stage of a peace process conflict parties address media and communication in peace agreements. The following section examines how references to the media are framed in peace agreements, and what role conflict parties assign to the media. The fourth section discusses the different practical ways in which conflict parties seek to (de)regulate and reform the media landscape post-conflict, followed by an overview of peace agreement provisions on communication. The Reports concludes with a brief summary and a recommendation to mediators and conflict parties to examine the risks and opportunities associated with the media and communication in their peacemaking efforts.

All peace agreements referenced in the Report are listed at the end of this publication and can be accessed via [www.peaceagreements.org/search](http://www.peaceagreements.org/search). Some caveats are also in order: the Report does not deal in detail with wider freedom of speech references, or cover the wider academic literature: its focus is on peace agreement provisions.

### Box 1. Example of a ceasefire referring to social media

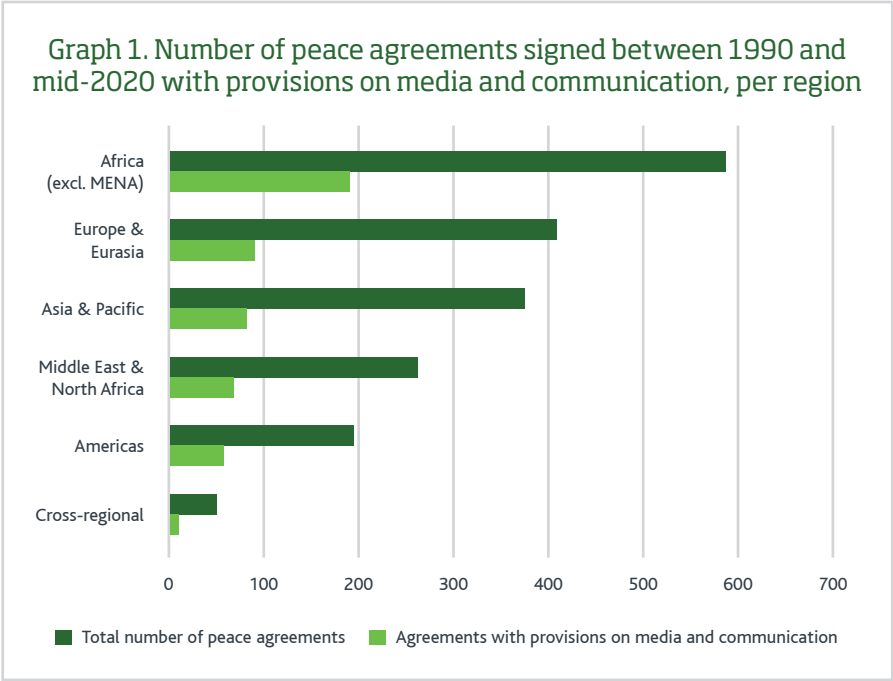
#### Syria, Agreement between Ahrar al-Sham (AAS) and Farqa 13, 22 May 2016

Page 1, By the presence and approval of Allah, Jabhat al-Nusra and al-Farqa 13 have agreed to represent the two sides by pledging the following:

Firstly: There will be no attacks on the headquarters or people until the ruling of the unison committee is released and concluded.

Secondly: There will be a cease of provocations on social media such as Twitter and [similar platforms] and of protests and [similar actions] on the ground until the ruling of the unison committee is released and concluded.

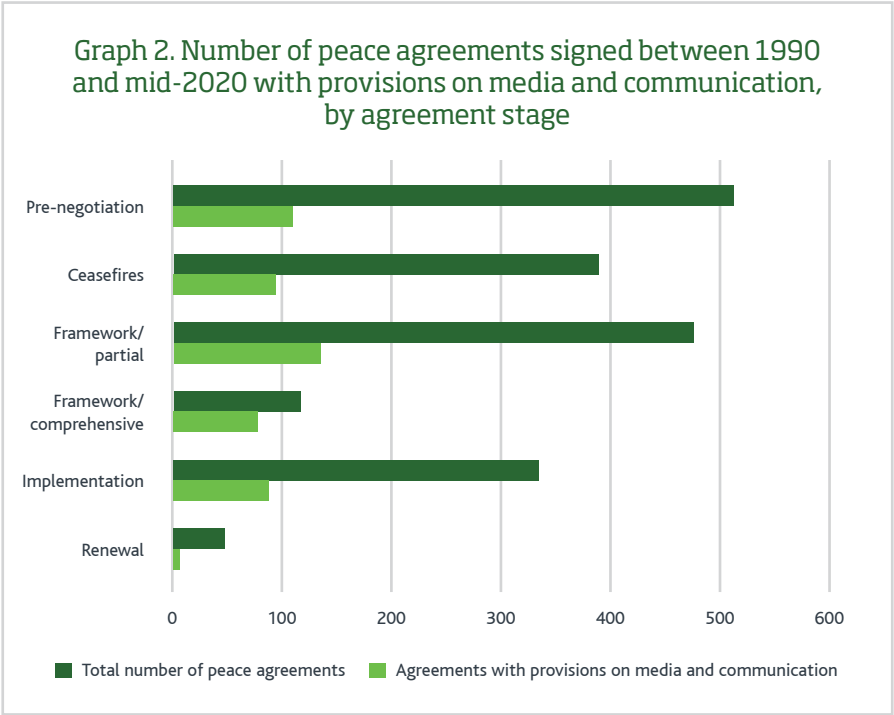
# Media and Communication Provisions by Region and Peace Process Stage



While peace agreements across all world regions feature provisions on media and communication, these provisions are most likely to be found in sub-Saharan Africa (almost one third of all 584 agreements have such provisions), closely followed by the Americas (about 30 percent of agreements). About one in five agreements in Europe and Eurasia and Asia and the Pacific refer to media and communication. Graph 1 illustrates this geographic spread of provisions on media and communication.

Out of the 116 peace agreements that provide the greatest detail on media and communication, peace processes in Colombia (15 agreements with detailed provisions on media and communication), the Philippines/Mindanao (7), and the Central African Republic (6) stand out in terms of the number of peace agreements with detailed provisions, reflecting a certain degree of geographic diversity.

Media and communication provisions are most likely to occur in comprehensive peace agreements, with almost two out of three comprehensive peace agreements containing such provisions (Graph 2). Fewer than one out of three peace agreements of all other agreement types feature provisions on media and communication (see Box 2 for agreement type definitions). Comprehensive agreements are thus far more likely to have such provisions compared to agreements concluded at other peace process stages. This might be explained by the broader scope of comprehensive peace agreements and their role in defining the contours of the post-conflict society, of which media and communication are one building block. With fewer than one in ten agreements, what we term renewal agreements – short agreements that merely affirm previous commitments – are least likely to include such provisions, as might be expected.



## Box 2. Peace agreement stage definitions (from [PA-X Codebook](#))

**Pre-negotiation/process.** Agreements that aim to get parties to the point of negotiating over the incompatibilities at the heart of the conflict. These agreements can happen at any time in a process (even after a comprehensive peace agreement has been signed), if parties have moved back into 'talking about how they are going to talk'. Therefore, this characterisation does not imply temporal precedence.

**Ceasefire/related.** This category contains agreements which provide in their entirety for a ceasefire, or association demobilisation, or an agreement that is purely providing a monitoring arrangement for, or extension, of a ceasefire.

**Framework-substantive, Partial.** Agreements that concern parties that are engaged in discussion and agreeing to substantive issues to resolve the conflict, but only deal with some of the issues in ways that appear to contemplate future agreements to complete.

**Framework-substantive, Comprehensive.** Agreements that concern parties that are engaged in discussion and agreeing to substantive issues to resolve the conflict and appear to be set out as a comprehensive attempt to resolve the conflict.

**Implementation/renegotiation.** Aiming to implement an earlier agreement, except for ceasefires.

**Renewal.** These are short agreements (typically of just one page), which do nothing other than 'renew' previous commitments. This category does not include ceasefire renewals which are contained in the ceasefire category.

## The Roles of the Media

The Media shape narratives of the past, present, and future. Societies emerging from armed conflict need to find ways to deal with a difficult past, while building and envisioning the post-conflict societal order. The media are thus important tools for peacemaking, for example through spreading information about the content of peace agreements. At the same time, media can harm peacemaking processes, for example by proliferating hate speech. This ambivalence between positive and negative media roles is reflected in peace agreements. Peace agreements highlight the risks and opportunities associated with the media both during and after armed conflict. In agreements, the media are commonly thought to play the following roles, each of which will be discussed in more detail below:

- ▶ Promotor of rights and values
- ▶ Tool for inclusion
- ▶ Watchdog
- ▶ (Mis-)Information platform
- ▶ Vehicle for propaganda

**Promotor of rights and values.** The free press and mass media are often referred to in peace agreements in the context of democratisation. These agreements stress the role the free press plays in promoting democratic discourse, freedom of expression, and human rights. In some cases, the media are also expected to create a peaceful atmosphere and to contribute to reconciliation. The [Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict in Colombia, 24 November 2016](#), for example, refers to the role of the media in promoting 'civic values' and argues that 'citizen participation in community media will contribute to ... a democratic culture' (see Box 3).

### Box 3. Example of a peace agreement provision on the media as a promotor of rights and values

Colombia, Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace, 24 November 2016

Pages 45-46, 2.2.3. Citizen participation through community, institutional and regional media.

The community, institutional and regional media must contribute to citizen participation and especially promote civic values, the acknowledgement of different ethnic and cultural identities, equality of opportunity between men and women, political and social inclusion, national integration and, in general, the consolidation of democracy. Citizen participation in community media will further contribute to the building of a democratic culture based on the principles of freedom, dignity and affiliation, and to strengthening communities with links based on good neighbourliness or mutual collaboration.

In addition, in an end-of-conflict scenario, the community, institutional and regional media will play a part in the development and promotion of a culture of participation, equality and nondiscrimination, peaceful coexistence, peace with social justice, and reconciliation, its content incorporating non-discriminatory values and respect for the rights of women to a life free from violence.

**Tool for inclusion.** Closely related to the idea of the media as a democracy promotor is its ability to amplify the voices of groups that were marginalised prior to or during conflict. Peace agreements can make provisions to create new media channels for particular parties or minority groups, or grant these groups access to existing state-owned media. The underlying motivation is often to increase citizens' participation in public life.

For example, the parties to the [Good Friday Agreement, 10 April 1998](#), agreed to 'seek more effective ways to encourage and provide financial support for Irish language film and television production in Northern Ireland' (see Box 4). The need to support the Irish language, and Ulster Scots, was also recognised in the [New Decade, New Approach Agreement, 10 January 2020](#), signed over twenty years after the [Good Friday Agreement](#) (see Box 4). Another example is an [agreement between the Zapatista National Liberation Army \(EZLN\) and the Mexican Government from 16 February 1996](#), in which the parties agree to hand over radio stations to 'indigenous communities in their respective regions' (see Box 4).

#### Box 4. Examples of peace agreement provisions on the media as a tool for inclusion

[Ireland / United Kingdom / Northern Ireland, The Agreement Reached in the Multi-Party Negotiations \(Good Friday Agreement or Belfast Agreement\), 10 April 1998](#)  
Page 21, RIGHTS, SAFEGUARDS AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY, Economic, Social and Cultural Issues, 4.

In the context of active consideration currently being given to the UK signing the Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the British Government will in particular in relation to the Irish language, where appropriate and where people so desire it:

- take resolute action to promote the language;

...

[cont'd]

- explore urgently with the relevant British authorities, and in co-operation with the Irish broadcasting authorities, the scope for achieving more widespread availability of Teilifís na Gaeilge in Northern Ireland;
- seek more effective ways to encourage and provide financial support for Irish language film and television production in Northern Ireland; and
- encourage the parties to secure agreement that this commitment will be sustained by a new Assembly in a way which takes account of the desires and sensitivities of the community.

Ireland / United Kingdom / Northern Ireland, New Decade, New Approach, 10 January 2020

Page 49, Annex A: UK Government Commitments to Northern Ireland  
Promoting Northern Ireland's culture, heritage and society

...

23. Support discussions with NI Screen to explore how the remit of the Ulster Scots Broadcasting Fund (USBF) and Irish Language Broadcasting Fund (ILBF) can be broadened, and will increase funding for the USBF and ILBF to reflect any broadened remit

Mexico, Actions and Measures for Chiapas Joint Commitments and Proposals from the State and Federal Governments, and the EZLN, 16 February 1996

Page 4, ACCESS TO THE COMMUNICATION MEDIA

The multi-cultural nature of the Mexican Nation is recognized in the Constitution and is borne out by the existence of its indigenous peoples. Laws governing the communication media must guarantee expression of this aspect and the communication media must take this multi-cultural nature into consideration so as to strengthen the national identity and meet its cultural and social objectives.

...

The federal government will table a proposal that the 17 radio stations belonging to the NII be handed over to the indigenous communities in their respective regions, complete with transfer permits, infrastructure and resources, once the express request is forthcoming from the indigenous communities.

**Watchdog.** Peace agreements also call on the media to hold to account parties to the conflict or those actors implementing agreements. For example, the media can be tasked with reporting to what extent a peace agreement implementing body fulfils its duties. The media can also report on post-conflict elections, adherence to ceasefire commitments, or the progress of peace processes more generally. In addition, peace agreements can include provisions mandating media oversight bodies to ensure elections are covered fairly. On 13 August 2007, in a transition process in Chad, for instance, the Chadian parties of the presidential majority and opposition parties called on state institutions to 'allow the public and private media to report on the electoral process and polling day in a free and responsible manner' (see Box 5).

#### Box 5. Example of a peace agreement provision on media 'watchdog' functions

Chad, Accord politique en vue du renforcement du processus démocratique, 13 August 2007

Page 8-9, Article 4. THE GENERAL ENVIRONMENT:

4.3: The Constitutional Council, the Supreme Court and the High Council for Communication

....

The State must provide the High Council for Communication with adequate resources to monitor all the media (public and private) and to discharge its mission effectively.

The High Council for Communication must ensure that competing candidates and political parties have equal access to and identical treatment by the media.

It will ensure that information about candidates is presented fairly.

Journalists should be completely neutral in presenting party candidates, proposals and programmes.

CENI and HCC should allow the public and private media to report on the electoral process and polling day in a free and responsible manner (including information and commentary on the voting process and results).

(Mis-)Information platform. Parties to peace agreements task the media to spread information in two principal ways. First, parties can use media channels to publicise a peace agreement, or can call on the media to help spread information about a peace agreement's contents. In a [ceasefire for Central Bosnia from 30 January 1993](#), for example, the Croatian Defence Council and the Bosnia Herzegovina Army commit themselves to 'broadcast frequently the spirit and the details of this agreement, in all accessible media' (see Box 6). Second, parties can communicate information that may not be directly linked to the agreement, but which are still vital for the peace process, through the media. This category could include, for example, public statements by political authorities, names of candidates standing in post-conflict elections, or information about the tendering of commercial contracts important for reconstruction. In the South Ossetia peace process, for example, the [Georgian and South Ossetian sides agreed on 29 October 2002](#) to 'consider expedient regular appearance of the political authorities of Georgia and South Ossetia in mass media' to explain the political settlement process to the public (see Box 6). In addition, in an agreement [from 4 April 1994, Georgian and Abkhaz parties](#) call for an 'information campaign among the displaced person/refugee population to encourage voluntary return' (see Box 6).

However, peace agreements also reflect the challenges posed by misinformation and sensationalization. In a [local peace agreement from Benue State, Nigeria, from 26 March 2020](#), parties '[t]ake cognizance of the disturbing misleading information on [...] COVID-19' (see Box 7). In the [Nakuru County Peace Accord from 19 August 2012](#), parties observe that 'events are often sensationalized in the media and may even be wrongly reported' (see Box 7). These observations highlight the ambivalent role of the media as a platform for both information and misinformation, and the difficulty in balancing a desire for using media to spread information about peace agreements and processes, while ensuring reporting is free, fair, and factual.

### Box 6. Examples of peace agreement provisions on the media as an information platform

Bosnia and Herzegovina / Yugoslavia (former), Agreement on an urgent cease-fire between the HVO and the BH Army in Central Bosnia, 30 January 1993

Page 3, 9. Both sides have the obligation to broadcast frequently the spirit and the details of this agreement, in all accessible media.

Georgia / Russia / Ossetia, Protocol of the Eighth Meeting of Expert Groups [abbreviated], 29 October 2002

Page 2, Untitled Preamble, ... Sides elaborated following recommendations:

...

4. To consider expedient regular appearance of the political authorities of Georgia and South Ossetia in mass media supporting resolution of Georgian-Ossetian conflict and explanation of importance of steps being taken in the process of settlement.

Georgia / Russia / Abkhazia, Quadripartite Agreement on Voluntary Return of Refugees and Displaced Persons, 04 April 1994

Page 4, 9. During its first meeting, the Commission will set out the modalities of the assessment mentioned in paragraph 5 above and will establish a plan concerning:

... (b) The implementation of an information campaign among the displaced person/ refugee population to encourage voluntary return;

### Box 7. Examples of peace agreement provisions on misinformation and sensationalisation

#### Nigeria, Joint communique by the chairs of the ten (10) communities to resolve the farmer-herder conflict in Benue State, 26 March 2020

Page 1, Preamble, ... Take cognizance of the disturbing misleading information on the COVID-19 (mainly abuse of liquor as a means of prevention to the COVID-19); poor sensitization of the pandemic at the grass roots and the social distancing affecting the cultural norms and beliefs

...

3. That we shall individually and collectively, deliver life-saving information and materials, where available, to hard-to-reach populations within our communities and fully comply with government directives and restrictions aimed at safeguarding our communities against the pandemic;

#### Kenya, Nakuru County Peace Accord, 19 August 2012

Page 3, 2. Acknowledgement of causes and consequences of violence:

...

e. ... For example, political slogans, or alleged events in neighbouring areas involving members of different communities, often have violent consequences in Nakuru. The events are often sensationalized in the media and may even be wrongly reported. We seek to build relationships that might reduce the sudden inflammatory effect of alleged events outside of Nakuru. We must avoid collective ethnic hurt, commission and retaliation.

**Vehicle for propaganda.** Misinformation can be spread intentionally, and conflict parties may deliberately abuse the media to spread propaganda or incite hatred (see Box 8). Four agreements in the Sudanese North-South peace process, including the [Comprehensive Peace Agreement from 9 January 2005](#), even refer to 'media warfare' and 'media wars' (see South Sudan / Sudan agreements in the list of peace agreements referred to in text at the end of this Report). Peace agreements thus negotiate the difficult relationship between freedom of speech and unwanted forms of speech linked to conflict, particularly in contexts where the media are perceived to be partial or to be abused as vehicles for propaganda. Measures taken by conflict parties to counter propaganda or hate speech can range from making pledges to abstain from hate speech (see Box 8) to the banning or reform of specific media outlets. In the [Kenyan Tana 1 Declaration from 27 April 2016](#), for example, conflict parties call for hate speech monitoring (see Box 8).

## Box 8. Examples of peace agreement provisions on hate speech and propaganda

### Nigeria / Plateau State, Declaration of Intent and Signatures, 10 July 2013

Page 5, 2. Religious tolerance and customs: Hausa: There had been deliberate attempt to distort the history of the old Jos Division on the Plateau through several jaundiced newspaper articles and publications. There is a hate campaign going on by means of ethnicity and religion targeted to create suspicion mistrust and disharmony against Hausa Community.

### South Sudan, Yei River Phase I Agreement, 06 June 2017

Page 3, RESOLUTIONS OF PHASE I DISCUSSIONS, 2. The elders of Uganda and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) representatives called for an immediate cessation of all hostile propaganda amongst the warring parties and urged the parties to create an atmosphere conducive to dialogue, reconciliation and peace.

### Chad / Sudan, Tripoli Agreement to Settle the Dispute between the Republic of Chad and the Republic of Sudan, 08 February 2006

Page 6, Article 6

The two Parties pledge to put an end to hostile media campaigns and to work to establish a spirit of fraternity and harmony.

### Kenya, Tana I Declaration, 27 April 2016

Page 4, IV. Good Leadership and Governance

1. THAT both communities and their leaders should desist from using demeaning and derogatory language against one another
2. THAT politicians/individuals be closely monitored for hate speech and incitement and subsequently charged for the same in a court of law
3. THAT the NCIC strengthens its efforts in monitoring and enforcing hate speech and incitement offence.

## Media Governance and Logistics

Based on their view of the roles of the media during and after armed conflict, conflict parties may agree to introduce media (de)regulation and reform measures in peace agreements. In the past, agreements have sought to both 'deregulate', or open up, state-controlled media, while at the same time regulating hate speech and introducing new forms of media oversight. In some cases, peace agreements are very specific about media logistics, for example by regulating the media's access to information or particular events. Peace agreement provisions on media governance and logistics broadly fall into four categories which will be examined below:

- ▶ Legal
- ▶ Institutional
- ▶ Technical
- ▶ Logistical

**Legal.** Peace agreements can lay the legal framework for the media in the post-conflict society. For instance, in the [Draft Constitution of the Transition of 1 April 2003](#), parties in the Democratic Republic of Congo agreed that 'the status of State media shall be established by law' with the aim of guaranteeing their impartiality and to allow for the free expression of opinions (see Box 9). Peace agreement provisions may also allocate media regulating powers and responsibilities as part of establishing new or revised political and legal institutions, for example by issuing licensing rights. In [Annex III of the Oslo II Accord, 28 September 1995](#), for example, the Israeli and Palestinian parties agreed that interior affairs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the licensing of newspapers, would be transferred 'from the military government and its Civil Administration to the Palestinian side' (see Box 9).

### Box 9. Examples of peace agreement provisions on legal aspects of media governance

#### Democratic Republic of Congo, Draft Constitution of the Transition, 01 April 2003

Page 11, TITLE III: PUBLIC FREEDOM, BASIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE CITIZEN, Article 29:

All persons shall have the right to information.

The freedom of information and broadcasting by radio, television, written press or any other means of communication shall be guaranteed.

State audiovisual and written media shall be public services whose access shall be guaranteed in a just manner to all political and social movements.

The status of State media shall be established by law, which shall guarantee the objectivity, impartiality and plurality of opinions in information processing and distribution.

#### Côte d'Ivoire, Declaration on the Implementation of the Pretoria Agreement on the Peace Process in the Côte d'Ivoire ('Pretoria II'), 29 June 2005

Page 3, 7. IVORIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION (RTI)

The agreement reached in Pretoria that President Gbagbo issue a decree to restore the status and management of the RTI has been implemented. The government is working on extending the infrastructure of the RTI to the rest of the country.

The leaders implored the management of the RTI to ensure that all parties are given fair access to state media and to improve the quality of the programmes.

Page 4, 8. RE-TABLING OF LAWS

...

The said laws relate to the IEC, Financing of Political Parties, Nationality, Identification, the Human Rights Commission, the Print Media and the Audio-Visual Communication.

[cont'd]

Israel / Palestine, Annex III, Concerning Civil Affairs, Israeli Palestinian Interim Agreement on The West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II), 28 September 1995  
Page 19-20, ARTICLE 20, Interior Affairs

1. Powers and responsibilities in the sphere of Interior Affairs in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be transferred from the military government and its Civil Administration to the Palestinian side. This sphere includes, inter alia, licensing of newspapers and publications and censorship of films and plays.

**Institutional.** Peace agreements also feature a range of provisions on both institutions governing media as well as media outlets themselves. Conflict parties may agree to reform the financing or organisation of state media, or to create entirely new media governing bodies. In Burundi, for example, the Constitution of 18 March 2005 called for the establishment of a National Council of Communication tasked with promoting freedom of the press and equitable access to the public media (see Box 10). In Chad, parties to the Accord politique en vue du renforcement du processus démocratique, 13 August 2007, agreed that “[t]he State must provide the High Council for Communication with adequate resources to monitor all the media” (see Box 10). Conflict parties may also agree to shut down specific media channels, as was the case in Angola, where it was decided in the Final Timetable for the Implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, 9 January 1998, to end radio Vorgan broadcasts (a radio station aligned with the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, UNITA) (see Box 10).

## Box 10. Examples of peace agreement provisions on institutional aspects of media governance

### Burundi, Constitution of 18 March 2005, 18 March 2005

Page 51, TITLE XII: OF THE NATIONAL COUNCILS, Article 268:

In view of assuring a large participation of the citizens in the administration of the public affairs, the State puts in place the following national councils:

...

- the National Council of Communication.

The Government guarantees to these Councils the means necessary for their functioning.

Page 55, TITLE XII: OF THE NATIONAL COUNCILS, 5. OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF COMMUNICATION, Article 284:

The National Council of Communication sees to the freedom of audio-visual and written communication within the respect for the law, for public order and for morality.

The National Council of Communication has, to this effect, a power of decision notably in [the] matter of the respect for and the promotion of the freedom of the press and the equitable access of the diverse political, social, economical and cultural opinions to the public media.

The National Council of Communication plays equally a consultative role vis-a-vis the Government in [the] matter of communication.

### Chad, Accord politique en vue du renforcement du processus démocratique, 13 August 2007

Page 8-9, Article 4. THE GENERAL ENVIRONMENT:

4.3: The Constitutional Council, the Supreme Court and the High Council for Communication

....

[cont'd]

The State must provide the High Council for Communication with adequate resources to monitor all the media (public and private) and to discharge its mission effectively.

The High Council for Communication must ensure that competing candidates and political parties have equal access to and identical treatment by the media.

It will ensure that information about candidates is presented fairly.

Journalists should be completely neutral in presenting party candidates, proposals and programmes.

CENI and HCC should allow the public and private media to report on the electoral process and polling day in a free and responsible manner (including information and commentary on the voting process and results).

Angola, Final Timetable for the Implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, Approved by the Joint Commission at Luanda, 09 January 1998

Page 2, Annex, 10. Cessation of radio Vorgan broadcasts. 28 February 1998a (a

Date which has been agreed by the parties, but not formally approved by the Joint Commission.)

**Technical.** Beyond legal and institutional media governance, peace agreements also contain provisions on more technical aspects of media development and conduct. Parties to the 'Sun City Agreement' from 2 April 2003 agreed to strengthen the media in the DRC, calling, (i) on the Transitional Government to 'professionalise and modernise the public media sector', and (ii) for training of those working in the press (see Box 11). In the Istanbul Statement of the Georgian and Abkhaz sides on confidence-building measures of 9 June 1999, the two sides specifically agreed to request the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) to train journalists from both Georgia and Abkhazia (see Box 11). Other technical aspects of media governance and development include the formulation of codes of conduct for personnel working in media (see Box 11, Zimbabwe, the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No 20) 2013, 19 March 2013) and the encouragement of exchange between warring parties' media channels (see Box 11, Israel / Palestine, Annex VI of the Oslo II Accords, 28 September 1995).

### Box 11. Examples of peace agreement provisions on technical aspects of media governance and development

Democratic Republic of Congo, Intercongolese Negotiations: The Final Act ('The Sun City Agreement'), 02 April 2003

Page 77-79, 29. Resolution No: DIC/CHSC/09 RELATING TO THE MEDIA SECTOR:

...

1. The creation of a High Media Authority. The State guarantees the independence and financial autonomy of the High Media Authority whose mandate is to:

...

f. ensure the technical development of the Congolese media and their access to new information technology;

...

2. That the Transitional Government:

...

c. rehabilitate and/or rebuild, professionalise and modernise the public media sector;

...

f. assist the corporation of the press to set up infrastructure and professional bodies especially up-to-date printing works for the press, one or several press distribution services and an international press centre.

3. That the corporation of the press:

...

e. ensure its professionalism through the training and retraining of its members.

Georgia / Abkhazia, Istanbul Statement of the Georgian and Abkhaz sides on confidence-building measures, 09 June 1999

Page 3, To develop and establish mechanisms for the regular exchange of information, including, inter alia:

...

e) To request the BBC to sponsor training courses for Georgian and Abkhaz journalists in London.

[cont'd]

Zimbabwe, Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No 20) 2013, 19 March 2013

Page 97-98, Chapter 12: Independent Commissions Supporting Democracy,  
Part 5: Zimbabwe Media

Commission, Article 249. Functions of Zimbabwe Media Commission:

(1) The Zimbabwe Media Commission has the following functions—

- (a) to uphold, promote and develop freedom of the media;
- (b) to promote and enforce good practices and ethics in the media;
- (c) to monitor broadcasting in the public interest and, in particular, to ensure fairness and diversity of views broadly representing Zimbabwean society;
- (d) to encourage the formulation of codes of conduct for persons employed in the media and, where no such code exists, to formulate and enforce one;

Israel / Palestine, Annex VI, Protocol Concerning Israeli Palestinian Cooperation Programs, Israeli Palestinian Interim Agreement on The West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II), 28 September 1995

Page 6, Article VII, Cultural and Educational Cooperation

... 2. Media and Communication

The two sides shall promote and encourage direct cooperation between news agencies, newspapers, and radio and television stations. In addition, the two sides will cooperate with third countries in order to promote the exposure of the benefits of the peace process to the respective societies.

**Logistical.** Beyond questions of media governance, some peace agreements include detailed provisions on logistical aspects of media access or public announcements. This includes managing the media's access to information, for example by restricting the media's access to sensitive information (such as names of witnesses testifying to peace committees), or by making information held by official bodies available to them. In addition, peace agreements can specify whether members of the media are allowed to attend meetings of ministerial, government or parliamentary bodies (such as in the Colombian Acta Interna del Acuerdo entre el Gobierno y el PRT, Ovejas, Sucre, 25 January 1991, or the Libyan Political Agreement (Sukhairat Agreement), 17 December 2015, see Box 12).

As mentioned in this Report's section on the roles of media, the media are also sometimes used to publicise information about peace processes. The [Colombian Acuerdo Final entre el Gobierno Nacional y el Movimiento Armado Quintín Lame, Campamento de Pueblo Nuevo Caldono-Cauca from 27 May 1991](#), for example, specifies that the Colombian government would pay for pages in national and regional newspapers to inform the public about the political negotiations (see Box 12).

#### Box 12. Examples of peace agreement provisions on logistical aspects on media access or public announcements

[Colombia, Acta Interna del Acuerdo entre el Gobierno y el PRT, Ovejas, Sucre, 25 January 1991](#)

Page 1, II. Promotion and Political Project, Article 4,  
Arrangements with the media will be made by Hernando Corral on behalf of the council and by the person appointed by PRT. Transport will be provided for one journalist to create material on site.

[Libya, Libyan Political Agreement \(Sukhairat Agreement\), 17 December 2015](#)

Page 26, Annex 3, Basic Rules for the Functioning of State Council  
Article 8

1. All plenary sessions of the Council and all committee meetings shall be open to the public and media. The rules of procedure shall specify the pertinent regulations.

[Colombia, Acuerdo Final entre el Gobierno Nacional y el Movimiento Armado Quintín Lame, Campamento de Pueblo Nuevo Caldono-Cauca, 27 May 1991](#)

Page 5, III. Guarantees, Article i,

To explain the importance of the political negotiation process and promote the strengthening of democracy through public participation, the government will pay for two pages in a national newspaper on a date indicated by MAQL and three half-page publications in a regional newspaper. Similarly, four segments will be broadcast on different days on the institutional programme Amarillo, Azul, Rojo.

## Communication

Apart from the roles, governance, and logistics of media, peace agreements also discuss (re-)establishing forms of communication, particularly with reference to the need to rebuild or connect communication infrastructure and equipment. In ceasefires, other common references to communication include details about when and how the armed forces of the signatories should contact the other side. Other agreements set out how peacekeeping operations can access their host states' telecommunication infrastructure. These references to communication can be grouped in two main categories:

- Infrastructure and equipment
- Modalities and arrangements

**Infrastructure and equipment.** This type of peace agreement provision includes references to the (re-)building of communication infrastructure, the designating of responsibility for the management of infrastructure, and access to telecommunication equipment. The [Dayton Peace Agreement, 21 November 1995](#), for example, delegates the responsibility for the installation and running of communication facilities to the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina (see Box 13). There are even entire agreements on telecommunications, including the [Telecommunications \(Technical Dialogue Agreement\), 8 September 2013](#), and the [Telecoms Action Plan, 25 August 2015](#), agreed between the Kosovo and Serbia.

Some peace agreements mandate parties to install infrastructure for specific actors or purposes. In the [Agreement on Establishing a Ceasefire and Cessation of Hostilities, 5 October 1992](#), Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia agreed to set up telephone lines between military commanders. The Chinese and Russian governments decided to establish a hotline between the two sides in the [Joint Declaration by the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, adopted at Beijing on 25 April 1996](#) (see Box 13).

Finally, peace agreements can allow monitoring or peacekeeping missions to establish their own communications infrastructure, or to access to the host government's telecommunications equipment. For example, on [28 September 1994](#), [Papua New Guinea and troop contributing countries to the South Pacific Peacekeeping Force](#) deployed in Papua New Guinea agreed that the peacekeeping force commander would have the right to 'install and operate a radio sending and receiving station' (see Box 13). The [Memorandum of Understanding on the Monitor Mission to Yugoslavia of 13 July 1991](#) that was signed by the European Community, Yugoslavia, Croatia, and Slovenia grants members of the monitoring mission access to telecommunications equipment of the hosting states (see Box 13).

### Box 13. Examples of peace agreement provisions on logistical aspects on media access or public announcements

Bosnia and Herzegovina / Yugoslavia (former), General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Peace Agreement), 21 November 1995

Page 63, Annex 4: Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Article III, Responsibilities of and Relations Between The Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina And the Entities, 1. Responsibilities of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The following matters are the responsibility of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina: ... (h) Establishment and operation of common and international communications facilities.

Papua New Guinea / (Bougainville), Agreement between Papua New Guinea and Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Australia and New Zealand, concerning the Status of Elements of the Defence Forces of those countries deployed in the North Solomons Province of Papua New Guinea as part of the South Pacific Peacekeeping Force, 28 September 1994

Page 7, Article 18, Communications and postal services,

1. The Commander shall have authority to install and operate a radio sending and receiving station or stations to make direct contact with the Participating States. The right of the Commander is likewise recognized to enjoy the priorities of government telegrams and telephone calls.

Bosnia and Herzegovina / Yugoslavia (former), Agreement on Establishing a Ceasefire and Cessation of Hostilities, 05 October 1992

Page 1, I, Item 9.

The parties will establish telephone lines between their respective brigade commanders and higher command staff.

[cont'd]

China / Russia, Joint Declaration by the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, adopted at Beijing on 25 April 1996, 25 April 1996

Page 1, I. BILATERAL RELATIONS

...The two sides agree to maintain regular dialogue at various levels and through various channels, believing that high- and top-level contacts and consultations between the leaders of the two countries are of particular importance. It has been decided that a telephone hot-line between the Chinese Government in Beijing and the Russian Government in Moscow shall be set up for this purpose.

Croatia / Slovenia / Yugoslavia (former), Memorandum of Understanding on the Monitor Mission to Yugoslavia, 13 July 1991

Page 4, Article IX (communications),

1.

The personnel of the Monitor Mission will have access to appropriate telecommunications equipment of the Host Parties for the purpose of its activities, including for communicating with Diplomatic and Consular Representations of the Sending Parties.

2.

Personnel of the Monitor Mission will enjoy the right to unrestricted communication by its own radio (including satellite, mobile and hand-held radio), telephone, telegraph, facsimile or any other means. The Host Parties will provide within 24 hours after signature of the Memorandum of Understanding the frequencies on which radios can operate.

**Modalities and arrangements.** Peace agreements can also include provisions regulating the usage of communication infrastructure and equipment. In ceasefires in particular, communication and exchange of information between opposing armed forces and/or peacekeeping troops plays an important role. For example, the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and Peaceful Settlement of Conflict between the Armed Forces of Liberia, and The National Patriotic Front of Liberia, and the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (Lomé Ceasefire Agreement), 13 February 1991, specifies communication arrangements for Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) troops in Liberia, stating that contact is to be established through liaison personnel and agreed radio channels (see Box 14).

Peace agreements also touch on freedom of communication and confidentiality of personal correspondence. The Constitution of Iraq of 15 October 2005, for instance, guarantees the freedom of communication and correspondence with exceptions in case of 'legal and security necessity and by a judicial decision' (see Box 14). In the Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation, 13 December 1991, North Korea and South Korea agreed to grant 'free correspondence, reunions and visits between dispersed family Members' and to respect the confidentiality of mail and telecommunications between the two countries (see Box 14).

### Box 14. Examples of peace agreement provisions on communication modalities and arrangements

Liberia, Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and Peaceful Settlement of Conflict between the Armed Forces of Liberia, and The National Patriotic Front of Liberia, and the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (Lomé Ceasefire Agreement), 13 February 1991

Page 3, Annex, Modalities for Monitoring the Implementation of the Cease-fire Agreement by the ECOMOG, 4.

Method and Channel of Communication: The Cease-fire Agreement and its monitoring modality will enable ECOMOG troops to operate detachments in the areas held by the various warring parties. In this case communication shall be by:

- (a) Contact through liaison personnel;
- (b) Radio through agreed working channel.

Iraq, Constitution of Iraq, 15 October 2005

Page 13, Section Two: Rights and Liberties

Chapter Two [Liberties],

Article 40: The freedom of communication and correspondence, postal, telegraphic, electronic, and telephonic, shall be guaranteed and may not be monitored, wiretapped, or disclosed except for legal and security necessity and by a judicial decision.

North Korea / South Korea, Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between South and North Korea, 13 December 1991

Page 2-3, CHAPTER III: SOUTH-NORTH EXCHANGES AND COOPERATION

Article 18: The two sides shall permit free correspondence, reunions and visits between dispersed family members and other relatives and shall promote the voluntary reunion of divided families and shall take measures to resolve other humanitarian issues.

Page 3, CHAPTER III: SOUTH-NORTH EXCHANGES AND COOPERATION with ...

Article 20: The two sides shall establish and link facilities needed for South-North postal and telecommunications services and shall guarantee the confidentiality of intra-Korean mail and telecommunications.

## Conclusion

Peace agreements address both the positive and negative roles the media and communication play in (post-) armed conflict contexts. About a quarter of peace agreements signed between 1990 and mid-2020 feature provisions with varying degrees of specificity on media and communication. The way peace agreement parties portray the media differs greatly, ranging from their framing as conflict drivers to the positive role the media can play in society. Agreements make various attempts to regulate media governance in legal, institutional, technical, and logistical terms, often with the aim to either minimize the media's harmful influence post-conflict, or to maximize their potential to contribute to a more peaceful and democratic future. Peace agreements also address communication infrastructure and equipment as well as other practical communication modalities and arrangements, often with a view to (re-)connect conflict parties.

Whether dealt with for practical reasons or to tackle conflict drivers, it is crucial for mediators and conflict parties to examine the risks and opportunities associated with the media and communication. Where the media have been dominated by one party during conflict and where parties negotiate a new political settlement, peace agreement parties need to ensure that the media are reformed in a way that supports the new political landscape. As this review has demonstrated, conflict parties at times do agree to empower the media to support wider political reforms. Conflict parties can draw on the media as a promotor of democratic rights and values or as a tool for inclusion. In other cases, the media can serve as an information platform or as a watchdog for holding conflict parties to account for the commitments made in peace agreements. Mediators and conflict parties should therefore explore opportunities for leveraging the media and communication tools in support of their peacemaking efforts.

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China / Russia, Joint Declaration by the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, adopted at Beijing on 25 April 1996, 25 April 1996, <https://www.peaceagreements.org/viewmasterdocument/1742>

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