

Strategic Communications of the United Nations: Case Studies of the Department of  
Public Information under Secretary-General Kofi Annan, 1997-2006

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This dissertation titled  
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## ABSTRACT

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This study examines strategic communication practices of the United Nations (UN) under the seventh Secretary-General Kofi Annan, including the successes and failures of Annan's revolutionary plan, through the lenses of strategic communication theories and the construction of a historical narrative. By focusing on the reorientation of the Department of Public Information and Annan's ambitious goals in terms of improving the UN image and leadership, this study attempts to show how Annan and the department implemented their plans and strategies to achieve a better UN image that was aimed at strengthening the UN's global leadership.

This study not only broadens the perspective on the communication strategy of the UN under Annan's leadership, but the study also revises several commonly held public images of the UN: ineffective and inactive from a view of organizational performance; corrupt from a view of administrative bureaucracy; submissive from a view of international relations; and non-newsworthy from a view of the media. It explores the maneuvers Annan and the department performed to address such images, and further reinforces the importance of the UN as an indispensable and irreplaceable organization at the international level. In doing so, this study attempts to show that the UN – as one of the most representative international organizations in terms of pioneering use of strategic

communication – would give an exemplary demonstration of how to utilize every means of communication strategies in order to achieve goals of international and non-profit organizations. Thus, this study uses a strategic communication perspective to evaluate the processes and outcomes of the UN's strategic communication.

## DEDICATION

*To Him*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

John F. Kennedy said, “As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” I will carve my blessings in my heart, the blessings from the members of my dissertation committee: Dr. Anne Cooper, Dr. Catherine Axinn, Dr. Roger Cooper, and committee chair Dr. Michael Sweeney. May they stay forever young.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study examines strategic communication practices of the United Nations (UN) under the seventh Secretary-General Kofi Annan, including the successes and failures of Annan's revolutionary plan, through the lenses of strategic communication theories and the construction of a historical narrative. By focusing on the reorientation of the Department of Public Information and Annan's ambitious goals in terms of improving the UN image and leadership, this study attempts to show how Annan and the department implemented their plans and strategies to achieve a better UN image that was aimed at strengthening the UN's global leadership.

The period for this study is ten years between 1997 and 2006, while Annan served the UN as two-term secretary-general. The UN – although certainly not the first organization suffering from criticism from the media, the public, and governments – could not help but be concerned about its existence and functions as an influential global organization when the two human-oriented catastrophes of conflicts in Somalia and Bosnia dragged it into chaos before Annan's era. These two catastrophes are important because they served as a drive for ending Annan's predecessor Boutros Boutros-Ghali as secretary-general. Annan, having learned from his predecessor's failure to manage the UN's image and secure public and political support, was determined to devote his tenure as secretary-general to an increase of the organization's influence with positive image through communication strategy.

### Purpose

This study aims to demonstrate that Annan and the department strategically used communication to emphasize the distinguished activities and irreplaceable roles of the

UN for the benefit of people around the world. It argues that the organization, which was accustomed to complaining about either negative media coverage or a lack of media coverage since 1948, had a turning point with the inauguration of Annan on January 1, 1997. Annan had a different approach to media relations with the UN. Rather than passively responding to media representatives who might be interested in the UN, he and the department made an active attempt to organize media events, create a media-friendly culture, and launch media-friendly programs to grab the media's attention; they hoped that the media would be persuaded to look at the UN as a reformed organization that could utilize its resources and perform efficient tasks to address chronic human issues such as poverty, war, human rights violations, and more recently terrorism and climate changes.

This study not only broadens the perspective on the communication strategy of the UN under Annan's leadership, but the study also revises several commonly held public images of the UN: ineffective and inactive from a view of organizational performance; corrupt from a view of administrative bureaucracy; submissive from a view of international relations; and non-newsworthy from a view of the media. It explores the maneuvers Annan and the department performed to address such images, and further reinforces the importance of the UN as an indispensable and irreplaceable organization at the international level. In doing so, this study attempts to show that the UN – as one of the most representative international organizations in terms of pioneering use of strategic communication – would give an exemplary demonstration of how to utilize every means of communication strategies in order to achieve goals of international and non-profit

organizations. Thus, this study uses a strategic communication perspective to evaluate the processes and outcomes of the UN's strategic communication.

### Definitions of Strategic Communication

The definition of strategic communication should be noted to elucidate the perspective of the UN's strategic communication program. However, as there are many definitions of strategic communication with self-interpreted understandings of those definitions from a broad range of claimers, a UN-related strategic communication definition needs to be stated to minimize the terminology confusion of strategic communication.

The term *strategic communication* gets confusing whether an “s” is added at the end. It seems that industrial or public relations organizations prefer to define the term with the “s.” Typing “strategic communications” on Google leads to some recognizable definitions for the industry use. O'Malley Communications Inc, a public relations company, defines it as “using corporate or institutional communications to create, strengthen or preserve, among key audiences, opinion favourable to the attainment of institutional/corporate goals” (“Strategic Communications,” n.d.). Another institution argues: “strategic communications is an art – the art of presenting ideas clearly, concisely, persuasively and systematically in a timely manner to the right people ... maximizing available resources and positioning your organization to be proactive” (Communication Leadership Institute, 2013). Karel, founder of the Communications network, states that strategic communications is “a process guided by the relentless pursuit of answers to deceptively simple questions: What do you want to accomplish?

Who has to think or act differently for that to happen? What would prompt them to do it?” (as cited in Patterson & Radtke, 2009, p. 7).

Public or non-profit organizations, on the other hand, adopt the term without “s.”

A study conducted by the United Nations Children’s Fund states:

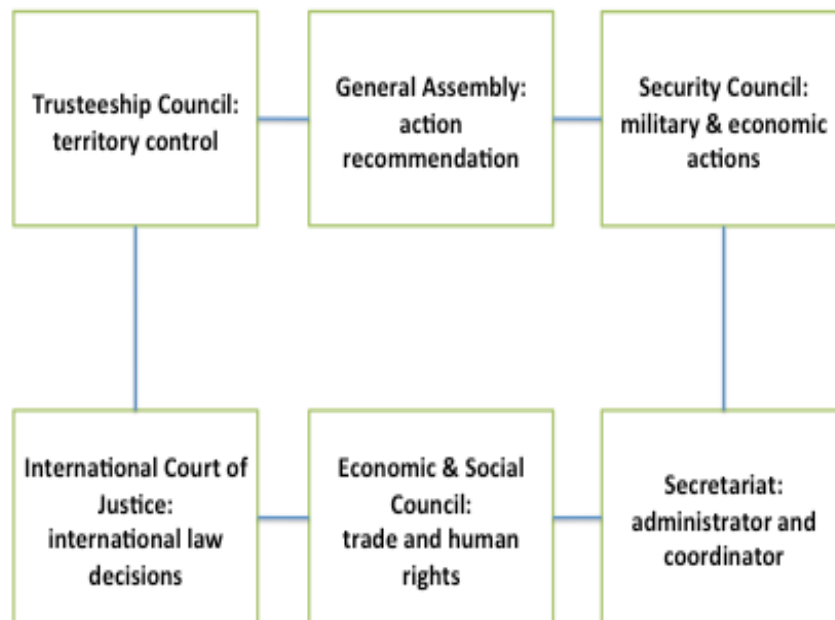
Strategic Communication is an evidence-based, results-oriented process, undertaken in consultation with the participant group(s), intrinsically linked to other programme elements, cognisant of the local context and favouring a multiplicity of communication approaches, to stimulate positive and measurable behaviour and social change (Lotse, 2005, p. xiii).

The System Staff College of the United Nations also sees strategic communication as an important tool to carry out its humanitarian work by stating, “[S]trategic communication takes a client-centered approach, it involves the development of programs designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences [and actors] to achieve management objectives” (Kleverweide, 2006, p. 4). Another institution within the UN system, the World Bank, states that strategic communication is “a stakeholder- or client-centered approach to promote voluntary changes in people’s knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors to achieve development objectives” (Kleverweide, 2006, p. 5). Although the UN at the headquarters level does not define its own strategic communication, the Division of Strategic Communications at the UN headquarters was established in 2003 to formulate communication strategies “on priority issues” and to carry out “communication campaigns to support the substantive goals” of the UN (UN Strategic Communications Division, para. 1).

#### UN History and Organization

The UN has six principal organs: the International Court of Justice, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship

Council, and the Secretariat (see Figure 1). These organs were established at the UN's founding in 1945 after World War II. When the representatives of fifty countries met in San Francisco to build an international organization that aimed to prevent another human-caused catastrophe such as war, they took the first step by drawing up the United Nations Charter on June 26, 1945. The charter proposed that the UN serve to save succeeding generations from war, to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, to establish international justice in treaties and international law, and to promote social progress and better standards of life (UN Charter Preamble, 1945). In this sense, the UN was established to maintain international peace and security with the goal of improving human life around the world.



*Figure 1.* The UN Structure

Since its foundation, the UN has served the international community. It strived not only to resolve international conflicts such as the Korean War (1950-1953), the Suez Canal crisis (1956), the Six-Day War (1967), and African civil wars (ongoing), but also to promote human rights with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), human equality with the adoption of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969), environmental protection with the UN Environment Programme, health with the establishment of the World Health Organization (1980), and sustainable economic growth with the declaration of the Agenda for Development (1994). As exemplified by these achievements in response to problems that concern real people, the cardinal reasons for the UN to exist are clear: resolution of international problems and improvement of human lives.

The six principal organs carry out their missions independently of one another. The General Assembly represents all 193 UN member states (as of April 2013), making decisions on key issues about international peace and security and addressing political and human rights issues with recommendations for action. The Security Council has primary responsibility for responding to international threats to peace contingent upon the unanimous vote from the five permanent members: China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, and the United States. They decide whether UN peacekeeping forces are sent to a conflict region. The Economic and Social Council is in charge of coordinating responses to international and social issues – such as the status of women, global crime suspension, and narcotic drug traffic – to foster international cooperation for economic development. The International Court of Justice mediates disputes among countries over territory and war crime issues. It also offers advisory opinions to the UN.

The Trusteeship Council formerly provided international supervision for countries with territorial conflicts. It suspended operation in 1994 when its last remaining trusteeship, the island nation of Palau, became independent, but the charter allows the council to resume meeting when such an occasion may require.

The Secretariat, the sixth organ of the UN system, takes care of the operation of UN activities. It carries out administrative work of the UN, which is directed by the other five organs. The UN secretary-general is the head of the Secretariat, and is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council. He represents the entire UN structure for a five-year term that can be renewed for one additional term. This organ is composed of departments and offices, including duty stations such as the UN headquarters in New York and the office in Geneva, Switzerland.

#### *Functions of the Secretariat*

The Secretariat constitutes “the skeleton of the organisation, allowing the entire system to work, supporting the activities of other organisms” (UN Guide to a Career, n.d., p. 16). The Secretariat’s duties range from administering peacekeeping operations, preparing studies on human rights, and mediating international disputes to offering conveniences such as speech interpretation to the members of the UN. In addition, the organ is obliged to inform the world’s media about the work of the UN, record meetings, translate documents into the UN’s six official languages (English, Russian, French, Chinese, Arabic, and Spanish), as well as organize international seminars and conferences. The staff members of the organ, defining themselves as “international civil servants,” are guaranteed their independence by the charter from member states’ individual instructions (UN Secretariat, 2013, para. 1). In other words, no member state is



allowed to instruct the work of the Secretariat. In turn, the staff members make a commitment to be “responsible solely to the United Nations,” and they agree not to seek “directions from any other authority” other than the secretary-general (Fasulo, 2003, p. 21).

The Secretariat’s organizational structure is divided into offices and departments. There are nine offices, including the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Office of High Commissioner for Refugees, whereas the eight departments include the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operation. It also has three offices away from the headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland; Vienna, Austria; and Nairobi, Kenya.

One of the most important tasks of the Secretariat is to communicate the work of the UN to people around the world. The task is assigned to the Department of Public Information, established by the General Assembly on February 13, 1946, with the following reasoning: “The United Nations cannot achieve the purposes for which it has been created unless the peoples of the world are fully informed of its aims and activities” (UN Resolution 13 (I) Annex I, 1946). In establishing the department, the assembly outlined clear and solid direction for the department to follow. The assembly said that the activities of the department “should be organized and directed as to promote to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world” (1946).

#### *The Department of Public Information*

Since its establishment, the department – in terms of providing UN-related information and spreading newsworthy material – has served many masters, including

UN agencies, UN programs, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN diplomats, the media, and the general public around the world. However, according to a report published in 1997, there were three constraints on effective activities of the department. The first constraint was the task of serving all member states (UN Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997). Member states of the General Assembly told the department what to do and how to act on at individual member states' requests. For example, the 1994 General Assembly's resolutions asked for specific information services or products for member states, rather than letting the department plan and perform its activities to inform the general public. The second constraint was that the department was given responsibility for mandated observance of UN-led conferences and seminars that required written records. The department lacked the necessary number of staff to effectively take on such burdens of micro-management. For example, the department in 1995 was assigned to observe twenty-one international days and weeks – such as UN AIDS Day and UN Earth Week – and a total of sixty-five conferences and seminars. The third constraint was rooted in the Committee on Information that gave specific instructions to the department. The committee, overloading the Department of Public Information with its demands, exhausted the staff and budget of the department, the report pointed out (UN Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997). Although the 1946 resolution assigned the department to formulate and execute an information policy guided by the secretary-general, the committee had in many ways replaced the secretary-general's role by producing detailed and overwhelming mandates for the department, according to the report.

The three constraints hampered the department's macro-management of its plan to communicate with more people. However, there existed a larger and more fundamental constraint on the department's effective work. That was the lack of an adequate budget (about \$71 million for the biennium 1996 - 1997 to support all activities and payroll of the department's 861-member staff). While new communication technology was emerging in the 1990s, especially the Internet and 24/7 cable news, the department needed to hire new media technicians to keep up with the rapid changes in the media environment. The fast-moving nature of communication technology required the department to create new job positions to attract skilled job candidates, but the lack of a proper budget only could offer short-term job security (UN Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997). The money issue also led the department to fail to utilize the ability of its staff. For example, because of lack of film reels, photographers of the department often had to skip taking pictures of UN programs and activities that might have been good for media publicity. Not surprisingly, the department's outdated computers, which could not be replaced under its budget, slowed the production of UN documents and publications as well.

It was obvious that the department was struggling to meet the charter's expected activities and goals. When the report was issued, the department was organized into four major units. They were the Division of Media, the Division of Library and Publications, the Division of Promotion and Public Services, and the Information Centres Service. The Media Division provided information services to the media that covered the UN. It distributed film footage, written summaries of official meetings, daily digests of events, and press accreditations. The division produced finished goods for radio and television

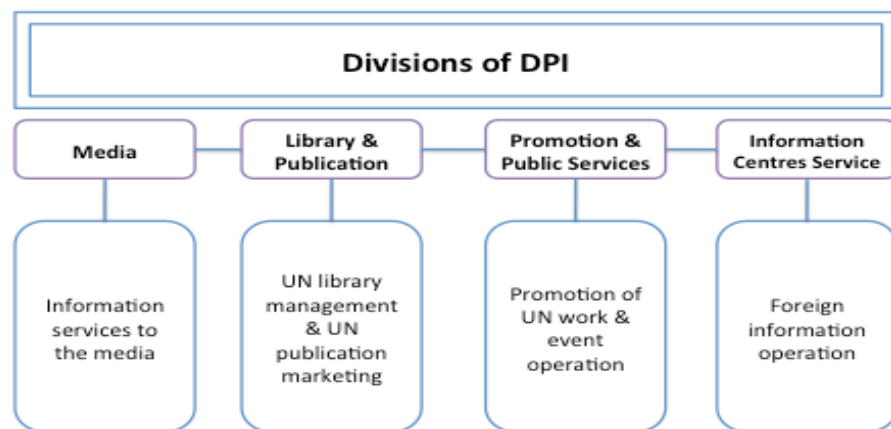
broadcast. Film packages for use by television broadcasters were entitled, “Questions and Answers about the UN,” “UN Minutes,” and “UN in Action.” According to the report, about sixty segments were produced and some of them were covered in the CNN “World Report” (1997). The division’s radio programs were made in six official languages. Most of the production was in the form of taped programs that were mailed to media outlets. This relatively slow delivery method resulted in making many programs arrive at the media outlets too late for timely broadcasting.

The Division of Library and Publications was in charge of running the headquarters’ Dag Hammarskjöld Library and producing publications such as “UN Chronicle,” “Africa Recovery,” and *The UN Yearbook*. The division took responsibility for sales and marketing of UN publications. It had to acquire and maintain “a complete collection of all UN documents and publications in any language anywhere in the world,” in addition to digitalization of the vast quantity of documentation from the birth of the UN (UN Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 13). The division dealt with a new, challenging assignment to develop the UN homepage, launched in 1995, while offering an Internet workshop for the Secretariat staff members.

The Division of Promotion and Public Service was obliged to comply with mandates recommended by the General Assembly and the Committee on Information. The division focused its resources on the promotion of UN work with particular themes, events, and observances. It saw itself as the “think tank” of the department, organizing UN campaigns to associate special events with public information programs of the UN. It was responsible for correcting misinformation or distorted information about the UN by publishing quick and timely fact sheets. Another responsibility of the division was to

increase general public relations with direct contact through public tours of the UN headquarters and UN exhibits on the first floor of the building, and to respond to public inquiries and maintain smooth relations with NGOs.

The Information Centres Service operated the sixty-one UN Information Centres (UNICs) outside New York. UNICs served as the field players of UN public information to inform foreign publics about localized UN work. Not only did UNICs organize press conferences, seminars, exhibits, and other events in local languages, but they also produced press releases and film footage to attract local media coverage. More importantly, UNICs provided feedback to UN headquarters on the country's trends and local media coverage of the UN. UNICs also carried out representational duties to inspect airplanes and cargo ships for compliance with UN embargoes. Communicating with local people in local languages to promote foreign public awareness of UN work required tailoring information to local audiences (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* Structure of the UN's Department of Public Information

Operating the four major units in the 1990s, the department knew that it had to keep up with fast-developing communication technology and rapid changes in the media reporting environment while attempting to overcome the three constraints. But the history of the UN and the longtime bureaucratic system of the UN proved that the extreme slowness and inefficiency of the UN kept the department from implementing quick and effective information practices. For example, even if funds were approved to allow the department to purchase new communication equipment, the UN procurement system officially required formal processes of an announcement for an acquisition, acceptance of bidding participants, bidding, equipment supplier confirmation, and new equipment in the department. The bureaucratic processes of procurement ran the risk of late deliveries of equipment – some took years – so that some was out of date when it was about to be used (UN Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997). The department needed a breakthrough to perform its activities better. That breakthrough could not be merely achieved by the department's efforts, but rather by the entire system of the UN.

#### Two UN Crises: Somalia and Bosnia

While the new millennium was just around the corner in the 1990s, the UN confronted deadlock situations in its Somalia and Bosnia peacekeeping missions. The Somalia mission to hunt for General Mohamed Farah Aideed in October 1993 left eighteen U.S. Rangers dead. The mission, referred to as Black Hawk Down among the U.S. public, sparked congressional and public resentment toward the UN as the failed mission was seen as a UN calamity under then-Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's leadership. The administration of President William Clinton then withdrew U.S. forces from the mission.

The Bosnia mission damaged UN credibility even further. When the UN was asked to deploy peacekeepers to Bosnia by the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Boutros-Ghali knew that the UN was “being manipulated” by the two entities to quiet domestic public opinion that was seeking action to halt atrocities (Meisler, 2011, p. 288). Critics argued that the United States and NATO had dragged the UN into a European war to clean up the mess for them, and in hopes of assuaging Western consciences about the barbarity in Bosnia (Levin Institute, 2013). Although the secretary-general knew that neither a single country nor a single organization would be able to hamper the ongoing atrocities in Bosnia without more casualties among interventionists and local residents, the UN was not in the position of saying “no” to the two powerful entities that pressured him to send UN forces to the region. As a result, the UN presence led to exacerbating the crisis because “the well-intentioned international effort” prevented Bosnian society from functioning at a level just tolerable enough to keep any of the belligerents “from negotiating seriously for peace” (Levin Institute, 2013, para. 5). Anticipating that the UN involvement would worsen the crisis, Boutros-Ghali said that “this is diplomacy,” in which NATO and the United States pushed the UN to take responsibility for the daunting work (Meisler, 2011, p. 288). And in the end the Bosnia crisis “damaged the UN markedly” (p. 289). The reputation of the secretary-general suffered even more when the horrors of Rwanda broke out in 1994. Then-U.S. Ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright, on behalf of the Clinton administration, blamed the UN for continual international crises. In return, the secretary-general said that the United States used the UN as a scapegoat.

Albright looked on the secretary-general as “the employee of the Security Council and more especially the United States” (Meisler, 2011, p. 345). On the other hand, Boutros-Ghali viewed himself as an independent actor with authority based on his experience “dealing with world leaders for many years” (p. 345). The relationship between the ambassador and the secretary-general grew disdainful. “In person, she acted as my friend,” Boutros-Ghali wrote in his memoir. “Through her spokesman, she slandered me” (p. 346). Albright fought back, writing in her memoir, “He was hyper status-conscious and seemed to believe that administrative tasks were beneath him” (p. 346). Albright quoted her predecessor, Edward Perkins, as saying that the secretary-general was “vain, petulant and impulsive” (p. 346). The different occupational views on the UN secretary-general and the personal antagonism between the two cost Boutros-Ghali a second term as secretary-general. Albright acted to remove him from the secretary-general’s position. She alerted him about the U.S. government opposing a second term, but he defied her and announced his plan to seek his second term. The Security Council members other than the United States supported his second term. The power of the United States, however, trumped Boutros-Ghali’s wish. In November 1996, the Security Council voted for Boutros-Ghali’s second term, and the United States was the only country that vetoed him among the five permanent members. The single negative vote was powerful enough to end Boutros-Ghali’s tenure, as the Security Council used the unanimous vote system. The Clinton administration endorsed then-Undersecretary-General Kofi Annan to be the next secretary-general, and the Security Council supported the U.S. choice. With the General Assembly’s swift ratification, Annan, who had a reputation as “a surprising international civil servant” and who had never tried to evade



questions posed by journalists, became the seventh secretary-general of the UN on January 1, 1997 (Meisler, 2011, p. 349).

### Secretary-General Kofi Annan and His Reforms

Annan, born in Ghana in 1938, joined the UN system in 1962 as an administrative and budget official in Geneva after he graduated from Macalester College in Saint Paul, Minnesota. He worked in a variety of UN offices, including the World Health Organization, the UN Emergency Force, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and UN Peacekeeping Force. His UN experiences and academic degrees in the United States – he received his master’s degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Sloan School of Management in 1972 – helped him become the first “rank-and-file UN staffer” to serve as secretary-general (Fasulo, 2009, p. 18).

After he took office, Annan made it a clear priority to repair the damage to the image of the UN caused by crises in Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda. He launched a comprehensive program of reform aimed at revitalizing the UN and making its operational systems more effective. He ensured the UN member states that the UN would use every means and employ every motivation to perform effectively to maintain international peace and security. Annan understood that his position required communicating with the entire UN family as well as with countries and the general public in the world. He had no concern with that requirement, for he was a media and social fixture. Unlike his predecessor, who was seen as something of a recluse, shying away from social life and media exposure, Annan took an active part in promoting UN publicity. He attended dinners and parties in New York City to socialize with influential people, and one of them called Annan “the current star of New York society” (Meisler,

2011, p. 351). Annan accepted an invitation from the New York Yankees to throw out the first pitch at a World Series game in Yankee Stadium in 1997. His cultivated celebrity status, culminating when he appeared on “Sesame Street” as an arbitrator who elicited a truce between Elmo and Telly Monster.

While maximizing his opportunity for contact with the general public, Annan did not ignore the importance of building a cozy political relationship with the United States. He chose Washington, D.C., as the site of his first official trip as secretary-general in January 1997. This was a bizarre choice to many UN employees because choosing to visit African countries as a secretary-general’s first official trip was an unwritten tradition. Regardless of such tradition, Annan received a warm official welcome from President Clinton and U.S. congressmen at a reception. Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Jesse Helms, known as a leading conservative, said to Annan, “I asked my staff to look into your background and try to find somebody who doesn’t like you and they could not find anybody that doesn’t like you; everybody likes you; I like you” (UN Oral History, Interview with Fred Eckhard, 2005, p. 8). President Clinton and U.S. congressmen reached some degree of understanding on the issue of UN reform as explained by Annan. But Annan did not obtain assurances of an immediate payment of the outstanding U.S. dues of \$1.6 billion to the UN, which had been in arrears because of the U.S. government’s dissatisfaction with Boutros-Ghali. Although there was a criticism of Annan visiting the United States first instead of African countries, he said that he would go anywhere to solve the problem of a billion dollars owed to the UN.

Annan was a media figure, world politician, sales person, and manager. After his first successful trip, he spurred his comprehensive reform efforts as chief manager of the

UN. Annan set out his UN reform plan, which would take immediate steps to make the UN a more efficient and effective organization. On July 14, 1997, his reform plan was produced in the form of a written report, entitled “Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform” (UN Report, 1997). Annan stated that his reform strategy to identify the ways in which the UN could meet the challenges in entering a new century would be “the most extensive and far-reaching reforms in the fifty-two year history of this Organization” (UN Report, 1997, p. 2). Annan expected the UN to be reoriented to do better in response to the international community’s needs. In the report Annan noted:

Here the report seeks nothing less than to transform the leadership and management structure of the Organization, enabling it to act with greater unity of purpose, coherence of efforts, and agility in responding to the many challenges it faces. These measure are intended to renew the confidence of Member States in the relevance and effectiveness of the Organization and revitalize the spirit and commitment of its staff (UN Report, 1997, p. 2)

The highlights of the reform were: (1) establishment of a new leadership and management structure within the UN system through reorientation of departments and programs; (2) financial solvency through a revolving credit fund of one billion dollars; (3) elimination of at least 1,000 UN staff posts; (4) promotion of sustainable development through the grouping of UN funds and programs; (5) enhancement of crime prevention through consolidation of UN agencies; (6) support for human rights activities through restructuring of all principal UN activities; (7) enhanced response to humanitarian needs through the setting up of a new emergency relief coordination office; (8) advancement of disarmament agenda through the establishment of a department of disarmament and arms regulation; (9) improvement of the UN ability to deploy peacekeeping and other field operations through enhancing the rapid reaction capacity of the UN; and (10) a major

shift in the public information and communications strategy and functions of the United Nations to meet the changing needs of the UN.

The report generated “mostly positive comment from experts, the public, and other interested observers” (Fasulo, 2009, p. 23). The U.S. Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) predicted that by carrying out “these far-reaching reforms,” Annan would be able to persuade the U.S. Congress to pay out a portion of its \$1.6 billion dollar debt to the UN (PBS Kofi Annan Center, 1997). With the reform plan, Annan had a strong yearning to revamp the UN’s internal management system to produce more efficient UN activities, even if he had to lay off a large number of UN officials who did not meet his expectations. Interestingly, Annan declared that he would place “communication functions at the heart of the strategic management of the UN” (UN Report, 1997, p.83).

#### The Task Force Report for Communication Reform

The media and the U.S. public were “really favorable toward the UN” in the early years of its establishment, but changes took root after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, better known as the Six-Day war, which caused U.S. public opinion to build “real hostility toward the UN” (UN Oral History Interview with Richard Hottelet, 2005, p. 15). The UN was blamed for having pulled troops out during the war. Along with the negative public opinion, some media outlets decided to withdraw their UN bureau chiefs from the UN press corps. UN bureau chiefs of *The Chicago Daily News*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and NBC were pulled out from the UN headquarters. As a result, “the public interest in the UN was at a pretty low ebb” since the UN received little coverage, which left the UN’s image damaged and its public perception hostile (p. 16).

Nobody in the UN knew better than Annan about the UN's reputation and public image in media portrayals, as he became the first secretary-general to have come up through the ranks. In hopes of increasing global support for the UN, in January 1997 he convened a task force on a new strategy for UN public information activities. Its members were nine communication experts, including a CNN reporter, a UN ambassador, and a UN correspondent. Annan, after his inauguration, sorted out the organization's urgent tasks to perform, and he proposed the reorientation of UN public information activities based on the report of "Global Vision, Local Voice" submitted to him by the task force.

Taking the force's report seriously, he declared that he was committed to "placing the communications function at the heart of the strategic management of the Organization" in order to turn the UN into an effective, modern communication-oriented organization (UN Report Questions Relating to Information, 1997, p. 2). The reason Annan regarded the task force's report as a fundamental framework for the reorientation of the UN information activities was that it not only diagnosed the UN's longtime image problems, but also suggested solutions to regaining public support that could redefine the UN as an indispensable global institution. For example, it noted that "the UN is seen as a distant talking shop rather than an organization that can bring solutions that matter" to people and countries in the world (UN Task Force Report Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 2). It added that the UN was not seen as playing a central role at the international level because of public perception of its being "a vast, unaccountable, ineffective bureaucracy" (p. 3).

The report asked Annan to address the UN's institutional image as a priority. The "talking shop" and the image of an ineffective bureaucracy could be addressed if the UN began its communication reform with the notion that "effective communications are the lifeblood of a complex modern organization" (UN Task Force Report Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 9). Through such effective communication, the UN could raise public awareness of the UN's primary role in promoting human rights, supporting gender equity, and addressing environmental change, which were all directly related to the lives of people in the world. The report designated the Department of Public Information and the Office of Spokesman of the Secretary-General as the main vehicles for shedding light on positive and unique roles of the UN.

The report defined the department as the centerpiece of the UN communications, but said the department was not "effective at informing the public" about what the UN was doing for the world's people (UN Task Force Report Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 11). In order for the department to be more effective, the report suggested that the department provide a better informational service for journalists, diplomats, and NGO workers, all of whom felt poorly served by the department (p. 11). They would act as opinion leaders having a great influence on the process of UN image-building.

The spokesman's office, according to the report, could play a more pivotal role than the department in building a new image of the UN by becoming a newsworthy source to the press, as journalists did not see the department as "a news source" (UN Task Force Report Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 19). Whereas the department provided the press with meeting summaries, press kits, and videotapes, which were often delivered too late and were too insignificant to be useful in covering breaking news, the

office was capable of offering important UN issue-oriented briefings, and the secretary-general could deliver information to the press before the department did. Hence, it was believed that the office would have a better chance to have the press positively describe the UN. In conclusion, the report argued that the UN needed a communication strategy to build a positive image with strategic delivery of UN messages targeting the general public through the press. More importantly, the report asked Annan to build “a communications culture” within the UN, meaning that all UN officials would feel free to discuss UN issues with the press or people outside the UN, even though they did not belong to the department or the office (UN Task Force Report Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 21).

#### A Culture of Communications

In response to the task force report, Annan announced that the UN would focus its communication activity on holding “a position of solid respect in public opinion worldwide” (UN Report Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform, 1997, p.82). While the UN was struggling to translate general international support into a significant level of global public advocacy, Annan pointed out that the UN should have the ability to clearly explain its role and range of activities such as “securing peace, fighting crime, drugs and disease, promoting employment and education, protecting the environment and human rights” (p. 83). In doing so, Annan hoped to shift the “talking shop” image to a more promising identity such as “a unique global forum for debate, reflection, and ultimate consensus,” as well as “a spokesman, advocate and implementor of that consensus” (p. 85). The UN ultimately could change its image further by following up talk and consensus with action. To achieve the image, Annan created one

communicative action priority: an establishment of “a culture of communications” within the UN that the task force initially proposed as “a communications culture.”

Annan asserted that a culture of communications must pervade “the entire Organization, with responsibility borne by all senior officials, ambassadors, delegates and the larger United Nations family” (UN Report *Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform*, 1997, p. 84). In particular, Annan emphasized that a culture of communications was designed to be effectively integrated into the work of all the organization’s departments, not just for the Department of Public Information. He understood that the UN was a large, heterogeneous and highly complex organization, so “managing its many activities and communicating its message are vital tasks” (UN Report on the Work of Organization, 1998, p. 25). Annan likely believed that vigorous communication within the UN would build a bridge between the UN and the press and the general public in terms of formulating a new, positive image of the UN.

The image reorientation project has the specific goal to project the UN as “an open, transparent and public institution which has the capacity to meet the principal peace, development and human rights” (UN Report *Questions Relating to Information*, 1998, p. 2). To achieve the goal, the project encouraged all UN officials to work together with other departments “to design and implement communications and information strategies for their substantive and thematic objectives” (p. 2). Annan argued that an exchange of UN inside information through communication would result in constructing integrated and focused communication strategy to ensure “global public support that is indispensable to the long-term survival of the UN” (p. 2). As part of the effort to promote the image of the UN as an implementor and transparent organization, Annan issued in



April 1999 “a set of guidelines” for UN officials in their dealing with the media (UN Report Questions Relating to Information, 1999, p. 4).

### The UN Media Guidelines

The guidelines, consisting of thirteen provisions, startled the press because “for the first time in its history” the UN allowed “almost anyone to speak on the record,” *New York Times* UN bureau chief Barbara Crossette wrote (Crossette, 1999, para. 1). She was correct: such open media policies had never been tried until Annan came to power. Under other secretaries-general, especially Boutros-Ghali, most UN officials were “forbidden to give interviews, or too afraid to talk” to the press (para. 4). When Annan was undersecretary-general for peacekeeping, he and his two press aides, Sashi Tharoor and Fred Eckhard, had tried to “push through an open media policy under former Secretary General Boutros-Ghali” (Atkinson, 1999, introduction section. para. 4). But Boutros-Ghali rejected Annan’s proposal twice.

When Annan succeeded him, his twice-rejected open media policy became a reality. “The United Nations is committed to being open and transparent in its dealing with the press,” the guidelines’ first provision stated (UN Media Guidelines, 1999, p. 1). “It is our interest to work with the media quickly and honestly, and to develop a coherent communications strategy on those same principles.” Using the guidelines, Annan aimed to improve the flow of information both in and out of the organization.

Tharoor, director of communications who later became undersecretary-general for the Department of Public Information, said that it was not Boutros-Ghali’s fault that the UN had been perceived as clandestine and aloof from the media; rather, “it was the culture” (Atkinson, 1999, para. 5). Annan tried to break the cultural taboos with his

flexible media guidelines aimed at rebuilding the UN's image. Atkinson, who identified the guidelines as a campaign, argued that Annan, Tharoor, and Annan's spokesman Eckhard forged the campaign strategy "to improve communications both internally and externally as the first steps toward improving the UN's image" (para. 6).

Eckhard acknowledged Annan's enthusiasm to welcome the press for more coverage of the UN's good work. When Annan became the secretary-general, he said to Eckhard that "I will talk to the press regularly," meaning that he was willing to make himself accessible to the press (Oral History Interview with Fred Eckhard, 2005, p. 4) – in contrast to his predecessor Boutros-Ghali who "didn't want to be at news conferences and didn't want to say anything about what he was doing" to the press (UN Oral History Interview with Barbara Crossette, 2005, p. 2). Not only was Annan determined to hold bimonthly press conference, but he also often allowed the press to intercept him and ask him questions on his way to work through the front door of the UN building.

The UN secretary-general position required frequent travel to foreign countries. Annan also set his rule for media exposure outside the UN, saying, "let's do one print interview, one electronic media interview, and one full blown press conference at every stop" where he would spend two days or more (Oral History Interview with Fred Eckhard, 2005, p. 4). Compare this with Boutros-Ghali, who when asked if he would say anything to the press on his foreign trip said, "That's not my job. If I go around making news, I am not going to get anything done because all the people I talk to trust me not to say anything" (Oral History Interview with Barbara Crossette, p. 2). He was a poor public communicator, according to Meisler (2011). "He was stiff and awkward" before the press (Meisler, 2011, p. 284).

Eckhard said that the press gave Annan and the UN “the benefit of the doubt” during Annan’s implementation of reforms, and Annan was a “very popular Secretary-General with a nice soft voice that average people found comforting” in his first term between 1997 and 2001 – before the war with Iraq and the oil-for-the food scandal broke out (Oral History Interview with Fred Eckhard, 2005, p. 5). Annan’s fairly generous contact with the media gradually began to gain media support. “He makes many public appearances in the United States and abroad, and is considered to be a great asset to the organization, which is often under attack in the country,” Crossette wrote in her *New York Times* article (Crossette, 1999, para. 9). Annan tried to capitalize on his bully pulpit status.

However, the guidelines did not satisfy media representatives entirely, as the fifth provision stated three limits: an official would speak “only within your area of competence and responsibility,” and provide “facts, not opinions or comment,” and leave “sensitive issues to officials who are specifically authorized to speak on them” (UN Media Guidelines, 1999, p. 2). Moreover, the guidelines maintained the traditional restrictions on television reporters. “Cameras are still severely restricted and confined to a few static positions to record very formal diplomatic exchanges or brief encounters with passing officials,” Crossette reported in *The New York Times* (Crossette, 1999, para. 10).

Although Annan’s new media policy and his culture of communications program within the UN were considered a groundbreaking change, reality and ideals were a long way apart. Even after the encouragement of talking to the press, “many [UN officials] still fear being quoted,” Atkinson pointed out (1999, para. 10). After Atkinson had a 20-minute conversation with a UN senior official about Annan’s media openness policy and

a culture of communications, the official ended the conversation with the comment:

“that’s all off the record, of course” (para. 11)

However, regarding Annan’s media guidelines as the first step toward improving the UN’s image, the department worked on detailed, practical instruction for UN officials to deal with the media. The department hosted a workshop, entitled “Communication as a Reform Tool for the United Nations,” for senior UN officials in April 2002. The workshop aimed to enhance the ability of the UN “to speak with one voice” among UN officials who were expected to become experts at using the power of the media to build Annan’s positive image of the UN (UN Report Questions Relations to Information, 2002, p. 3). The workshop produced a document instructing them to be shrewd about dealing with the media. The document stated that “building image, influence and identity in the global network” is a function of how the officials use information and knowledge through effective communication skills, the currency of the new information age (UN Pocket Guide for Practitioners, 2002, p. 2). The document reminded them of expected benefits of media use: reaching a large audience at little cost to the UN, adding credibility to an issue, and getting the UN stories told the way they wanted (p. 4). To hone their skills of dealing with the media for the UN’s image sake, the document offered the Five-F’s principles in practice. They were (p. 5): Fast (know journalists’ deadlines and meet them); Factual (use facts and anecdotes about individuals to make a story more interesting); Friendly (say thanks and know journalists’ names); Fair (treat media in a balanced way and recognize the differences among various media); and Frank (be honest and be open to journalists’ concerns).

In addition, the document gave practical advice on how to fend off difficult questions in case the press ambushed them. For example, if asked the questions of “What do you personally think about the secretary-general’s 2000 report” and “What if the UN did not receive the funding from the United States?” the document asked them to answer – “I do not believe the issue here is my personal opinion but rather what governments will do about the report” for the first question, and “We’ll cross that bridge when we get to it” for the second question (UN Pocket Guide for Practitioners, 2002, pp. 8-9). More importantly, the document instructed them to avoid “off the records,” as there was always a risk of the reporters finding confirmation from other sources on the record and using the information (p. 6).

Annan’s culture of communications and the department’s workshop served as a fundamental framework for the UN communication strategies. The media were interested in some special occasions about what the UN was doing and what its officials were saying. Annan wanted to spread information about the UN’s humanitarian work and international activities in conflict zones to the general public in the world, so the UN could be perceived as an indispensable and effective organization. He needed to borrow the information-disseminating power from the media, while recognizing that the UN in return had to be more open to journalists.

#### UN Communication Strategies under Annan’s Leadership

It is important to note that Annan as secretary-general was motivated to devote his UN career to repairing the damage to the image of the UN. He believed that the image-repairing process would begin with systemic management reform from inside the UN. He proposed “the most extensive and far-reaching” reform plans, including laying off 1,000

employees (UN Report *Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform*, 1997, p.2). After declaring that he would place communications at the heart of the reform process, Annan planned and practiced the reorientation process of the Department of Public Information, seen as the prime enforcer of building his culture of communications inside of the UN and manufacturing positive media coverage.

Annan hoped to improve the department's communication practice by reorienting its structure and operational system. In fact, the department was restructured and its members and duties reassigned throughout Annan's two-term history as secretary-general. For example, in November 2002 the department was divided into the Strategic Communication Division (responsible for devising and disseminating UN messages), the News and Media Division (responsible for the delivery of timely, accurate, objective and balanced news and information to the media and audiences worldwide), and the Outreach Division (responsible for building relationships with NGOs, academic institutions, and civil society). The department was convinced that "it must make full use of all available channels of communication" to fulfill Annan's hopes (UN Report *Questions Relating to Information*, 2003, p. 5).

It is worth noting that Annan's reform plan, especially for the department, was rooted in the task force's report, "Global Vision, Local Voice" (1997). The program of a culture of communications, the new structure of the department, responsibilities for each division, and operational strategies had been outlined in the report. It emphasized the importance of strategic communication practices, suggesting that Annan focus on the transition from the task force report to "a new strategic communications function at the UN," which would deliver tailored communications programs and messages to target

audiences (UN Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 34). In the guidance section of the report, Annan and the department were urged to organize and implement strategic communication activities to build a positive image and sustain public support for the UN. The report then gave its last suggestion to Annan: “The UN must open itself to communications” (p. 34). Annan attempted to take that advice and change the communication culture.

The UN’s strategic communication perspective refers to the broader concept of public relations and media relations aimed at addressing the UN’s image. As Annan announced that communication was essential to reform aimed at regaining public support for the UN, the department and Annan aimed to follow four strategic communication steps for a successful reform. They were: (1) the creation of an interpersonal communication culture within the UN; (2) the announcement of media guidelines for organizational communication; (3) the invention of media events at the organizational level; and (4) the exposure of the secretary-general to the media for purposes of persuasion. In sum, Annan believed that building a cordial communication culture among UN officials for a free flow of information within the UN would be an engine for attracting more media and journalists to cover the UN’s role and activities helping people in desperate situations. In doing so, more people would perceive that only an international organization – not a single, independent country – could pull off such humanitarian missions with resources and skills. If the UN were perceived as being a unique and indispensable organization by the general public, it was hoped, they would support the existence and international role of the UN. Thus, Annan with his strategic messages would be able to integrate the private sector and the UN member states into one

entity pursuing international peace under UN leadership. This was Annan's final goal of the reform through communication strategies. Therefore, this study argues that Annan's communication strategies toward public relations and media relations were organized through these steps.



## CHAPTER 2: RELATED LITERATURE

As the UN was formed with the notion that it should take the main role in maintaining international peace and security, the constant conflicts under Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's era of 1992 to 1996 inflicted significant wounds on the organization. Moreover, the UN's estranged relationship with the U.S. government gave rise to a serious suspicion of its existence. For example, when the administration of President Ronald Reagan decided to pull out of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) over the debate ON the New World Information and Communication Order in 1984, some conservatives proposed that the U.S. withdrawal from UN membership. The conservative Heritage Foundation in its 1984 report noted that diplomats could solve international problems with informal meetings in London, Paris, or Washington "without the UN's costly Secretariat, its cronyism, legions of bureaucrats, high salaries, and anti-Western ideology" (Future Survey Annual, 1984, p. 6507). It wrote that if the UN failed to stop being anti-US, anti-West, and anti-free enterprise, "The US and other democratic nations should consider withdrawing from the UN." It concluded: "A world without the UN would be a better world" (p. 6507). The critics of the UN used the U.S. pullout from UNESCO to fix an image in the U.S. public mind of "a blathering, incompetent, corrupt United Nations" (Meisler, 2011, p. 219). The UN was not able to rid itself of the image, even after the UN teamed up with President George H.W. Bush's administration to fight during the Gulf War against Iraq in 1991. The war was considered a big success for the Bush administration, rather than for the UN.

This study takes its starting point after the Clinton administration ousted Boutros-Ghali and endorsed Annan to become secretary-general. Annan was well aware of the UN image and its challenges, and he did not waste a minute trying to rebuild a strong and well-loved United Nations. However, he knew that because the UN's identity was limited to that of an international and non-profit organization, his easiest course of action was off limits to him: He could not pour millions of dollars into an advertising campaign. So he and the UN had to find an alternative to improve the image. This is why he turned to communication functions capable of informing the public about the UN's role and activities, telling them about what the UN was actually doing for people in need, persuading powerful countries to be more cooperative with UN policies, and most importantly integrating the 186 UN member states into a unified group of governments under the UN leadership (as of 2013, 193 members).

#### Studies about the UN

Previous studies of the UN examine a variety of its aspects, including organizational systems, peacekeeping operations, human rights, politicization, global organization, diplomatic failures and achievements, economic development, and humanitarian work. In this sense, a great number of books, journal articles, and news articles have been published about the UN's history, roles, structures, systems, and impacts on the world.

Numerous books about the UN have taken an explanatory approach to describing general facts and information about the international organization. For example, Weiss and Barnett have written and edited dozens of books related to the performance of the United Nations. These books, in a wide range of systemic and functional explanations,

analyze: how the UN was born; how it has been performing; why it has been criticized; what it can do to become an influential international organization; and why it tends to fail to prevent international conflict and humanitarian crisis (see *What's Wrong with the United Nations and How to Fix It* of Weiss (2002) and *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda* of Barnett (2002).

By contrast, Fasulo (2009) and MacQueen (2010, 2011) focus on an explanation of the six organs' functions; how the General Assembly works; what kind of veto power the Security Council has; how secretaries-general can implement their powers guaranteed by the UN Charter; and how the UN is operated financially and politically (see *An Insider's Guide to the UN* of Fasulo (2009), *Humanitarian Intervention and the United Nations* of MacQueen (2010), and *The United Nations, Peace Operations and the Cold War* of MacQueen (2011). In the same vein, a vast number of books describe unique functions and structures of the six organs, but no special, in-depth description of the Department of Public Information has been found in a search of Internet databases, including EBSCOhost, Communication Abstracts, Academic Search Complete, and the online catalogs of Ohio University and the Library of Congress.

Some books about the UN take a chronological storytelling method. Meisler (2011) and Kennedy (2007) tell the story of the UN, including its promise and its problems for a general audience. They explore the UN's past and present, highlighting the UN's struggles and resolutions for international conflict with their detached view of the historian attempting objective analysis (see *The United Nations: A History, The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations* of Meisler

(2011), and *When the World Calls: The Inside Story of the Peace Corps and Its Fifty Years of Kennedy* (2007).

Several books use a memoir format. Bolton (2007) and Albright (2003) tell stories behind the scenes about how the UN was actually guided and instructed by the United States, and how the other four permanent Security Council members agreed or disagreed with them. Of course they analyze the UN systems through U.S. lenses, in which the UN, according to Bolton, was invalid and misdirected (see *Surrender Is Not an Option* of Bolton (2007), and *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* of Albright (2003). However, Annan (2012) defends his organization against critics such as Bolton in his memoir *A Life in War and Peace*, which he published after finishing his tenure as secretary-general. Dealing with remarkable international crises, such as terrorist attacks, genocides, and climate change, Annan discusses his efforts in maintaining international security and peace, emphasizing successes such as resolved international tensions under his leadership. Yet, he does not mention the UN's ineffectiveness at stopping the massive war in the Congo and the seemingly endless crimes of Somali pirates. It seems that memoirs by former U.S. ambassadors to the UN and former secretaries-general are unlikely to illustrate much about their own shortcomings while on duty – a failure no doubt shared by many memoir writers.

The Department of Public Information itself is the most vigorous publisher and author of books about the UN, including online editions. Nearly every year, the UN sells an updated version of basic information books targeting the general public. In *Basic Facts about the United Nations* (2011), the UN explains how it works and deals with major issues all around the world. Similar books are annually updated and sold: *United*

*Nations Today* (2011), *United Nations at a Glance* (2010), *The Security Council Working Methods Handbook* (2009), *Human Development Report* (2012), *Permanent Missions to the United Nations* (2011), and so on. These books enumerate facts about what the UN has done and what peoples it has protected in an attempt to get a positive response from the public, rather than objectively analyzing and evaluating the UN's work.

While books are published to either describe UN-involved international conflict resolutions or explain its basic structures and functions, journal articles about the UN typically take a much broader analysis of the UN's existence. These articles specialize in agencies of the UN such as the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Monetary Fund, International Labour Organization, World Health Organization, and Food Agriculture Organization, rather than the UN headquarters. Business, law, political science, and economics journals analyze the agencies' performances based on a cost-benefit analysis or ethics principles or humanitarian norms. Some highlight issues of the UN's reputation and image in the media, such as an observation in 1948 that "the U.N. was getting a bad press" (see "United Nations: Like Toast in a Toaster," *Time*, June 14, 1948; and continuing image problems in "From Bad to Worse at the United Nations," RealClearPolitics, 2010, and "The United Nations: The Tarnished Image," by Waldeheim, *Foreign Affairs*, 1984).

It is not a new concern that the general public and scholars connect the UN with an "ineffective" and "inefficient" image. Balci found in his 2011 study that many students at in the twelfth grade in the United States regard the UN as an institution that does not operate in line with its main objectives. Concerning this, "they passed the following remarks: unnecessary, only for show, nonfunctional, an organization that has

deviated from its aim and has lost its significance, a so-called organization . . . that does not have much function” (Balci, 2011, p. 439). Public relations specialists Lisa Marchese and Rachel Simmons argued in 2005 that “current perceptions of the UN seem to stray further away from ‘doing good’ and closer to out-dated, bureaucratic, and ineffective” (Marchese & Simmons, 2005, para. 4). And a poll conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation in 2005 showed that the general image of the UN, interpreted by the U.S. public, was of an organization “incapable of effectively resolving international affairs,” and one third of the respondents believed that its influence had declined since the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001 (Marche & Simmons, 2005, para. 5). Such negative perceptions of the UN in the twenty-first century tend to be rooted in a combination of the complex history of the UN from its inception and, more recently, to the UN’s seemingly powerless responses to the inside scandal of the oil-for-food program, genocides in Africa, and wars against terrorism at the international level under Annan’s leadership until the end of 2006.

Anemic operational potential, thanks in part to the Bush administration’s unwillingness to cooperate with the UN, has fueled the long-term “jack of all trade, master of none” image of the UN. For example, Indian scholars Murari Sharma and Ajit M. Barnerjee noted that the UN was “woefully wanting in transparency, hugely outdated in substance, disturbingly inefficient in performance and disappointingly ineffective in producing the anticipated results” (as cited in Miller, 2011, p. 813). They found that the organization looks like “a hybrid that has imitated the management style of the private sector and the substance – lengthy decision-making process, diffused accountability, slow service delivery and myriad bureaucratic procedures” (p. 814). Such cynical attitudes

toward the UN from the U.S. government, the international community, and the academic world would offer grounds for the media to view and characterize the UN in a negative light with a barrage of scornful reporting before, during, and after Annan's era.

Despite such massive numbers of books, journal articles, and periodical databases that describe and evaluate aspects of the UN, they do little to explore the communication workings and systems of the organization, especially from a communication perspective during the time of the Annan administration. Annan and the department exploited every means of communication to inform, persuade, educate, and influence both the general public and various target audiences.

#### Theoretical Bases

This study examines five communication theories primarily concerned with the communication strategies and objectives of Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the Department of Public Information. These theories play a pivotal role in explaining the communication process of the UN under Annan's leadership. This study expects that these selected theories move beyond describing a single event "by providing a means by which all such events can be understood" (Dainton & Zelley, 2011, p. 3). They illuminate an aspect of the UN communication so that this study can analyze the communication process and event outcomes clearly. The five theories are the elaboration likelihood model, integration propaganda, narrative paradigm, co-orientation, and press nationalism.

#### *Elaboration Likelihood Model*

The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) is a theory that Richard Petty and John Cacioppo introduced in 1986 with the assumption that people have neither the ability nor the motivation to evaluate every piece of information they encounter, but they tend to be

willing to hold reasonable attitudes. Since they can evaluate only a limited amount of information in their routine every day – while getting tremendous amounts of information through advertising, speeches, personal sales, books, and special events in the form of persuasive messages – message creators or persuaders are likely to carefully examine how persuasively and effectively their messages can be delivered to those whom the messages are supposed to appeal to in modern society.

Psychologists Petty and Cacioppo (1986) suggest the ELM as a cognitive model that views persuasion primarily as a mental process of motivation and reasoning to accept or reject persuasive messages; motivation refers to a person's inclination to think about the content of a message and reasoning refers to logical use for judgments. When the ELM was introduced, researchers' interest in persuasion was revitalized with its proposal for an elaboration continuum (Scudder, 2010). As the term "elaboration" means the conscious scrutiny people use in requiring their motivational ability to process messages, the elaboration continuum determines the extent to which messages are cognitively processed and evaluated by message receivers, in contrast to the rest of messages in which message receivers decide not to evaluate.

The motivational ability can function as a vehicle for a focused elaboration on certain types of messages that are personally relevant, for people are motivated to hold what they perceive as correct or most adaptive attitudes, according to the ELM. It is likely that personally relevant messages are taken more seriously by certain individuals with cognitive clarity, so such individuals distance themselves from the disruption of the elaboration process of understanding messages. In other words, elaboration of the process of understanding message requires concentration and attention.



The ELM explains that there are two ways by which people come to hold correct attitudes with regard to the impact of messages: central route and peripheral route. Depending on the purpose of a message, there are many different persuasion strategies to employ.

*The central route*, often referred to as an elaborated route, forms the high end of the continuum. The route requires an information-processing course that occurs as a result of a message receiver's careful and thoughtful consideration of the true merits of the information present (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Since this route is used to spread elaborated ideas and content embedded in the message, the receiver of the message is likely to carefully analyze the message and evaluate the purpose of the ideas. The message possesses a high level of content that interests the receiver's involvement, meaning that the receiver pays attention to the message by relating it to his or her previous knowledge.

The centrally routed message is persuasive and compelling to the receiver who feels obliged to dissect it from every angle. It encourages the receiver to be an active processor of the message's substance, which includes a wealth of information, evidence, and argument. It needs to be later evaluated as approving, disapproving, neutral, or some combination of these. Such processes generate new implications of the message, in which the receiver can ask what this message means for his or her life.

When a persuasive message is sent through the central route, the extent of attitude change depends on "the valence of the thoughts generated in response to the message," whether the attitude toward the message is generally positive or negative or to what extent the audience sees the message as valid and informative (Petty, R., Cacioppo, J.,

Strathman A., & Priester, J., 2005, p. 84). Such a response to the message is perceived as a cognitive act in an attempt to assess the benefit of “the position taken as following the central route to persuasion” (p. 84).

The key point of the central route is that elaborated messages can change attitudes, which are formed by an active and scrutinized process, in which the message receiver pays close attention to the argument presented in the message. The receiver with the cognitive recognition of the message examines the arguments based on his or her experience and knowledge by associating them with the expected benefits if acted upon.

The *peripheral route* forms the low end of the continuum. Through this route, messages are understood with less cognitive effort. As noted earlier, an average U.S. resident is exposed to thousands of pieces of information every day, and only few messages are elaborately assessed by a person who is motivated and skilled while the rest of the pieces of information would be dumped. As it is unreasonable to expect every message to be effective and to think every person is equipped with motivation and ability in terms of analyzing message arguments, message creators or persuaders generally prefer using the peripheral route over the central route for broader reach to the general public.

The peripheral route assumes that most messages create their impact through “the sneaky route,” bringing attitude changes without relevant message assessment (Scudder, 2010, p. 93). Rather than carefully analyzing the benefit of messages, a receiver through the peripheral route relies on not only the simple cues of source attractiveness and message length, but also emotional involvement (Petty, R., Cacioppo, J., Strathman A., & Priester, J., 2005). In this sense, although a receiver is unable to elaborate on a message,

he or she can be still persuaded by “factors that have nothing to do with the actual content of the message itself” (Moore, 2001, p. 2). Returning to the presidential election campaign example, the two candidates invested million dollars in 30-second TV commercials that highlighted their humanitarian image, patriotism, and strong leadership while downplaying the opponent’s strengths and family values. Even though TV viewers were bombarded with a barrage of political messages during the campaign period, many decided not to become active receivers of the centrally routed messages. They were less motivated to judge or examine the messages the candidates were sending. Such receivers who were not persuaded through the central route can be persuaded through the peripheral route, and celebrity endorsements for the candidates were used as a popular example of the route.

Scudder argues that the ELM revitalized persuasion research interests (2010). It has been one of the leading theories of persuasion associated with the focus on attitude change of message receivers, suggesting that persuaders need to rely on rational, factual arguments to send a message if receivers are motivated and capable of examining an elaborated message. On the other hand, persuaders can also strategize to produce emotionally based peripheral messages if receivers cannot or will not analyze an elaborated message.

### *Integration Propaganda*

Snow (2006) argues that the meaning of propaganda throughout U.S. history and through the social concurrence procedure has negatively been fixed and agreed upon among the general public. However, French scholar Jacques Ellul in his book

*Propaganda*, standing apart from the U.S. perception of propaganda, proposes a humanist perspective, analyzing its external and internal characteristics (1965).

Clearly, Ellul's view of propaganda and his approach to the study of propaganda differs from the U.S. view, as Ellul regards propaganda as a sociological phenomenon rather than as a tool for the traditional means and agencies of politically manipulative persuasion. Ellul does not make a baseless criticism of U.S. understanding of propaganda. After critically reviewing U.S. studies of propaganda and mass media from Lasswell to Riesman, he claims that the most powerful notion that made Americans – particularly scholars and elites – label propaganda as “an evil” was established by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis formed by U.S. social scientists and opinion leaders in 1937, which explained propaganda as “the expression of opinions or actions carried out deliberately by individuals or groups with a view to influencing the opinions or actions of other individuals or groups for predetermined ends and through psychological manipulations” (1965, pp. xi- xii). Such a psychologically manipulative image of propaganda has been perceived and absorbed in the U.S. general public.

Because propaganda is often the prepared image of evil, in which most U.S. scholars place their political and ethical prejudgments, there is little chance to analyze it from a diverse or different aspect, according to Ellul (1965). Thus he suggests, “We shall examine propaganda in both its past and present forms . . . [and] must examine not a test group, but a whole nation subjected to real and *effective* propaganda, in its broad sense (italics added)” (Ellul, 1965, pp. xii-xiii). It is important to note that although traditional analyses of propaganda focused on techniques required to make messages effective, they paid less attention to the social conditions and structures required to make messages

effective (Shanahan, 2001). This is why Ellul stresses the importance of studying propaganda at a socially broader and less individually conscious level.

Shanahan (2001) argues that social context of propaganda produces persuasive messages and promotes receptiveness to those messages; Ellul's idea that propaganda as an instrument is concerned with effectiveness is considered significant in the analysis of the technique development process. Hence, Ellul declines ethical judgments on propaganda while perceiving it as a whole social phenomenon, created by those who strive to utilize and spearhead the aspect of propaganda that "propaganda has become an inescapable necessity for everyone" (Ellul, 1965, p. xv). In other words, propaganda is necessary to modern public decision-making because "in practice it cannot be separated from information, education, or public relations" (Culber, 1983, p. 172). Culber argues that the social elite and leaders become even more susceptible to the allure of modern propaganda. The three reasons for such elites and leaders to grow more vulnerable to propaganda than the general public are: (1) they feel pressured to know a large amount of information generated by the mass media; (2) they are expected to have an opinion on every important social issue so easily succumb to opinions offered to them by propagandists; and (3) they consider themselves capable of judging for themselves (Ellul, 1967, p. vi).

Not only should propaganda be understood in the sociological phenomenon, but it also requires being understood in a context of technological society, Ellul points out (1965). "Propaganda is called upon to solve problems created by technology, to play on maladjustments, and to integrate the individual into a technological world" that facilitates all of modern media such as the press, radio, TV, movies, posters, and even meetings

(Ellul, 1967, pp. xvii - 7). He continues that propaganda creating technological good will as well as enthusiasm for the right social myths will solve human problems (1965). More importantly, propaganda is a potential good that can incorporate the entire technological society into “a completely integrated society” (Ellul, 1965, p. xvii).

Ellul categorizes various forms of propaganda, for example: political propaganda and sociological propaganda; vertical and horizontal propaganda; rational and irrational propaganda; and propaganda of agitation and propaganda of integration. Among them the last category is the most innovative distinction made by Ellul (1967).

Ellul explains that agitation propaganda, which is visible and widespread, is led by either a party or a demagogue to destroy the government or the established order; it seeks rebellion or wages war. For example, the French Revolution (1789-1799) was sparked by demagogues who were armed with new Enlightenment principles of equality and inalienable rights. They incited the general public to overthrow old ideas about hierarchy of monarchy and religious authority. Conversely, agitation propaganda can also be initiated by government to maintain the social system. In particular, a new government after overthrowing the former regime wants to pursue “a revolutionary course of action” (Ellul, 1967, p. 71). The Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin is an example for the government-led agitation propaganda. After installing a communist government in Russia, he pioneered the use of agitation propaganda to sustain power and conquer resistance of rebels and crush the Kulaks.

Demagogues in hopes of toppling the current system and leaders in the totalitarian system tend to be experts at creating sentiment formed by lies, emotions, delusions, and resentments when they implement agitation propaganda; such sentiment is likely to lead

the intended audience to demonstrate violent reactions. Because the sentiment is created on such deceiving components of human interactions, “the less educated and informed the people to whom propaganda of agitation is addressed, the easier it is to make such propaganda,” Ellul argues (1967, p. 74). In this sense, the proletariat can be a group of agitation propaganda target.

Propaganda of integration is introduced in contrast to propaganda of agitation. Unlike the totalitarians’ favor for agitation propaganda, integration propaganda, described as “a propaganda of conformity,” is preferred by developed and democratic countries, according to Ellul (1967, p. 75). Integration propaganda did not exist until the twentieth century, but the industrial revolution in Western society prompted the advent of a new sociological pattern of uniformity. An individual member of the society is expected to integrate and adapt himself to the socially constructed setting by sharing beliefs, values, cultural norms, and behavioral practice. He is also urged to participate in social doings such as voluntary work, voting, and obedience to the law. Ellul argues that integration propaganda aims at making the individual meet the social expectation and “reshape his thoughts and behavior in terms of the permanent social setting” (1967, p. 76). In this context, integration propaganda encourages the people in the society to adjust themselves to desired patterns of the normal framework of politics and economics.

Another aim of integration propaganda is unification and reinforcement. Ellul (1976) identifies the United States as “the most important example” of the use of integration propaganda, based on the fact that integration propaganda is subtle, complex, long term, and more planned than other types. Although he does not elaborate any specific example of the United States’ integration propaganda, suffice it to say that the “I

am an American” campaign is an example of the U.S. government-organized integration propaganda. Shortly after the attacks of September 11, the Ad Council launched the campaign to highlight U.S. ideals of the country’s racial diversity but strong integration as a whole: out of many, one. Featuring people of various ages, skin colors, and genders in the TV, online, and newspaper campaign, each speaker testifies, “I am an American.” The message was intended to strengthen the social integration of the same people with the same nationality against the terrorists’ identity. In this case national identity is used to form the collectivity of integration propaganda.

### *Narrative Paradigm*

Walter R. Fisher (1984) asks what the essence of human nature is. And Fisher, from a communication perspective, explains that stories in history, culture, and character are key to understanding that nature. As people in their communicative routines seek to interact with others through conversation about news articles, novels, plays, movies, TV shows, and other media, Fisher views every type of communication as a story in the narrative paradigm.

In response to such criticism, Fisher argues that his narrative paradigm is designed to correspond to “an existing set of ideas shared in whole or in part by scholars from diverse disciplines,” for those who are informed on narrativity (Fisher, 1985, p. 347). To argue the case for the academic legitimacy of the paradigm, Fisher (1985) claims that his narrative paradigm embraces fundamental sociological theories such as attribution theory (Heider, 1958), balance theory (Heider, 1946), constructivism (Delia, 1977), social convergence theory (Bormann, 1983), reinforcement theory (Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953), social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), and symbolic



interactionism (Mead, 1934). Furthermore, he defines narration as “words or deeds that have sequence and meaning” by people who live, create, or interpret; his definition of paradigm is a representation designed “to formalize the structure of a component of experience and to direct understanding and inquiry into the nature and functions of that experience” (Fisher, 1984, p. 2).

Whereas the narrative paradigm, like other sociological theories, is a product of description, explanation, and prediction at how people come to adopt stories that guide behavior, unlike them it takes the assessment of communicative values into consideration, according to Fisher (1984). Simply put, the narrative paradigm is the experience and value of human communication in symbolically created words. In particular, the value determines that not every story is a good one.

Fisher responds to some concerns about storytellers’ tendency toward manipulation and dramatization. In his 1984 monograph, *Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument*, Fisher cites Kenneth Burke, who writes, “The corrective of the scientific rationalization would seem necessarily to be a rationale of art – not, however, a performer’s art, not a specialist’s art for some to produce and many to observe, but an art in its widest aspects, an art of living” (Fisher, 1984, p. 1).

According to Fisher (1987), some stories are better at satisfying an audience in narrative rationality because of values that set the narrative paradigm’s logic of good reasons. There are five issues related to the logic of good reasons: the values embedded in the message; the relevance of those values to decisions made; the consequence of adhering to those values; the overlap with the worldview of the audience; and conformity

with what the audience members believe (Fisher, 1987, p. 109). The logic enables people to prefer accounts that embrace what they perceive as trustable and compassionate. One thing that needs to be emphasized with the narrative rationality is Fisher's presupposition about the public who are not "unreasonable" (Fisher, 1984). With it, application of narrative rationality to specific stories can detect values. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* is an example of a bad story, judged by the perspective of narrative rationality. Fisher states that *Mein Kampf* lacks "fidelity to the truths humanity shares in regard to reason, justice, veracity, and peaceful ways to resolve social-political differences" (Fisher, 1984, p. 16).

In the development process of narrative paradigm since the 1970s, Fisher, after the five assumptions of the rational world paradigm, calls for a new conceptual framework that serves as a foundation for the narrative paradigm. Five presuppositions (Fisher, 1987, pp. 62-69) are suggested as follows:

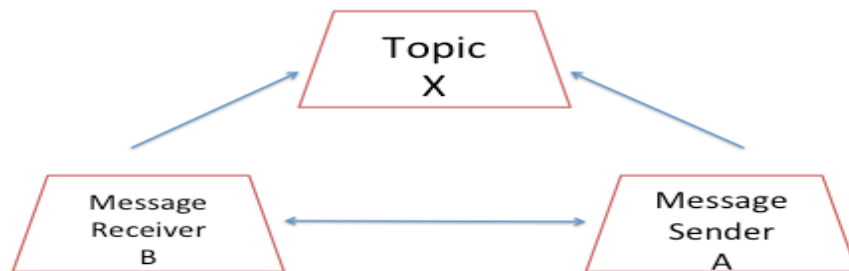
1. People are essentially storytellers.
2. We make decisions on the basis of good reason, which vary depending on the communication situation, media, and genre (philosophical, technical, rhetorical, or artistic).
3. History, biography, culture, and character determine what we consider good reasons.
4. Narrative rationality is determined by the coherence and fidelity of our stories.
5. The world is a set of stories from which we choose, and thus constantly re-create, our lives.

A cardinal shift from the rational world paradigm to the narrative paradigm occurs thanks to the view of human beings as essential storytellers.

### *Co-orientation Model*

The co-orientation model by McLeod and Chaffee (1973) assumes that a person's communication manner with an audience depends on his or her perception of attitudes held by the other. In other words, the communicator's manner is not only based on his or her personal construction of the perceptions from experience, but also based on the perception of the orientations that others hold around the communicator. And in response to others' perceptions, the communicator constructs his or her orientation toward them.

The perception of attitudes refers to the way individuals are oriented toward objects from their own surroundings in different organizations, since the term "attitude" stands for orientation (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The way organizations orient toward each other or they orient toward publics through communication is considered mutual orientation that has been called "co-orientation," according to Vercic, Vercic and Laco (2005, p. 3).



*Figure 3. Newcomb's Model*

The co-orientation model is an upgraded version of Newcomb's A-B-X model (1953). The main purpose of the model is to explain the role of communication in a social

relationship. Unlike other communication models using the elements of message and channel to illustrate the flow of the communication process, Newcomb focuses on the social purpose of communication in the model, which adds the element of topic between the message sender and the message receiver. The model sees communication as a means of sustaining human relationships (see the Shannon-Weaver Model and the Rileys' Model).

In the model illustrated above, the topic X refers to the message sender's and receiver's orientation toward a matter of communication. The matter of communication can be any kind of object such as a job, which the message sender offers and the message receiver hopes to get; an event, which the message sender wants to attend and the message receiver feels obliged to attend; and an attitude, which the message sender objects to and the message receiver agrees or disagrees. Any subject or object the sender and the receiver communicate about has the potential to be the "topic" as long as the two participants are involved in the social communicative act. Hence, the model suggests that they have a simultaneous co-orientation toward each other and toward the topic of communication (Newcomb, 1953). The co-orientation toward each other is associated with feelings or thoughts, whereas the orientation toward the topic is associated with positive or negative attitude.

Newcomb assumes that a balance exists between one's attitude and belief or between one's perspective and social environment. When the balance is broken, communication is used to restore it because Newcomb sees communication as a way in which "people orient to their environment and to each other" (Scribd PDF, 2008, p. 8). The elements of "people" and "environment" lead Newcomb to invent the A-B-X model

with the triangular illustration, which introduces the role of communication in society or social relationships, with the triangle offering the foundation of the co-orientation model. In the social relationship environment, the message sender (A) can refer to a group or even an organization. So can the message receiver (B). The communicative relationship between A and B is interdependent, meaning that communication cannot be occurring by oneself in the social setting. If A sends a message, B will respond. If A changes content or method of sending message, B will change. If A changes his or her attitude toward X (topic), B will change his or her attitude toward either A or X, or both. For example, if A is a father and B is a mother, and X is their child's misbehavior, it will be important that A and B communicate until they arrive at broadly similar attitudes toward X's misbehavior. Therefore, communication equilibrium exists in any social environment. In a broader setting, if A is a militarily strong democratic country and B is a rogue country threatening A's security, and X is B's nuclear development program, they are pressured to communicate until they agree on X, such as whether it has to be dismantled in exchange for financial aid. In this context, the more important a place X has in their social environment, the more urgent will be their drive to share an orientation toward it (p. 8). In this case, perhaps they hold meetings frequently and try to agree on X. Then they are highly likely to remain in equilibrium. On the other hand, if they always fail to agree on X, they are less likely to share an orientation toward it. As long as they decide to remain communicative over X, they still will be in equilibrium, despite the little chance of agreement.

Newcomb (1953) points out that the "people" and "environment" elements are central to the A-B-X model of communication, but X can function as the drive for

changing the way A and B communicate in equilibrium. If X changes, the need to communicate for A and B can increase or decrease. For example, when X is war waged by a neighboring country, the government (A) would initiate its communicative act with its people (B) to establish their co-orientation to the new X. A and B can communicate through the media to share messages in the social environment, which continuously changes. So A and B need an exchange of information that can be seen as a necessity to react and identify the information in the time of war. They simply interact for the same goal of endurance and survival at the same level of communication because of the X.

Newcomb identifies four basic components of relations of the model: (1) A's attitude toward X, (2) A's attraction to B, (3) B's attitude toward X, and (4) B's attraction to A. One common factor for the components is that A and B have "a natural propensity toward balance in their co-orientation toward X" (Newcomb, 1953, p. 9). If A has a negative attitude toward owning a personal firearm (X) and a positive attraction toward B, but B has a positive attitude toward X and toward A, then A will notice an imbalance that pushes A to revise his or her attitude toward X in order to regain balance. A can either change the negative attitude toward X or reduce the positive attraction toward B or change B's attitude toward X in favor of A's. Thus, because A has perceptions of what B is thinking and feeling, A's action depends on A's orientation as well as A's perception of B's orientation. In sum, each person's orientation (attitude toward X and attraction toward the other) and what each person perceives of the other's orientation can explain communication in a social environment.

Drawing on the A-B-X model, the co-orientation model is developed by McLoed and Chaffee (1973), who suggest that A and B hold equivalent and reciprocal positions in

the social communication system; the system can be observed “either from the perspective of the said A or the perspective of the side B, or both” (Vercic et al., 2005, p. 3). According to Vercic, the main contribution of the co-orientation model in comparison to the A-B-X model is the elaboration of the X. Opposing the A-B-X model’s argument that A and B are oriented toward a particular topic (X) in the social environment, the co-orientation model suggests that A and B are oriented toward the discrimination between topics (Xs). If there are two topics, “a large number of discriminations” are then possible, “one for each of the characteristics with which a comparison is possible” (Vercic et al., 2005, p. 3). In the same vein as seeking and processing the attributes of different Xs is the key element of the orientation: the attributes are equally important in the co-orientation.

The attributes are measured by the degree of agreement, accuracy, and congruency between two groups, rather than individuals such as A and B. Agreement refers to the similarity in a particular issue between the groups. It shares similar evaluations that result in understanding – “the degree of similarity in definitions given” by the groups (Vercic, D., Tkalac Vercic, A. & Laco, K, 2005, p. 5). Vercic et al. (2005) recommend that the understanding difference between the groups be calculated to measure the gap between the similar evaluations of the two groups. The understanding, of course, becomes greater when the difference is shorter. Accuracy is the degree to which one group can predict the responses of the other group. If the prediction of one group matches the real attitudes of the other, accuracy represents a positive construction of attitudes toward each group. And congruency refers to the degree with which one group’s beliefs and attitudes correspond to “the responses they predict for the other” (Connelly &

Knuth, 2002, p. 934). It is also regarded as perceived agreement based on the evaluation and strategies of relations with the other group.

The co-orientation model has inspired diverse research. According to Connelly and Knuth (2002, p. 935), Purnine and Carey (1999) characterized co-orientation research as “underused,” the co-orientation model has been applied in other topic areas such as public policy (e.g., Hesse 1976; Neuwirth 2000), interpersonal communication (e.g., Fields and Schuman 1976; Purnine and Carey 1999; Steeves 1984), and organizational dynamics (e.g., Papa & Pood 1988). It is worth noting that while the A-B-X paradigm focuses on explaining interpersonal communication in the social environment, the co-orientation model expands to include group communication in the same environment. If the co-orientation model is applied to a case of two interest groups, a possible scenario of communication strategy between the groups can be the following (Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1999; Vercic et. al., 2005, p. 2): Suppose that the group A represents the United Nations complaining about the UN press corps’ poor job of covering UN activities. The Group B represents the UN press corps unsatisfied with the UN’s ability of producing newsworthy events. They experience these three steps.

Step 1: Group A has its own definition of basic problems in its mutual relations with group B. Both A and B do not talk about the same thing when communicating about the same topic (the lack of media coverage of the UN). They are in fact talking about different topics (poor job vs. poor event).

Step 2: A’s perception of the attitudes of B does not match the actual attitude of B. Decisions on a course of action that involves the public are based on incorrect assessments of public opinion.



Step 3: Members of either or both sides have incorrect perceptions of the other side's position when it comes to issues of mutual interest. Reactions of the public are based on erroneous assessment of the policy and values of the other side.

In this scenario, group A and group B have to find a way to share the same topic to reach an agreement in Newcomb's equilibrium. Both groups negotiate over what the other side thinks about the topic related to public opinion. Furthermore, they have their own favorite evaluation of an attitude toward the topic while evaluating what each side thinks the other thinks. Departing from each group's determined perception and attitude toward the topic and the knowledge of the difference between them, they initiate communication to understand the difference and try to shorten the gap. After going through the steps of understanding each group's perception and attitude toward the topic, they begin to believe that the idea or evaluation of the other group is congruent. More communication helps them evaluate the real difference of the groups, and they agree to find both groups' approximation to match reality. Lastly in the social environment of communication equilibrium, they agree to cooperate to achieve their communication goals such as an increase in public opinion about the topic. Hence, the co-orientation model underscores that the increase of accuracy and agreement represents the key objectives of communication.

The A-B-X model of interpersonal communication in the social environment offers the co-orientation model a theoretical framework to be expanded to the analysis of differences and agreements in communication between groups. When two groups have attitudes toward the difference between Xs, they eventually find the equilibrium of communication after going through the processes of congruency, accuracy,

understanding, and agreement in similar value orientations. In sum, two groups accept adaption to the social environment if the Xs represent their common interest.

### *Press Nationalism*

With respect to the effects of government foreign policy on media, many studies suggest that media coverage of a certain country of “mine” toward a foreign country of “others” favors “my” country’s foreign policy. In other words, national interest is the fundamental impetus for directing media coverage and tone, often regarded as bias. Such bias embedded in media coverage is widely called press nationalism although it is uncertain who coined the term and when it began to be accepted among media study scholars. However, it is important to note that since nationalism refers to a country’s superior political ideology that is spontaneously used to protect a homeland from other countries’ intentional cruelty, press nationalism advocating the national identification of culture and societal order offers a common, excusable sense for media employees to be susceptible to national interest that manufactured and guided by government. Thus press nationalism is associated with foreign policy reporters’ congruent surrender to the point of view in official speeches and answers given press conferences that address the national interest (Cohen, 1963).

Herman and Chomsky (1988) point out that the U.S. media were likely to cover foreign events or international conflicts through processes that can slant foreign news according to U.S. foreign policy. These processes are: (1) selecting and highlighting media sources providing easier access to journalists; (2) reducing investigative expense by using credible sources from government and corporations; (3) avoiding potential criticisms of bias and the threat of libel suits; (4) in return, allowing routine news sources

to have privileged access to influencing the media coverage that can manipulate viewpoints of the media on a specific agenda and framework constructed through the distribution of the sources' intended opinion and information (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, pp. 19-23).

Drawing on such studies on press nationalism, it is worth noting that the ways that media report international events tend to succumb to national interest. More importantly, the term “press nationalism” may be defined as an unwritten compliance of the press to the government's foreign policy in which a reciprocal relationship between the government and the press is presented in an unwritten concurrence.

The reciprocal relationship implies mutually agreeable cooperation in terms of source selection. Studies of press nationalism investigate how press coverage of a country, overwhelmingly the United States, tends to comply with changes in the country's foreign policy. In order for the studies to measure the tendency, examining sources used for news articles seems to be a promising means of explaining government interest and influence on press coverage. Sigal (1973) summarizes the importance of news source selection: “For the reporter, in short, most news is not what has happened, but what someone says has happened” (p. 69). Sigal's remark epitomizes that the use of official sources mostly from government and social elite is likely to influence media coverage. For example, the tone of U.S. media coverage on a certain international event, regardless of whether it corresponds to U.S. interests, is to be determined by the government's foreign policy information, disseminated by officials the press heavily depends on as news sources. For reporters, relying on official sources – rather than making voluntary efforts to gain information from a wide variety of research strategies –

is more effective and safer in the competitive press environment. Succumbing to the routine of government officials can be understood as a customary practice among journalists, as Bennett pointed out that journalists “tend to ‘index’ their coverage to reflect the range of views that exists within the government” (Bennet, 1990, p. 124). “Indexing” is grounded in whom the journalists perceive as having decision-making power on the political process, and government high-ranking officials reflect the views of U.S. foreign policy. Copying and reporting whatever the powerful officials say about foreign policy with few questions asked is categorized as press nationalism (Bennett, 1990).

In a similar sense, Gans (1979) argues that U.S. media were reflective of U.S. foreign policy and government interest in relation to news coverage, meaning that the press and nationalism built close ties over distinctive national issues. Hence, there is little doubt that journalists prefer to use sources armed with enough information, reliability, suitability, and authority. Government officials not only fall into the category of the most suitable candidates for news sources, but also are capable of defining the parameters of media coverage, especially regarding international affairs.

## CHAPTER 3: METHOD

This study employs textual analysis, referring to a text as “any written or recorded message” (Dainton & Zelly, 2011, p. 21). This research method helps uncover the content, nature, or structure of messages that Annan and the department strived to send, in addition to the evaluation of the messages with the focus on effectiveness. The textual analysis will guide this study to explore the strategies used to communicate the UN’s role and activities to the general public and target audiences. Of three distinct forms of textual analyses – content analysis, interaction analysis, and rhetorical criticism – this study relies on the last form. Rhetorical criticism is “a systematic method for describing, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating the persuasive force of messages” (p. 21). Dainton and Zelly (2011) explain that this form also has three types: genre criticism (evaluating particular types of messages, such as political speeches or corporate image restoration practices), historical criticism (how history shapes messages), and feminist criticism (how beliefs about gender are produced).

This study uses genre criticism to evaluate the UN’s particular messages of image restoration practices. Since genre criticism is designed to evaluate purposely created messages by a personal speech and an organizational practice according to symbolic artifacts, communication strategies and practices of Annan’s and the department’s can be analyzed and evaluated through assessment of effectiveness and/or contribution to the UN. More particularly, this study can apply five communication theories to the analysis and evaluation of communication strategies of symbolic artifacts that Annan and the department did mean to disseminate. As discussed later, the 2004 Global Compact was an exemplary event that can be evaluated by genre criticism because Annan gave a dozen

speeches aimed at persuading global business leaders to cooperate with the UN's humanitarian principles in increasing human rights and addressing poverty. Through the speeches, Annan sent persuasive messages encouraging the business leaders to feel obliged to participate in the UN-organized global business practice principles (see Chapter 4). In doing so, Annan hoped to expand the UN's positive influence to the private sector. The evaluation of success or failure of Annan's speech influence will be evaluated by media's and audience's responses. For example, if U.S media and business leaders applauded Annan's achievement in terms of improving the image of the UN with the 2004 Global Compact, his efforts to maximize the effectiveness of strategic communications with the focus on message crafts and dissemination through his speeches could be considered successful. In addition, the success would lead the UN to building a better image as a leading global organization in the era of globalization. Thus, rhetorical or genre criticism is an optimal method to describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate the persuasive force of messages.

This research method, however, does not produce numeric results or scientific statistical results; it rather is able to explain the ways individuals may make sense of texts in a strategic, cultural setting. To complement the weakness of the textual method, this study draws on the concept of strategic communication theoretical grounding to close the gap between theory and the way individuals may make sense of the UN. The theory grounding is expected to analyze the outcomes of the UN's strategic communication planning and implementation through qualitative scrutiny in the pattern of categorization, comparison, and examination.

## Case Study Approach

UN case studies in the fixed time period are examined with the application of selected theories. Although the use of a case study presents certain limitations such as generalizability and representativeness, much potentially can be learned from case studies. Problems or programs can be examined in a case study to “bring about understanding” that can improve practice in the fields of study such as communication, education, social work, and so on (The Stanford Center for Teaching and Learning, 2013, para. 2); more importantly, case studies have proven useful to evaluate particular programs of organizations and inform policies of governments by offering “a means of investigating complex social units” to produce a rich and holistic account of phenomena (para. 2).

This study features four cases that took place during Annan’s era, offering insights and illuminations into the UN’s strategic communication activities in narrative description. These cases may be of interest of such as when a communication scholar studies the UN with the aim of improving its communication functioning. According to Fidel (1984), case studies – as a research method – are appropriate to investigate phenomena when:

- a large variety of factors and relationships are included
- no basic laws exist to determine which factors and relations are important
- the factors and relationships can be directly observed (Fidel, 1984, p. 273).

Another strength of case studies is to provide an annotated description of the procedures and analyses applied (Fidel, 1984). During the procedures, case studies can reveal special problems of an organization and possible solutions to the problems. For example, a

celebrity ambassador program of the UN that is presented as one of the cases in this study will shed light on the UN's functional or dysfunctional management from a communication perspective. The evaluation for the celebrity program will be derived from U.S. media's and UN's internal responses.

More importantly, case studies help communication researchers to deal with unexpected findings and consider multiple interrelations of particular communicative phenomena they assume (Becker, 1970). In other words, case studies save them from making false assumptions by providing "some facts to guide those assumptions," which force researchers to check on the facts (Becker, 1970, p. 76). This study uses a UN project of storytelling, based on the assumption that a form of storytelling would generate more media publicity than that of press releases or briefings. Whether the storytelling form is successful will be determined by U.S. media's response.

As noted above, generalization from several cases is not reliable "because one cannot determine which regularities are general and which are unique" (Fidel, 1984, p. 275). However, the method of controlled comparison can help researchers avoid the concern. Diesing (1971) points out that "comparison is not postponed until the individual case study is completed, but occurs continuously during study and is an essential part of it" (p. 183). The 2005 UN Global Summit presented by this study is analyzed by the comparison method describing the conflict between Annan versus John Bolton on behalf of George W. Bush. If the conflict influenced any means of operating strategic communications of the UN, the outcomes would be evaluated by responses of the U.S. media and international media if necessary, since the summit was an international event. In sum, this study employing the four cases relevant to strategic communication plans



and practice of the UN under Annan's leadership aims to analyze and evaluate patterns of communicative behavior of the largest international organization. This study also hopes to evaluate success or failure of the cases by heavily depending on U.S. public's, U.S. government's, and U.S. media's responses that will be examined with a certain amount of data.

### Data Collection

Internal documents of the UN, such as the annual secretary-general reports for the Security Council members and the General Assembly, the department's annual and unplanned reports to the secretary-general, and the Information Committee's reports during the period, were gathered through the UN's public online data search system. On the other hand, special documents which have been neither digitized nor posted on the online system – such as outside task force reports, special conference and seminar relevant to the department's strategic communication activities – were received through the author's personal connection with a UN official.

UN press releases and news briefings by the department and the secretary-general's office were collected through UN data online searches. The researcher collected documents using the UN's specialized documents codes, such as A/66/261 (UN Report of the Secretary-General) and A/RES/60/109 (UN Report Questions relating to Information) at the United Nations Bibliographic Information System ([www.unbisnet.un.org](http://www.unbisnet.un.org)) and the United Nations Official Documents System ([www.documents.un.org](http://www.documents.un.org)).

Interviews with a *New York Times* UN bureau chief, spokesman for the secretary-general, CBS bureau chief, and department director were collected from the website of the UN Oral History Project (see <http://www.unmultimedia.org/oralhistory/>). Numerous

data from major media outlets and policy institutes were gathered from U.S. newspapers, magazines, and TV scripts with the search keywords of “Kofi Annan,” “Department of Public Information,” “UN image,” “UN programs,” “UN policies,” “UN communication,” and so on. Google.com and LexisNexis were mainly used to find news articles from January 1, 1997 through January 1, 2007.

### Case Studies

Four events organized and executed by Annan and the department are presented in this study. They are the 2005 UN World Summit, the 2004 UN Global Compact Leaders Summit, the UN Good Ambassador/Messenger of Peace Program, and the Ten Stories Project.

The 2005 World Summit was the largest event put on by the UN as it invited more than 150 presidents, prime ministers, and kings to the UN headquarters along with more than 3,000 journalists from around the world. Annan intended to use the event for his ambitious promulgation of an integrated world under UN leadership. But his ambition was hampered by the George W. Bush administration, which was represented by then-U.S. ambassador to the UN John Bolton. The author evaluated success/failure of the world summit by checking U.S. media usage. With data of media reporting from the United States and the UN’s reports, this study aims to show how effective/ineffective the summit was in terms of fulfilling Annan’s hope regarding his strategic message penetration to the target audience.

The 2004 UN Global Compact Leaders Summit was scripted, organized, and carried out by Annan with assistance of the department. It took Annan five years to plan and host the event, which brought hundreds of global business leaders to the UN

headquarters. Annan persuaded them to support the UN by practicing excellent business ethics; they responded to him by adopting ten principles of global business practices at the summit. The author evaluated the outcomes of the global compact by using data from U.S. media and the UN's internal reports. This study shows that Annan was a persuasive communicator in terms of enforcing his messages to encourage global corporations to enhance their ethical business operations.

The Goodwill Ambassador/Messenger of Peace Program focused on celebrity endorsements. The Goodwill Ambassador Program was initiated in 1964, whereas Annan created his own Messenger of Peace Program in 1997. He appointed nine celebrity messenger-ambassadors during his term. Michael Douglas, Muhammad Ali, and Luciano Pavarotti served as popular messengers on behalf of the UN and received some media attention for their efforts. Angelina Jolie and Susan Sarandon also were popular goodwill ambassadors. The author evaluated success/failure of the world summit by checking usage by U.S. media. Drawing on data from U.S. media usage, this study shows how effective/ineffective the celebrity program was when it comes to dissemination of the UN messages to the general public.

The Ten Stories Project was created by the department to increase the amount of media coverage for marginalized people and places. In 2004, the department publicized ten humanitarian stories, urging the media to report the stories in detail. Those stories were about people who suffered from extreme poverty, human rights violations, labor exploitation, war crimes, and lack of natural resources. The annual project lasted until 2007 and produced forty story lines aimed at triggering the interest of the media. The author evaluated success/failure of the stories project by checking U.S. usage. Focusing

on the analysis based on usage by U.S. media, this study shows how U.S. media view the project as valuable/invaluable sources for their coverage.

This study explains these cases to highlight that Annan and the department made an interesting, strategic approach to the dissemination of UN-oriented information and messages in hopes of informing and persuading the general and target audiences. All of the events – associated with thoroughly customized messages – for media exposure were strategically planned and vigorously executed on the basis of communication functions. Such events can be explained and further evaluated by theoretical analysis, for Annan and the department strived to weave the events into the broader fabric of communication strategies. This study focuses mostly on the UN communication strategies from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, trying to explain and to understand the development of UN communication activities along with the dramatic change of communication environment. Communication theories shed light on the evaluation and the understanding of communication plans and implementations by Annan and the department.

## CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDIES

This chapter both describes and interprets the UN cases, including UN messages embedded in four events during Secretary-General Kofi Annan's tenure at the UN – the UN Goodwill Ambassador/Messenger of Peace Program (1997 - present), the 2004 UN Global Compact Leaders Summit, the Ten Stories Project (2004 - 2006), the 2005 UN World Summit. These big, ambitious programs were historic according to Annan's claims. All of the events were planned and held to restore the image of the UN with strategic message distribution processes. The events first will be described, one by one, with brief reference to the relevant communication theories; the chapter then will end with a broader synthesis and discussion of how the relevant theories help explain the events' successes and failures.

### The UN Goodwill Ambassador/Messenger of Peace Program

The UN is not an organization seeking profits. It sparsely uses commercial advertising to promote its interest, meaning that it commercially cannot afford to hire celebrities to endorse the interest. But it has the capacity of using celebrity volunteers to promote its image and activities in exchange for not money but honor, although a symbolic payment of \$1 per year is granted. In 1954, one of the UN agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), created a celebrity endorsement program called "Goodwill Ambassadors." Since then 15 other agencies – such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Program (WFP), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – operated such celebrity endorsement programs with their own titles (UN Joint Inspection Unit report,

2006) – for example, the title of Honorary Ambassadors for UNDP and UNESCO, and the title of Ambassadors against Hunger (WFP).

As the elaboration likelihood model explains, peripherally routed messages are expected to change attitudes of message receivers without issue-relevant information processes. Even if the receivers were never motivated or able to evaluate arguments embedded in messages, they at least could not help but notice the existence of the messages. Because there is little motivation or little ability to elaborately evaluate the messages, they tend to turn to source credibility, which is most important for them. Therefore, message creators and persuaders using the peripheral route of message dissemination prefer to find an easy way of convincing the unmotivated receivers that the messages promote their interest. And persuaders, especially advertising persons, use celebrity endorsements as an effective and convincing means of arguments through the peripheral route.

#### *Program Launch, 1997*

As a persuader, Annan wanted to take advantage of such celebrity programs for the UN as a whole, not as an individual agency. In 1997 he launched the “Messengers of Peace Programme” to represent the UN by celebrity endorsements. The messengers’ job was to inform the general public of activities and good functions of the UN. Annan’s peripherally routed messages for the UN were conveyed by such celebrity messengers to people around the world. However, Annan did not replace the Goodwill Ambassadors program with his messenger program. Rather he decided to use the former as a collective honorary term representing all UN agencies affiliated with celebrities while utilizing his own program of the celebrity program independently. Simply put, he endorsed the

appointment of goodwill ambassadors by UN agencies, while Messengers of Peace were picked by the secretary-general himself.

Since the launching of the Messengers of Peace program, Annan appointed Enrico Macias the first messenger of peace in 1997. Macias was an Algerian French singer and composer who supported many NGOs and humanitarian grass-roots movements. The main reason for him to become the first messenger was that not only did his music represent his commitment to promoting human rights, peace, and tolerance, but also his experience as a former refugee symbolized the UN's devotion to peace (UN Messenger of Peace, 2000). In the next year, Annan appointed three more familiar figures for the general public around the world to become UN messengers. Oscar-winning actor Michael Douglas, known for his commitment to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, accepted the honorary position to help the UN promote "an innovative UN programme of weapons recovery in Albania" in exchange for development ("United Nations," 1999, para. 4). On behalf of the UN, Douglas sent messages of the risk of small arms possession to Albanians at the community level and asked them to return the arms while visiting the country in October 1999. He addressed a gathering of 500 youth leaders and officials at the International Cultural Centre in Albania, saying, "[I am here to] draw the attention of the international community to the deep commitment of the Albanian people to improving internal security and their deep need for economic and social development" ("United Nations," 1999, para. 5). He added that he would use his voice as a "Messenger of Peace to get the message across" (para. 5). His messages calling for the arms return for UN development aid resulted in 6,700 small arms and 100 tons of ammunition being surrendered to the UN weapons recovery program.

“The Greatest” boxer Muhammad Ali became another messenger of 1999. He promoted a wide range of the UN’s work focusing on “healing” such as supporting relief and development initiatives and hand-delivering food and medical supplies to hospitals, street children, and orphanages in Africa and Asia (UN Messenger of Peace, 2000). In the same year, Italian author Anna Cataldi, who wrote “Letters from Sarajevo,” was designated as another messenger. Cataldi recorded the impact of war on Bosnia’s children and initiated a project aimed at creating a new version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for children. She promoted human rights by traveling to “a number of conflict zones” where the UN was engaged (UN Messenger of Peace, 2000, Anna Cataldi section, para. 1).

Watching his four messengers promoting the UN’s humanitarian values and activities, Annan planned to honor all celebrities engaging in the UN’s work. He hosted the first meeting of Messengers of Peace and Goodwill Ambassadors in October 2000 at the UN headquarters. It was “a big media event attended by 48 personalities” to discuss how to raise public awareness to support UN goals and activities (UN Joint Inspection Unit Report, 2006, p. 12). The Reuters news agency noted the first major celebrities’ gathering at the UN since actor and comedian Danny Kaye was appointed to be the first goodwill ambassador for UNICEF in 1954 (“Stars Confront,” 2000). At the meeting, Annan directly pointed out that the UN needed celebrities because they had the power to spread messages of the UN’s concerns such as human rights, poverty eradication, and disarmament. He said they could help people to recognize how the UN had “changed people’s lives, strengthened peace and ensured human rights” while raising “funds, spirits and awareness” (“Messengers of Peace,” 2000, para. 3).



Annan continued highlighting the importance of using their fame, image, and capacity as a messenger. “Whenever you make an appearance in the service of a cause ... [people who] feel forgotten know they have you as an ally and they have you in their corner,” Annan said (“Messengers of Peace,” 2000, para. 5). He also emphasized the effectiveness of fame-based messages: “Whenever you put your name to a message, you raise awareness far and wide . . . in an age when the media” began to lessen the coverage of international news (para. 6). He asked them to explain what the UN does and why it is important to people, and what the UN can implement. He concluded the meeting by reminding the forty celebrities from thirty countries that they had the power to “connect with people practically anywhere on Earth,” through messages about humanitarianism, which is the UN’s reason to exist (“Secretary-General,” 2000, para. 5). Former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell agreed with Annan. She said that if an ambassador delivered a message about safe sex or a woman’s right to reproductive health, and he or she reached two people, “that’s brilliant” (para. 6).

At the meeting the distinguished guests were Mia Farrow, Susan Sarandon, and Danny Glover from the United States, Mikko Kuustonen (singer from Finland), Feryal Ali Gauhar (actress from Pakistan), Catarina Furtado (actress from Portugal), and Sir Peter Ustinov (actor from United Kingdom). The four Messengers of Peace also attended.

The second meeting for UN peace messengers and goodwill ambassadors was held in June 2002 at the same place. Between the first and second meeting period, Annan appointed six more messengers: tennis player Vijay Amritraj, basketball player Magic Johnson, jazz musician Wynton Marsalis, opera singer Luciano Pavarotti, Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Weisel, and environmentalist Jane Goodall (“Jane Goodall,” 2002).

Annan praised the new six messengers: Amritraj's messages against the spread of AIDS and about the promotion of charitable events were respected; Marsalis's messages to help underprivileged young musicians were endorsed; Pavarotti's messages about alleviating child sufferings in war-torn countries were held in high regard; Wiesel's messages aimed at eradicating atrocities were highly regarded because of his Holocaust survivor experience; Johnson's messages for AIDS prevention were popularly recognized; and Goodall's messages in instituting innovative conservation for animals, particularly endangered apes, were also recognized. Annan said that the new messengers vigorously raised their compassionate voices to a variety of the UN causes (UN Messenger of Peace, 2006).

A week before the celebrity gathering, the department distributed information about the second meeting, noting that the event would help the celebrities feel "more connected, more informed, more comfortable with UN issues, and more prepared to speak on many occasions about the United Nations" ("Celebrity Advocates," 2002, para. 2). Annan's determination to cooperate with celebrities to diffuse messages of the UN's goodwill and irreplaceable performance to the world was about to voice hope that the less-motivated public, knowing little about the UN, would have a chance to discern positive functions of the UN in helping people in need. Thus, the upcoming event was planned to be longer and more organized than the first one.

The department announced that 2002 UN Messengers of Peace and Goodwill Ambassadors – "from the worlds of art, music, film, sports, literature and public affairs who help raise awareness of key United Nations issues and activities" – were scheduled to meet for the second time at United Nations Headquarters on June 18 and 19, 2002

(“Forty-Four,” 2002, para. 3). The release stated that media photo opportunities would be arranged with forty-four celebrities who promised to attend the meeting.

Thanks to the two-day schedule and the department’s promotion, the second meeting attracted an army of media, including the BBC, Xinhua, Agence France-Presse, and major U.S. news outlets including CNN, the Associated Press, and United Press International. Annan welcomed the pool of celebrities. He said, “When I walked into this room, I wasn’t sure I was in the right place. I wondered whether it was a combination of the Oscars, the Olympics, the Grammys or the Pulitzers” (“Secretary-General,” 2002, para. 4). Also, he reminded the celebrities that they were at the meeting because they could “capture the attention and imagination” of people in every corner of the world (para. 5). Their messages strongly associated with the UN goals were and would be truly universal to various audiences because these messages would reflect their “true star quality – not the glitter of celebrity on the outside, but the character of the human being inside – a human being who cares . . . for others,” said Annan (para. 7).

A significant achievement of the meeting was that the celebrities helped raise awareness of key UN issues and activities, according to the United Press International (“Annan Urges,” 2002). Among those celebrities was Angelina Jolie, widely covered in the media as goodwill ambassador for the UN high commission for refugees. Interviewed by CNN, Jolie said, “I became involved because I became aware of it. One-third of the world has no electricity, that there’s so much poverty. How could you do nothing?” (Interview with,” 2002). Deutsche Presse reported her saying during her presentation, “I think if you can go out once, it will change completely your life” (“UN Honours,” 2002). And the Associated Press reported that Jolie said the Goodwill Ambassador Program

taught her “to value family more, to value life more, to value other people more” (“Celebrities Discuss,” 2002). More than forty celebrities were at the event, but some like Jolie had a better power to spread messages. Four days after the meeting, Jolie had an interview with CNN. Her interview turned out to be a great message for the UN and Annan’s strategies to link UN activities and issues with famous figures. “I try to do everything I can to bring awareness to the different areas,” Jolie said. “I’ve always believed in the UN” (“Prominent Personalities,” 2002).

### *Program Weakness and Revisions*

The second meeting, however, turned out to be the last. There was no further meeting because UN agencies began overusing the ambassador appointment system. A total of 16 United Nations system organizations (UNESCO, WHO, FAO etc.) were operating the goodwill ambassador program with about 400 celebrity ambassadors. Many people inside the UN were concerned about the effectiveness of the program, given such dilution of star power. For example, in 2003 there was a warning issued from the UN communication group. It argued that “Ambassadors without regard to their quality, both in terms of their stature and commitment, could be counterproductive” (UN Committee on Information report, 2003, p. 4). With that concern, Annan in 2003 issued “Guidelines for the Designation of Messengers of Peace and Goodwill Ambassadors” to restrict UN agencies’ appointments.

Ensuring “consistency and the maintenance of a high standard in the selection, designation and involvement of prominent individuals in the work of the United Nations,” the guidelines provided a definition and specified their role, conditions of service and termination (UN Guidelines for the Designation of Messengers of Peace and

Goodwill Ambassadors, 2003, p. 1). The guidelines asked the agencies not to designate any ambassador until the undersecretary-general for Communications and Public Information would “endorse the appointment on behalf of the Secretary-General, at which point a commitment and public announcement can be made” (p. 2). More specifically, the agencies were asked to keep the number of ambassadors to a minimum for the value of rarity and exceptionality.

Not all celebrities can be appointed. According to the guidelines, celebrities who can “normally be influential beyond their national borders,” thus having the ability to promote the values of the United Nations internationally, were eligible to become goodwill ambassadors (UN Guidelines for the Designation of Messengers of Peace and Goodwill Ambassadors, 2003, p. 1). If he or she had global fame, the agencies would have to ensure that the ambassador candidate should be willing to engage in public advocacy and public awareness activities. The candidate was also expected to participate in UN events and to visit UN operations in the field with a minimum of three activities or event every year to “develop an area of special focus, which would strengthen their advocacy role” (p. 3).

However, “The competition among organizations to capture new celebrities results in new designations year after year, ” according to the special report of the UN Joint Inspection Unit (2006, p. 3). In 2006, Annan’s last year in the UN, there were more than 400 ambassadors; most of them were inactive and unenthusiastic about UN work. The special report pointed out that the origin of the many ambassadors was rooted in the designation system that automatically renewed the ambassadorship indefinitely without

evaluation of the satisfactory fulfillment of duties, despite the tradition of a term of two years.

In order for the UN to enhance the effectiveness of Goodwill Ambassadors Programmes, the special report suggested rationalizing their numbers and stopping the practice of systematically adding new nominations each year (UN Joint Inspection Unit Report, 2006, p. 4). Not every celebrity was like Jolie, to be sure. The peripheral route suggests that celebrity endorsements are a popular means of distributing messages, but such endorsements tend to be short-lived. As the UN celebrity ambassadors and messengers demonstrated that they were only effective at informing the target audience of UN messages in a limited place and time, new celebrity members of the UN were added for a special occasion in a particular time period. For example, Hollywood A-list actor George Clooney eclipsed Jolie in terms of UN media publicity in 2007 with his Darfur activity. The selection of Clooney and others shows that the peripherally routed messages need continuous, diverse changes in message production and use of message distributors.

#### The 2004 UN Global Compact Leaders Summit

Secretaries-general of the UN are the UN press corps' favorite spokesmen. Their office is a bully pulpit. No single journalist is likely to miss the opportunity of using him as a UN source. Crossette argues that the biggest issue maker of the UN could be the secretary-general (UN Oral History Interview with Barbara Crossette, 2005). An issue maker can also be an effective persuader if he is willing both to capitalize on the use of the media and to constantly disseminate his strategic messages for his personal interest or his organization's interest in the process of crafting persuasive messages.

Six months after he took office as secretary-general, Kofi Annan launched “the most extensive and far-reaching reforms in the fifty-two year history” of the UN, which included a reorientation program for the Department of Public Information (UN Report of the Secretary-General, 1997, p. 2). The report described how Annan instructed the department to build a strategy to enhance the public’s knowledge of the UN’s worldwide presence and global agenda, in addition to the department’s continual effort to help the public recognize the UN as “an indispensable global institution” (p. 83). If the strategy were implemented well, Annan expected that governments would treat the UN as a principal world forum discussing and resolving international conflict. Annan, in assistance with the department, prioritized putting himself and the UN in touch with people and governments around the world, taking advantage of a host of technological communication innovations.

Annan – while the department was being reoriented to concentrate its energy on the strategy of raising awareness of the UN role – decided to locate himself in the center of the UN’s most controversial project throughout its history. The project was the United Nations Global Compact. While his UN reform plans were laid out, he wanted to eliminate the limited role of the UN as an international and non-profit organization. In doing so, he hoped to expand the UN role and influence beyond its limitations in order to become a powerful, indispensable organization in terms of representing a wide range of people all around the world.

#### *Davos Economic Forum*

His ambitious plan was exemplified in the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. On January 31, 1999, Annan in the forum gave one speech before a group of

world business leaders. “On my previous visits, I told you of my hopes for a creative partnership between the United Nations and the private sector,” said Annan (“Secretary-General,” 1999, para. 2). The business leaders were attracted to Annan’s compelling argument underscoring their benefit. Annan said, “I made the point that every work of the United Nations helps to expand opportunities for business around the world” (para. 3).

Nobody would have ever thought about the odd concept of the UN and private companies working together for the same vision of a better world, since the UN was conventionally perceived and actually established as an international organization associated with non-governmental organizations and sovereign governments. Surprisingly, Annan’s message to the business leaders appeared to be straightforward, urging them to analyze the argument presented by Annan. The process of Annan’s message and the reactions of the leaders are explained by the central route of the Elaboration Likelihood Model. The way Annan chose to distribute his message targeted the specific group of people who had to hear him out in specific occasions. Annan strengthened his argument with his elaborated message: “The goals of the United Nations and those of business can, indeed, be mutually supportive” (“Secretary-General,” 1999, para. 8). The leaders with their cognitive recognition of the mutuality between the UN and their businesses were expected to examine Annan’s message based on their experience and knowledge by associating them with their expected merits.

Annan’s continual messages, which were elaborately designed to target such business leaders in Davos, served as a vehicle for engaging them into action in cooperation with the UN. Annan proposed the initiation of a global compact of sharing human values and principles in light of the global market expanding. His strong message



should be noted: “The spread of markets outpaces the ability of societies and their political systems to adjust to them. History teaches us that such an imbalance between the economic, social and political realms can never be sustained for very long” (“Secretary-General,” 1999, para. 3). In his conclusion Annan added that if the leaders agreed with him, it would mean that they uphold human rights and labor and environmental standards in their own conduct of business.

Although Annan’s messages in Davos sounded fresh and tempting, the business leaders needed some time to evaluate the arguments embedded in the messages. Annan proposed a global compact between the UN and the world business community, calling on business leaders to accommodate a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labor standards, and the environment in business practice. The three areas had been perceived as a white elephant to the community. Using cheap laborers or even children at manufacturing conveyor-belt assembly lines helped the community keep production costs down and profits up. With respect to the environment, business leaders knew clean energy from the sun, ocean waves, and wind could save energy costs, but the initial installation fees for natural energy saving infrastructures surpassed the cost of using such conventional energy resources as coal and oil. And in relation to human rights, offering workers a modern, remodeled workplace and better employee packages including such perks as maternity leave and paid vacation would cost more money and generate less profit. The leaders probably could not ignore such disadvantages from their business perspective when they scrutinized Annan’s messages.

The year 2000, however, was less than one year away. Transnational corporations and for-profit organizations were receiving more blame for global warming, unfair

treatment of laborers in the developing world, and energy resource exploitation. For example, chemical companies and oil companies such as Du Pont and British Petroleum were accused of polluting water sources with chemicals that caused cancer or of emitting greenhouse gases that caused extreme weather changes; financial services and banks such as KPMG and Bank of America were receiving criticism due to tax shelter creation and investment in the coal industry; and manufacturing companies and retailers such as Gap and Wal-Mart were being blamed for exploiting their hourly paid employees with lack of employee benefits.

### *New Millennium*

The advent of the new millennium highlighted by the media began to turn the business community's attention to public relations and customer relations as media criticism tended to cast a spotlight on the negative effects generated in light of business performance. More rapidly, customers through the Internet sent direct, scornful messages to companies and promoted consumers' rights to boycott a company's products if it were caught doing wrong in its business practices. For example, some global chocolate companies used to employ children on foreign cocoa farms, and some coffee companies deforested mountains to grow more coffee. Such business activities were brought into the spotlight of ethical debate formed by the media and the Internet, and these companies' damaged reputations resulted in the loss of profit (see CNN Freedom Project). The time was ripe for global corporations to begin a program of corporate social responsibility in the new millennium.

Annan's message urging the business leaders to establish a compact with the UN seemed to be an irresistible deal for the global business community. As the ELM

suggests, centrally routed messages aim to change receivers' attitudes in the long term with compelling arguments; Annan's message was delivered in a manner of being repetitive and coherent. Annan's hope for establishing the UN-led global compact grew ambitious with his continual messages targeting a specific group of business leaders. In Seattle, on November 30, 1999, Annan attended the Third Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization. At the meeting he cherry-picked transnational corporations rather than the general private sector to send his elaborated messages of the establishment of global compact. He said, "Transnational companies, which are the prime beneficiaries of economic liberalization, must share some of the responsibility for dealing with its social and environmental consequences" (UN Global Compact, 1999, para. 13).

Annan repeated the message of his motivation for the compact:

This is why, earlier this year, I proposed a Global Compact between business and the United Nations, under which we will help the private sector to act in accordance with internationally accepted principles in the area of human rights, labor standards and the environment (UN Global Compact, 1999, para. 14).

Annan assured the companies by emphasizing partnership: "The response so far has been encouraging, and I believe we can achieve a great deal by working together more closely" (UN Global Compact, 1999, para. 15). His argument in building the partnership between the UN and the transnational companies signaled that the global compact he envisioned was about to occur, so such companies might want to join and support his proposal to elicit mutual benefits. He argued that economic rights and social responsibilities were "two sides of the same coin" (para. 15).

After focusing his messages on the group of transnational corporations, Annan identified the U.S. government and U.S. companies as his next message receivers for the

creation of the compact. He gave a speech to the John Quincy Adams Society in Washington, D.C., on May 25, 2000. He opened his speech to thank U.S. congressmen, U.S. business leaders, and government officials for the opportunity to discuss U.S. support for the compact creation, and he said that one of the UN's top priorities was to forge a good relationship with the United States because the United States and the UN would need each other to promote human rights and protect the environment in the millennium year. Referring to the society as a close link between business and Congress, Annan sent the society a message to support his plan. He said that the UN was trying to build a new partnership with the private sector to expand its capacity, so he proposed "a global compact . . . and asked the business community to act within its sphere of influence, according to internationally accepted norms and principles" in the areas of human rights, labor standards, and the environment ("World Needs," 2000, para. 8). His messages were repeated again with a different target audience. In addition, he revealed a new fact that he was scheduled to have a meeting with several business leaders to discuss how he and they could "bring the global compact to life" and how they were to ensure the three values of human rights, labor standards, and the environment applied in their work (para. 10).

A high-level meeting on the UN Global Compact was held on July 26, 2000, at the UN headquarters in New York. The meeting convened by Annan signaled the commitment of world business to the three values of the compact. Representatives of more than forty companies participated in the meeting with UN officials and NGO activists, according to a press release ("Secretary-General," 2000). Annan expressed his excitement, saying, "Together, we are making a bit of history today" ("Secretary-

General,” 2000, para. 2). “Never before have so many global leaders from the worlds of business, labor and civil society come together at the United Nations to forge a new coalition in support of universal values,” he said (para. 5).

He kept reminding the audience of his centrally elaborated message and his consistency:

Eighteen months ago, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, I warned international business leaders that globalization might be far more fragile than they realized. That is why, in Davos, I proposed the Global Compact as one step towards reaching the benefit of globalization (“Secretary-General,” 2000, para. 7).

At the meeting, Annan set forth three strategies to be discussed. The first was to build a strategy in calling for more business leaders from all around the world to join the compact; if so, it could be seen as global. In this sense, teaming up with a variety of leaders could persuade more business associations to achieve the values in business practice. The second was to establish the compact itself as a forum seeking common solutions to common problems. The last was for the participants to decide on priorities and devise “mechanisms for translating the good intentions into actions that make a real difference” (“Secretary-General,” 2000, para. 8). Annan was determined to spearhead the process of bringing the compact to a reality. “I personally intend to remain fully engaged,” he said. “And I am ready to establish a Global Compact Office, to coordinate the support you will get from different partners within the United Nations system” (para. 9). Annan ordered the UN representatives from the International Labor Organization, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the United Nations Development and Environment Programmes to engage in the very beginning process of developing the UN-

led global compact. And the meeting was documented as the official launching of the UN Global Compact, better known as the first UN Global Compact.

In a persuasive communication, the central route recommends receivers carefully think about issue-relevant arguments. In 2001 Annan in London sent another persuasive message aimed at urging seventy-five business leaders who were at a breakfast meeting to consider joining the compact. He took a business approach to highlighting the merits of partnership, saying, “There is enormous potential for new partnerships and new ideas that will help us achieve the progress . . . that will protect your investments, improve your reputations and customer loyalty, and ultimately raise standards of living (“At London,” 2001, para. 18). His centrally elaborated messages were repeated and further developed by adding a matter of business reputation to that of global business practice. His message was clear that the era of profit maximization with cost reduction that encourages social, international problems of business was over, but business rather should think about inducing customers’ positive attitudes toward business itself. His elaborated message relevant to their business performance was compelling enough to motivate the leaders to think about Annan’s argument, as well as to act on Annan’s messages. For example, Wolfgang Reithofer, CEO of the Wienerberger Group, the world’s largest producer of clay bricks, joined the UN Global Compact. He said, “For an international company like Wienerberger it is important to be transparent for external stakeholder groups. By signing the UN Global Compact in 2003, we made an official commitment to corporate social responsibility” (respACT PDF, 2006, p. 1). Reithofer vowed to “champion ethical corporate conduct and ensure rigorous implementation” for good corporate citizenship (p. 1). For another example, after joining the compact, Titan – India’s leading manufacturer

of watches and jewelry – began to hire disabled people in a variety of functions including packing, polishing, assembling and sorting (UN Report Global Compact, 2007).

Whenever and wherever Annan had a chance to send his message about the compact, he would never miss repeating the repertoire of his persuasive messages. At the same London meeting he reminded the leaders of a brief history of the compact and his goal. “It is now almost two-and-a-half years since I first challenged the world’s business leaders to enter into a Global Compact with the United Nations,” he recalled (“At London,” 2001, para. 2). “My aim was to find a way for business and the United Nations to work as partners in pursuit of our shared interests. After all, we both want the global economy to rest on a sound foundation” (para. 2).

Annan was aware that his messages to the business community could intimidate business people with a host of new international restrictions and regulations if the compact was enforced. It was his duty to educate and encourage them with his fundamental enthusiasm for the compact, intended to elicit harmonious agreement and practice for global business operation, not to pass bills to restrain business operations. He made sure that his proposal for the compact did not mean to make a legally binding contract, but to be a regulatory instrument. “A number of corporations have asked if their lawyers could examine the fine print,” he said. “I have good news for you: there is no fine print” (“At London,” 2001, para. 3). In short, Annan as a persuader sent another encouraging message to the leaders about why they should join the compact in that it would be a voluntary initiative. His messages were constant, steady, improving, and long-term oriented, which fit into the notion of central route persuasion.

Annan's enthusiasm for the compact grew and his strategy for the compact became specific. He said that the UN and some business leaders were making "good progress" and many leading companies were supporting the compact ("At London," 2001, para. 3). If the compact officially went into effect, the UN in consultation with the global business community would instruct companies at the international level to embrace nine fundamental principles in the areas of human rights, labor standards, and the environment, according to Annan. He told the London business leaders to get familiar with the nine principles in the three areas, which were adopted in the first UN Global. First, in the area of human rights, Annan proposed: (1) business should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and (2) business should not be complicit in human rights abuses. Second, in the area of labor, Annan proposed: (3) businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; (4) business should eliminate all forms of forced and compulsory labor; (5) business should work for the effective abolition of child labor; and (6) business should eliminate discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. Third, in the area of the environment, Annan proposed: (7) businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges; (8) business should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and (9) business should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies ("At London," 2001).

Annan's persistent messages for the compact ultimately aimed to ask the leaders to incorporate the nine principles into their business mission statements and business operations.



In numerous speeches after the London meeting, Annan repeated his same messages for the compact. For example, in February 2002 at the World Economic Forum he said, “Many business leaders have responded to the call I first made in Davos three years ago, when I proposed the Global Compact. They have publicly espoused the nine principles that I set out” (“Secretary-General Urges,” 2002, para. 19); “The Global Compact initiative I launched in 1999 at the World Economic Forum in Davos was based on my belief that open markets and human well-being can go hand in hand,” Annan said at MIT business school’s fiftieth anniversary celebration in October 2002 (UN Secretary-General, 2002, para. 3); “Five years ago, here in Davos, I asked you, the world’s business leaders, to join the United Nations on a journey,” Annan told business leaders at the 2004 World Economic Forum (UN Secretary-General, 2004, para. 1). He continued: “And I called for a compact – not a code of conduct; not a set of regulations, or new system of monitoring, but a concrete expression of global citizenship” (para. 2) Through his speeches, he not only reminded business leaders of his messages for compact arguments, but also emphasized the merits the global business community could receive because helping people eventually would lead the community to build larger, more eager markets in the world.

His last elaborated message before the first official Global Compact Leaders Summit of 2004 was sent directly to the business leaders in Davos: “I urge you all to tell your governments just how important this is to you, as business leaders, and try to persuade them to support” the principles and the first Global Compact Leaders Summit (“At World Economic,” 2004, para. 31).

### *Reactions*

Since the launch of the compact that invited forty business leaders, Annan strived to disseminate his message of partnership between the UN and business leaders while emphasizing the new age of business operations that required corporate social responsibility. His messages targeting the business community motivated business leaders to evaluate such messages, which helped them make reasoned judgments. The messages must have penetrated their minds, as on June 24 2004, Secretary-General Annan welcomed nearly five hundreds executive-level leaders who attended the first Global Compact Leaders Summit at the UN headquarters, including government officials, the heads of various labor groups, civil society organizations and UN agencies (UN Global Compact Report, 2004). It was a glorious moment that Annan's centrally routed messages proved persuasive. Business leaders (quoted below) stated their endorsement of Annan's vision.

Annan was pleased to have many guests by stressing the historic moment, saying, "This is the largest and highest-level gathering of leaders from business, labor and civil society gathering ever held at the United Nations" (UN Secretary-General, 2004, para. 2). They came to the UN to discuss how to create a world in which "economic activities coexist in harmony with, and reinforce, human rights, decent working conditions, environmental sustainability and good governance," said Annan, repeating his messages for the compact (para. 4). He also praised the sudden expansion of the compact. He said some 1,500 firms participated in the summit from seventy countries and fifty NGO leaders (UN Secretary-General, 2004).

Annan proposed an additional principle to the leaders at the summit. He declared that the compact “will include a tenth principle against corruption,” that urged the global business community to work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery (“Global Compact,” 2004, para. 8). He wanted the leaders to share experiences in implementing the compact and building lessons and generating ideas in a spirit of cooperation and dialogue. “So I ask all of you to work together – business, civil society, labor and governments and, of course, us – and to work with the United Nations, to reduce the global risks we all face, and to realize the promise of a fairer more stable world,” he said (para. 9).

Among the leaders, Gary Pfeiffer, CFO of Du Pont, agreed to Annan’s messages for the compact from the view of business opportunity. “Every corporation is under intense pressure to create ever-increasing shareholder value,” Pfeiffer said (UN Global Compact Report, 2004, p. 9). “Enhancing environmental and social performance are enormous business opportunities to do just that.” George Heller, CEO of Hudson’s Bay Company as the oldest commercial corporation in North America, announced at the summit that his company would initiate “a global program to improve and simplify human rights/labour code compliance in the retail supply chain,” aiming for the promotion of the UN Global Compact (p. 20). Another leader, Henry McKinnell, CEO of Pfizer, applauded the newly added tenth principle. He said that the anti-corruption principle would call on the business community to combat “an estimated three trillion in bribes” paid each year in the world (p. 23). In addition, he asked governments to better monitor business activities to eradicate corruption and bribery.

The summit led the leaders to adopt the principles to be part of business strategy and operations in support of human rights, decent working conditions, the environment and anti-corruption. They ostensibly committed themselves to promote a shared vision of global markets that “benefits all of the world’s people and advances a new understanding of the relationship between business and society” (UN Global Compact Report, 2004, p. 2). Annan concluded: “Let us be true global citizens. Let us not rest until we have truly succeeded in bringing positive change into the lives of people, and laid the foundations for peaceful, well-functioning, sustainable societies throughout the world” (p. 2). It is apparent that his initial 1999 determination for the creation of partnership between the UN and the business community bore fruit thanks to Annan’s centrally routed message strategy, which had made appeals that were constant, plausible, argumentative, and persuasive to the business community. The central route supports Annan’s continual messages, which appealed to the business leaders who were encouraged to think about the benefits of cooperating with the UN-led global compact. Their motivation and ability to assess Annan’s centrally routed messages served as the core principle to be persuaded. In the discussion section of this chapter and the conclusion chapter of this study, the intertwined relationship between UN cases and theories will be discussed again.

### The Ten-Story Project

Secretary-General Kofi Annan declared in his 2002 Report of the Secretary-General that “the UN has a compelling story to tell” (UN Secretary-General Report, 2002, p.13). Annan added, “That story must be told well, because public support is essential for strengthening the organization” (p.13). Under Annan’s direction UN officials in the Department of Public Information felt obliged to translate resolutions,

decisions, declarations, and debates into meaningful messages that would make the general public in the world acknowledge the irreplaceable existence of the global organization, dedicated to serving people who struggle to acquire basic needs and achieve peace.

The department, in line with the secretary-general's declaration, pledged to focus its operational energy and resources on a communication strategy for the UN's indispensable work to achieve "the greatest possible impact on the hearts and minds of the peoples of the world" (UN Committee on Information, 2002, p. 12). Annan's guidance functioned as a driving force for the department's reorientation as the report indicates that the department suffered from "too many mandates and missions," some of which are far from essential tasks (UN Secretary-General Report, 2002, p. 2). For example, the department officials were often asked – despite no obligation – to serve member states' demand for background materials and interpretation services for their meetings (p.17), even though the department's activities were apparently limited to the scope of news coverage of United Nations events on radio, video, and the Internet; production of information materials to promote particular United Nations issues or conferences; special events and exhibits; guided tours; library services; and relations with media and other groups outside the United Nations (p. 14). Although the 1997 task force report suggested that Annan omit such outside work for the department to focus on strategic communications to repair the damaged UN image, the long-time custom of UN diplomats calling for private information services would not easily fade away (UN Report Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997).

Annan's 2002 special report about the department's raising awareness of the UN's existence by targeting more global publics persuaded the General Assembly to support the urgent tasks of the department (UN Report Reorientation of United Nations, 2002). The assembly agreed to the need for enhanced publicity through a targeted strategy to be developed by the department aimed at addressing issues crucial to the international community (UN Committee on Information, 2002). The special report noted that the department develops communication strategies for "each major global conference and each special session of the General Assembly with the purpose of building worldwide interest on the part of the media, non-governmental organizations, and the public" (UN Committee on Information, 2002, p. 14). In doing so, the department would achieve the goal of raising awareness of the UN role.

After the 1997 task force report claimed that the UN had failed to be seen as playing a central role in expanding public consciousness of global issues such as environmental change, gender equity, population and human rights – issues that are considered relevant to the international community's concerns – Annan asked the General Assembly and the UN Committee on Information to "provide strategic guidance and direction to the communications function" for the department's better-focused operations to inform the general public of the positive impact of the UN on such global issues (Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. ii). In addition, Annan sought to maximize two functional UN communication roles: Taking advantage of new communication technology and engaging global citizens.

First, a new trend of global information flow driven by the emerging power of the Internet would give the UN an impetus to promote an effective UN communication

strategy in overcoming communication barriers built by several closed societies.

Individuals meeting across the Internet would have access to the same real-time global information services provided by the department in light of the rise of 24/7 global television services (Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 5). In other words, Annan's special report discerned a new age of information flow, expecting to create an alternative to the U.S. mainstream press coverage, which had been less concerned with international news than with domestic events.

Second was the extraordinary rise of secular society, which engaged in new global and national networks of citizens with whom the UN could communicate. The report noted that "it is a time of explosive growth in both numbers and recognition" of the secular that would provide scope for close partnership with the UN (Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, pp. 4-5). The global citizens in a secular society would call on international and U.S. media to cover more stories about "lifestyle, culture, and shared issues such as the environment or human rights" (p. 5). The report recommended that the department place UN-generated stories in a meaningful local context for the citizens around the globe, as many media personnel were aware of the rising demand for stories aside from politics and governments. As a result, the key recommendation for the department could be understood in getting back to people on the planet with more humanitarian information and messages through the form of storytelling. The storytelling strategy needs customized messages generated on the basis of rationality, probability, and fidelity to win the hearts and minds of audience, according to Fisher's narrative paradigm.

It turns out that the storytelling idea was rooted in the task force report reflecting the influence of the Council on Foreign Relations (a think tank specializing in U.S.

foreign policy and international affairs) and the Ford Foundation; in the mid-1990s the two institutions were concerned that the UN under Boutros-Ghali's leadership did nothing of significance. Boutros-Ghali, who was being politically disowned by the U.S. government and Congress, was losing his chance for a second-term as secretary-general.

The council pointed out that the UN needed to be understood by the general public in order to attract support for its existence. To induce more public support, the council suggested making "vigorous and hazardous work of UN personnel in the field – in health care delivery, refugee work, peacekeeping, and development assistance" more visible than its political functions (The Council on Foreign Relations, 1996, p. 38). Difficult activities the UN engaged in needed to be publicized to create positive attitudes in the mind of the public through the form of storytelling, which is the product of description, explanation, and prediction for how the public comes to adopt stories that guide both their behavior and assessment of communicative values, according to the narrative paradigm.

From a U.S. perspective, the council suggested that the department make information about UN operations more accessible to the U.S. press and public. For the department to implement the suggestion, the UN itself had to be subject to a "political unbundling" so U.S. citizens such as "evangelical groups, corporations, environmental organizations, transportation safety groups, and other citizen associations" would perceive the organization as indispensable for people around the world (The Council on Foreign Relations, 1996, p. 38).

In contrast to the council emphasizing the role of the department, the Ford Foundation highlighted the UN secretary-general's role in demonstrating a strong voice



that would generate world leadership to elicit positive media coverage of the UN for public support. “The Secretary-General, more than anyone else, will stand for the United Nations as a whole,” the institution quoted the UN’s Preparatory Commission as saying (Ford Foundation, 1995, p. 43). “In the eyes of the world, he must embody the principles and ideals of the UN Charter to which the Organization seeks to give effect.” It was suggested that the secretary-general undertake more public activities over political ones, for the UN secretary-general’s position was associated with his public persona and the image of the entire organization when projected through public media lenses. Moreover, as he would represent the moral authority, intellectual stimulus, and the organizational skill to sustain the credibility and effectiveness, the central role of him dealing with the media needed to be fully “utilized and developed” (p. 43).

Drawing on numerous opinions and suggestions of institutions outside the UN, Annan’s 2002 special report, which embraced ideas and suggestions from the task force report, came up with five strategies of storytelling in order to build upon the goals of informing broader publics of the UN’s involvement in world issues related to humanitarian work (Ford Foundation, 1995, pp. 2-13).

First was to create global thought via local action. While crafting global messages aimed at strengthening the UN’s central action capacity at the international level, the UN would specialize in a high degree of effective delegation to an empowered and effective local-level communication program. Such a strategy would allow the translation of global messages and campaigns into effective local ones. The greatest public impact at the local (foreign) level is to promote to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and role of the UN, as one of the narrative paradigm prepositions explains that

the world is a set of stories from which the message sender/story teller chooses and recreates, tailoring the stories into the narrative rationality of the target audience.

Second, encourage every UN official to become a communicator. In other words, not only the department staffers but also staffers outside the department should be capable of becoming well-informed communicators to narrate and disseminate more good stories about the UN. This strategy demanded that all UN staff be armed with knowledge of public diplomacy and particular UN campaigns. This appeared to be relatively easy, as the narrative paradigm stresses that people are essentially storytellers. The department of course would take the lead role in facilitating, organizing, and promoting the communication activities of storytelling.

Third, improve public credibility for the UN through the creation of campaigns relating to poverty, drugs, employment, and global environment, all of which would call for actions of member states. Creating issues relevant to the general public's interest would attract more attention from audiences across the world, meaning that U.S. and international media would be likely to cover the UN-created activities. The public's interest would depend on the communication situation and genre, according to the narrative paradigm. In addition, the A-B-X model explains that the particular story being told (X) will transfer feelings of the public (A) about the story to the image to the UN (B).

Fourth, ensure a flexible operation of the department's resources and efforts, depending on priority targets at particular times. This strategy in particular targeted the U.S. political elites and citizens in hopes of inducing them to have positive attitudes toward the role of the UN at the domestic level. Shedding light on the UN's efforts

relevant to U.S. concerns, the strategy aimed to build credibility of the UN in U.S. public opinion that would determine whether the U.S. financial and political contribution continued to the UN. A recommended tactic for the storytelling strategy was to associate global UN campaigns and stories with U.S. messages, which would demonstrate relevance between the UN's and U.S. interests such as promotion of human rights, eradication of terrorism, and spread of democracy. Stories grounded in coherence and fidelity are likely to be rationalized by the target U.S. audience, according to the narrative paradigm.

Fifth, increase the UN's global, indispensable institutional image through active storytelling aimed at underscoring the UN's role as a unique international organization that would deal with a wide range of human catastrophes. Keys to success to this strategy would be gradually eliminating the public's disappointment with the UN, which failed to prevent the crises of Bosnia and Somalia. Telling the general public about its role in serving as the unique global forum for debate and ultimate consensus for the international community's well-being would prove that the UN implemented, and continues to implement, efforts pivotal to people and countries around the world.

It is important to note that the 1997 report of the task force employed a comprehensive approach to the department's storytelling strategies, emphasizing that the UN's existence as the irreplaceable international organization would rely on the tactic of telling "the UN's story with accurate and timely information," in addition to that of making the significance of the UN role and activities clear (Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 26). In particular, not only should the department play a role in breaking news stories, but it should tailor them, in narrative if necessary and if possible, offering an

accurate picture of the UN's goal and action in terms of promoting its view and competency for addressing human conflicts and problems. This approach means that the department both had been since 1997 responding to requests for information from the press in a quick manner and had been active in the promotion of stories that highlighted humanitarian work of the UN. In the same vein, the department was in charge of correcting misinformation about the UN's role. Some stories considered newsworthy were, and are, delivered in various languages for the media.

In an effort to build and maintain favorable public opinion toward the UN, the department was directed to revise its process of story dissemination, based on transparency and accuracy. The task force report recommended the UN open itself to communications by “embracing public diplomacy as the means of building and sustaining support for positive changes in global cooperation on the problems that concern real people” (Global Vision, Local Voice, 1997, p. 34). Average people tend to care more about stories of the UN's humane work in which its officials try to save children in Africa dying of malnutrition or malaria; its officials struggle to supply shelter and water for those who are struck by earthquakes. These could be stories that would touch the minds and hearts of the general public in the United States and the rest of the world. But such touching stories needed to be interpreted as good stories through the strategic work of the narrative. In addition, such narrative stories contain Fisher's three narrative elements of fidelity and probability and rationality to be picked up by the media.

Following the guidance of the task force report, the department developed its strategy of storytelling in the pledge of the UN to bringing itself to “the peoples of the

world in partnership with the media and civil society, and with the support of Member States” (UN Report Questions Relating to Information, 2003, p. 2). Annan highlighted that the reoriented department, after a period of transition of the reform since 1997, “now understands what is expected of it, has gained practical experience in their execution. It is ready to apply the lessons learned, as well as its new-found confidence, to further improve the products and services it offers” (UN Questions Relating to Information, 2004, p. 21). And the department with regard to narrative story production finally bore fruit in 2004.

#### *Ten Stories: 2004*

The department’s effort to transform the UN’s humanitarian engagement into a strategic storytelling program was embodied as the project of “Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About” in 2004, while the department was honing its communication tools, sharpening its focus and reaching out to newer audiences using new technologies (“UN Spotlights,” 2004). The department launched a list of ten stories in consultation with other United Nations offices and agencies to draw “the attention of numerous news organizations both to the specific stories themselves and to the broader question of what role the media plays [sic] in raising public awareness” (UN Report of the Secretary-General, 2004, p. 63).

In addition, Undersecretary-General for Communication and Public Information Shashi Tharoor revealed another reason why the program was created: “Because news on Iraq seemed to be eclipsing all other important stories” (“UN Spotlights,” 2004, para. 3). Tharoor stressed that an unfortunate side effect of the U.S. invasion of Iraq that began in 2003 resulted in the media giving only marginal coverage for other important

international issues. Annan applauded the initiation of the program, which received positive responses from inside and outside the UN (UN Secretary-General Report, 2004).

The ten stories included “a number of humanitarian emergencies, as well as conflict or post-conflict situations, and spans other matters of concern to the United Nations” (“10 Stories,” 2004, para. 2). Such conflicts described in the ten stories threatened the livelihoods of 200 million people worldwide (UN Report of the Secretary-General, 2004). In the press release, Tharoor said, the list itself was “a snapshot of the most compelling stories that, at this point in time, we believe are in need of more media attention.” The department’s effort and practice for this project can be explained by the A-B-X and co-orientation models. The department (A) and the press (B) would agree that some horrible news stories (Xs) in the developing world (the social communication setting) could be found and reported. However, their orientations toward Xs are different, depending on whether Xs are newsworthy. A and B have the significant chasm of attitudes toward stories of news values. They blame each other for not covering Xs. In this case, the department (A, also the message sender) tries to close the chasm with the new approach to persuade the press (B, also the message receiver) to be reoriented toward Xs (the ten-story project). On the other hand, if the press were A and the department were B in the same situation, A would have its own news agenda with its pride of being independent in its judgment about what constitutes a newsworthy story. A would send B a message that B could choose its stories, but could not force A to cover them. Hence, the best way of closing the chasm seems that either many media outlets agree to cover such stories as their agenda or the department finds more interesting, timely stories (according to the *media’s* definition) to attract media coverage.

The stories on the list were of factual human struggling that became more salient in the form of storytelling. They were selected by and narrated because those stories received only little media attention (“10 Stories,” 2004). Thought had been given to stories that the department found to be compelling in terms of audience interest, said Tharoor in the press briefing. He added that it was difficult to believe that “the story of AIDS orphans in Africa was not worth covering,” so the goal of ten stories was to engage the media in bringing attention to critical issues that were most happening to developing countries (“Public Information,” 2004, para. 5).

In hopes of getting the ten stories and the department’s innovative, ambitious storytelling articles published or covered by U.S. and international media, the department in the April 2004 press release noted that it would also operate a special webpage for the program and help media personnel to arrange interviews with UN officials who were well prepared to speak on those ten stories. In this sense, the ten-story project aimed to raise awareness of some of the important international issues and developments that often failed to invite hoped-for media coverage. For the likelihood of maximum coverage of the program, the department – after the distribution of such press releases to lay groundwork for awareness of the press – organized the official launch of the program with the opening of its exclusive webpage (<http://www.un.org/en/events/tenstories>) on May 3, 2004. The day was thoughtfully chosen because it was World Press Freedom Day proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in December 1993. Since then, from 1994, the day has been celebrated annually worldwide to defend the media from attacks on their independence and pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the line or duty for

the fundamental principles of press freedom, according to the homepage of World Press Freedom Day (<http://www.un.org/en/events/pressfreedomday/>).

The department gave the launch day a special meaning: “The United Nations launched these ten stories on World Press Freedom Day in order to bring attention to critical issues facing the world today” (*UN Chronicle*, 2004, p. 6). On the same day, Annan attended a panel on press freedom to pay tribute to the 36 journalists killed in 2003 in the line of duty, including the 17 dead journalists in the first three months of 2004 (“Highlights from,” 2004). Annan also referred to the ten-story program, saying, “Those crises are each at a critical moment, when outside attention could make a real difference” (“Highlights from,” 2004, para. 3).

The brief narrative of the ten 2004 stories is as follows (see the webpage at <http://www.un.org/events/tenstories/07/list04.shtml>).

**Ugandan Child Soldiers:** The 18-year-old rebellion of the Lord’s Resistance Army coerces and trains children, some younger than ten, to become killers against the Ugandan government’s progress to economic development. The insurgence supplied by the force of child soldiers is the daunting aspect of this humanitarian crisis. Ninety percent of them are minors and they pick the same strategy to recruit other children, including siblings, by violence and threat. They eventually become national threats to undermine the country’s national security.

**Central African Republic:** The Central African Republic, located in the heart of Africa, but 154<sup>th</sup> among the world’s 174 poorest countries. More than ninety-five percent of the people are living on less than \$2 a day while fifteen percent of them are HIV positive patients. The poverty and HIV situation places the country and its people in the center of turbulence threatening peace efforts in the region in spite of its economic potential. The instability of the country affects not only neighboring countries’ security but also that of Central Africa as a whole.

**AIDS Orphans in sub-Saharan Africa:** AIDS issues are not new in sub-Saharan Africa, and they used to bring media attention. However, some eleven million AIDS orphans in the region deserve better care and attention. Eight in ten children worldwide whose parents die of the disease live in the region. The long-term



ripple impact the disease will have on governance, social structures and economic growth of the worst damaged countries in sub-Saharan Africa is overlooked.

**The Peacekeeping Paradox:** Although the war on Iraq generates some number of casualties, today, fewer people are being killed by war than at almost any time in the past century. Some 25,000 were killed in armed conflict in 2002, barely one tenth the number killed each year during the 1990s. Even the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have not reversed the decline in recent years. Two basic reasons are that fewer wars are starting and many old ones are ending. However, resources of specialized military services to maintain peace in conflicting countries are shortened by developed countries' unwillingness to aid.

**Tajikistan:** The former Soviet country suffers from the aftermath of a deadly civil war. Despite the country's efforts to persist on the road to peace and recovery, a lack of human and financial resources dampens the development process. Over the past three years, the United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace-building (UNTOP) has played a crucial role in post-conflict activities aimed at consolidating peace and national reconciliation, promoting the rule of law and strengthening democratic institutions. Although the office has helped mobilize international support for promoting demobilization, voluntary arms collection and employment creation, there is a tough road ahead with the high unemployment rate, drug trafficking, and the resurgence of extremist organizations in Tajikistan.

**Women as Peacemakers:** Whereas the plight of women in war often gets close media attention, their vital role in terms of negotiating peace and rebuilding societies is often underreported. Women in conflict situations are shown as powerless victims, but in reality they are in the forefront when it comes to negotiating and building peace. Women as torchbearers of peace are making a difference in hot spots of every region of the world, in particular, such as Palestine, Israel, Nepal, and Colombia. Annan has pointed out: "For generations, women have served as peace educators, both in their families and in their societies. They have proved instrumental in building bridges rather than walls." Their stories about rebuilding society are full of interesting storytelling material.

**Persons with Disabilities:** A milestone international accord for the rights of persons with disabilities is about to be created among UN member states. The accord is designed to create a legally binding comprehensive framework for the protection and promotion of the rights and dignity of the disabled. The new legal framework will aim to raise awareness of a wide range of disability related issues, and this is an area where the media can play a key role in focusing attention on a matter of vital concern to some 600 million people worldwide who experience disabilities of various types and degrees.

**Bakassi Peninsula:** The resource-rich peninsula – the 1,600-kilometer-long border area between Cameroon and Nigerian extending from Lake Chad to the

Gulf of Guinea—has been a bone of contention between the two countries, culminating in mounting hostilities and military confrontations since the early 1990s. But the International Court of Justice offers a peaceful way to resolve the border dispute regarding sovereignty over the peninsula and maritime boundary. The two parts ask Annan to set up a Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission to implement the court's decision. This case illustrates the importance of UN's mediator role in assisting the parties to address international conflict issues that may threaten peace and security.

**Overfishing:** The magnitude of the problem of overfishing is overlooked as marine biodiversity is in ever-greater danger with the rising depletion of world's fish species. In the developing world, fishing is central to the livelihood and food supply of 200 million people. The rapid growth in demand for fish and fish product is leading to fish prices increasing faster than prices of meat; the dramatic increase of destructive fishing techniques results in bad consequences for mammals and entire ecosystems. As a result, fishery investments have become more attractive to both entrepreneurs and governments, much to the detriment of small-scale fishing and fishing communities all over the world. As prompting calls for urgent measures for fish protection are needed, overfishing issues should be treated as important as deforestation, desertification, and energy resource exploitation by the media.

**Indigenous Peoples Living in Voluntary Isolation:** Some sixty-four indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation in Amazonian Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, and Bolivia are condemned to gradual extinction far from the eyes of the world. The challenge facing the impoverished governments of the region is to balance further exploitation of the riches of the Amazonian belt in the name of development with the protection of these fragile indigenous groups and the cultural heritage they represent. Gas and oil companies, loggers, miners, and entrepreneurs are viewed by indigenous groups as ghosts of death for the toxic legacy they can leave behind. These indigenous groups have developed their own health care and food gathering systems, but which are fragile and easily threatened by damage to the ecosystems. All too often contact with outsiders results in the transfer of disease, resulting in epidemics since the indigenous peoples have no immunities to what are common and treatable disease elsewhere.

Annan claimed that the ten-story project successfully fulfilled the UN's expectation (UN Report of the Secretary-General, 2005). "The level of press attention," which the stories had attracted with positive feedback from member states and others, demonstrated that the program became "a valuable tool for drawing the attention of the media and the world at large to urgent matters of international concern," the secretary-

general noted (UN Report of the Secretary-General, 2005, p. 57). But Annan and the department did not enumerate which media paid attention to the project with their coverage. And this study found that no U.S. media directly reported about the project after thorough online searches, including Lexis-Nexis and Google.com, and offline searches of library databases (see the discussion section of this chapter).

### *Ten Stories: 2005*

Such positive responses offered the department momentum to continue the program. On World Press Freedom Day in 2005, after Annan saluted the courage and dedication of journalists risking outright brutality to exercise their right to seek and tell the truth, department head Tharoor presented the 2005 list of “Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About” in hopes of the program encouraging media outlets to consider giving the ten stories and their relevant issues more space and airtime. “Our list will present a wide spectrum of matters of concern to many, many people around the world, and we look forward to working with media everywhere to help raise the profile of these stories,” Tharoor said (“UN to Release,” 2005, para. 2). He added that the program was about engaging the media in globally important issues that should not be in the shadows. Based on the analysis of the co-orientation model, the department (A) invited the press (B) by encouraging them to change their attitudes toward such stories left uncovered (Xs). When A tried to shorten the difference between A’s and B’s orientations toward Xs with the statement of “we look forward to working with media,” A was seeking the three elements of co-orientation: agreement, accuracy, and congruency between the two groups. A’s strategy to persuade B to build reciprocal orientation to benefit the both groups remains in equilibrium of communication in the social environment. It then would

be time for the department to await the press's response, which would be based on the press's evaluation and strategies of relations with the department in association with the orientation toward Xs.

While the war in Iraq continued dominating international news coverage in the United States and the rest of the world, the other big news event – the tsunami in the Indian Ocean blamed for more than 200,000 human casualties – left other important international stories sidelined in the mainstream media coverage (“UN to Release,” 2005). Therefore, the department included stories from a range of lesser-known issues and underreported regions, “focusing on situations and humanitarian challenges, as well as vital areas in health, human rights and development” for the 2005 ten-story program (*UN Chronicle*, 2005, p. 60). In a similar selecting process of the 2004 ten stories, the 2005 list was prepared in consultation with UN offices and programs, many of which “provided their views and ideas on issues” that would benefit from greater media exposure (“UN to Release,” 2005, para. 3).

The brief narrative of the ten 2005 stories is as follows (see the webpage at <http://www.un.org/events/tenstories/07/list05.shtml>).

**Farming in the Dark:** Poor cocoa and coffee farmers in Cameron have little chance of getting a fair price for their products since they have lack of the knowledge of the markets and fair prices beyond their villages. To break the poverty cycle for the farmers, technical assistance such as Internet installation can help them access information about the markets, so that they can negotiate better prices.

**Island after the Hurricane:** Hurricane Ivan devastated Grenada. The world responded generously at the time, but several months later, with lack of international aid, the island remains in ruins. The devastation shows that disaster recovery needs to receive sustainable assistance from the international community as well as continuous attention from the media in general.

**Northern Uganda:** Up to 1.6 million people have been displaced by the conflict with the rebel Lord's Resistance Army notorious for its cruelty lootings, murders, mutilations, and abduction of children. The humanitarian tragedy continues and its impact on some of the most vulnerable groups, especially children, is a story that demands close and continuous attention.

**Sierra Leone:** Even after the country ended its civil conflict, disarmed combatants, freed thousands of child soldiers, and watched over domestic elections, the country needs bigger help, in case such processes of building domestic order faced fragile peace. More important, now that the UN peacekeepers are scheduled to leave the country soon with media attention leaving with them, the country's peace can hardly be sustainable.

**Somalia:** As the only country in recent history that has endured such a prolonged period of state collapse, the insecurity of the country has kept the presence of international media to a minimum at a time. The consequences are enormous. The lack of media coverage results in scarcity of the outside help, and there is less hope for mobilization of humanitarian aid.

**Tragic Blind Spot in Health Care for Women:** A little-known illness fistula is caused by complications during childbirth. The condition leaves more than two million women in long-term, chronic incontinence, and kidney disease in the developing world. If worse, damage to the nerves in the legs leaves some women unable to walk. A global campaign to end fistula was launched in 30 African countries.

**Behind Closed Doors:** Violence against women and girls is a universal problem, but its human cost often remains invisible. At least one out of every three women around the world is beaten, coerced into sex, or abused in her lifetime. Its statistics are alarming, the spread is global, and the human cost is staggering, but the problem of gender-based violence often lacks the consistent media spotlight.

**Curbing Illicit Drugs:** While the fight against illicit drugs generates media spotlight, curbing the cultivation of illicit drug crops such as coca leaf and opium poppy hardly invites international attention. Since there are an estimated four million growers of illicit crops for a living in the world, an alternative development project has to be provided for those who look for help.

**Actors for Change:** A growing role and effectiveness of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights receives international attention. More than a hundred national institutions emerge in recent years to protect the rights of vulnerable groups. They are increasingly active in a wide range of human rights cause, from torture to discrimination.

**Environment and Health:** The World Health Organization has noted the appearance of at least thirty new diseases, which can threaten the health of hundreds of millions, people in the last two decades. The organization also identifies places a loathsome catalogue of infectious disease that have revived and thrived in places where natural habitats are altered or degraded by loggers, road and dam builders, and urban encroachment.

Not surprisingly, given research on lack of foreign coverage especially in Africa, the 2005 list did not grab any attention from U.S. media. And the department and Annan made no official mention in speeches and documents about the reception in the press.

#### *Ten Stories: 2006*

The year 2006 was the third year for the ten-story project. It is worth noting that the department and Secretary-General Annan seemed to be indifferent to the third annual program. Unlike the traditional practice of releasing the list on May 3, which is World Press Freedom Day, the 2006 list of the stories was released on May 15, according to the UN News Centre. A bit surprisingly, Annan made neither comment nor evaluation about whether the program of the previous year produced another positive impact. It can be assumed that because that year was Annan's last year for his position, he might have many more crucial things to take care of. In fact, 2006 was remembered as the worst year of his position because of the aftermath of the Oil-for-Food scandal. The combination of his last year as secretary-general and his damaged authority seems to be the compelling reasons.

Despite the fact that the ten-story project was not even mentioned by the secretary-general, the department, which was "concerned that some issues continue not to receive sustained media attention or slip off the radar screen," unveiled the 2006 list of "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About" ("UN to Release," 2006). "The media

and the UN share an interest in getting information about what is happening in our world to the public,” Tharoor said, “but journalists are often inundated with stories, all competing for their – and the public’s – attention. Our aim is to make it easier for them to see that important issues do not fade from the headlines” (“UN to Release,” 2006, para. 2). He also stressed that the program’s goal was to draw attention to those stories that must be told (“10 Stories,” 2006).

Even though the third round of ten stories did not get much appreciation and attention, as in previous years, the 2006 list covered “a spectrum of issues and geographical regions . . . some of which draw on troubling humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations . . . while others focus on vital areas like human rights and development” (*UN Chronicle*, 2006, p. 54). The U.S. media expressed no interest in reporting the 2006 story launch (see the discussion section of this chapter).

The brief narrative of the 2006 ten stories is as follows (see the webpage at <http://www.un.org/events/tenstories/07/list06.shtml>).

**Liberia:** While the aftershocks of the country’s 14-year civil war and its past history of ethnic hatred tend to draw intensive media attention, its economic mismanagement, corrupt government, administrative abuse and infrastructure collapse receive less media spotlight. Such problems are compounded by the socio-economic and humanitarian impact of sanctions.

**Lost in Migration:** Asylum seekers face challenges amid efforts to stem flows of illegal migrants. While illegal migration and security are problems that no country can afford to ignore, an estimated 200 million people look for new countries they can settle down. However, the importance distinctions between migrants, asylum seekers and refugees have been blurred, so international refugee protection guidance is less effective.

**DR of Congo:** After 45 years of dictatorship and intermittent wars that have claimed roughly four million victims over the last five years alone, the country moves boldly toward its first multiparty poll. However, humanitarian concerns

continue to demand attention. The steep humanitarian challenges facing the devastated nation must not be forgotten.

**Nepal's Hidden Tragedy:** Maoist rebels against the government forces inflict great harm on children whose rights are violated and whose lives are profoundly disrupted on a daily basis. Over 40,000 Nepalese children are estimated to be displaced over the course of the Maoist uprising. Some of them are either recruited into the Maoist militia or abducted for short periods for political indoctrination.

**Somalia:** Over eight million people are in grave danger from a devastating drought despite some recent progress toward reestablishing a central government. Persistent insecurity makes combating the effects of drought very difficult and complicating political reconciliation leaves the country vulnerable.

**Protracted Refugee Situations:** Millions of refugees have been caught in limbo, with no solutions because they have lived in exile for far too long, being restricted to camps, or eking out a meager existence in urban centers in the developing world. The refugees cannot return home because of continuing violence or persecution.

**South Asian Earthquake:** Nearly seven months after the disaster struck, the post-quake efforts are at another crucial junction that deserves close attention by the media and the public. As the recovery effort shifts from relief to reconstruction, desperately needed donor support often ebbs once relief phases out. Many quake survivors could face another precarious situation with less relief help.

**Behind Bars, Beyond Justice:** An alarming number of children around the world are being deprived of their liberty, held in detention without sufficient cause, often for offences that are not considered criminal when committed by adults. Most of them have not been tried, and yet are being held for months without access to legal aid. Physical abuse is common to the children.

**From Water Wars to Bridges of Cooperation:** Water has been known for centuries to be a major cause of tensions or conflict. Some experts predict that the wars of the twenty-first century will be fought over water. While freshwater's propensity to strain relations among countries frequently makes headlines, the other side of the coin – water as an agent of cooperation – rarely gets sufficient attention.

**Cote d'Ivoire:** As Cote d'Ivoire gears up for October elections, the country remains divided between the government-held south and the rebel-controlled north. In 2004, the ceasefire between the parties was agreed, but the shaky peace



threatens the people seen as the most unprotected in the world. Journalists have been victims of governmental harassment, threats, arrest, and even murder.

After Annan retired as two-term secretary-general on December 31, 2006, the ten-story project had one more round in 2007. Then the project was killed permanently.

### The 2005 World Summit: Messages of Integration

In September 2005, the UN for the first time since its founding in 1945 organized a very large-scale event. The event was the 2005 World Summit, which was described in a UN press release as “a once-in-a-generation opportunity” for the world and the organization itself (“Promotion of 2005,” 2005, para. 1). The summit to be held two weeks later, September 14-16 at the UN headquarters in New York, was expected to reach major agreements toward ending poverty, promoting human rights, fighting terrorism, helping countries recover from deadly conflict, and endorsing Annan’s UN reform proposals from more than 170 heads of state and government out of 191 member states of the UN who had signaled their intention to attend, making it “almost certain to be the largest gathering ever of world leaders” (para. 2). Annan hoped the leaders at the summit would take bold decisions for development, security, human rights, and reform of the United Nations. He expressed his excitement by saying, “A successful outcome at next month’s summit will be a success for all of us – for all the people that you represent” (para. 4).

The summit was officially outlined in Annan’s March report “In Larger Freedom” (UN Report, 2005). Annan believed development (freedom from poverty), security (freedom from fear), human rights (freedom to live in dignity), and UN reform (strengthening the United Nations) would convey the idea that greater freedom for the

world could only be advanced if countries, regardless of being developed or still developing, worked together in an integrated unit for their common purpose. Annan recommended every developing country adopt a comprehensive national strategy bold enough to mobilize all its resources behind the common purpose as well as improve its governance, uphold the rule of law and combat corruption, whereas every developed country support the common purpose “by increasing the amount it spent on development and debt relief, and doing whatever it could to level the playing field for world trade . . . [and] give immediate duty-free and quota-free market access to all exports from the least developed countries” (“Promotion of 2005,” 2005, para. 3).

It is clear that Annan’s ideas and requests are nearly identical with Ellul’s explanation – as noted earlier – of integration propaganda (1967). This elaborates that an individual member of the society is expected to integrate and adapt himself to the socially constructed setting by sharing beliefs, values, cultural norms, and behavioral practice. In this context, substitute “nation” for individual member and “world” for society. Ellul adds that the individual member is also urged to participate in social [substitute “international”] doings . . . and reshape his [the state’s] thoughts and behavior in terms of the permanent social [international] setting (Ellul, 1967. see chapter 2). In the same vein, Annan asked all states to agree that:

Scientific advances and technological innovation must be mobilized now to develop tools for mitigating climate change, and that a more inclusive international framework must be developed for stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions beyond 2012, with broader participation by all major emitters and both developed and developing countries (“Promotion of 2005,” 2005, para. 5).

During the preparation for the summit, Annan hoped that the UN could take the reins from the United States in terms of resolving international conflict. Annan urged the

UN member states to make the Security Council more broadly representative of the international community as a whole (“Promotion of 2005,” 2005). In the release, Annan made “far-reaching” proposals for the reform of the UN, arguing that it must serve the interests of the world’s peoples in greater coherence with the work of the United Nations system as a whole (“Promotion of 2005,” 2005). Although Annan did not use the term “integration” in the report, he implied that the UN could take the leading role in the integrating process of all UN member states to think as a whole and act as one. The summit could finalize and endorse his integration ideal, which would place the 191 UN member countries under integrated leadership of the UN. He did not hide his ambition about the historical world event, which was initiated by his idea and implemented by his staff, that “world leaders, when they arrive at the United Nations for a summit meeting in September, would be ready to take the decisions that were needed, and adopted them as a package” (“Promotion of 2005,” 2005, para. 6).

#### *Pre-Summit Media Relations and Preparation*

While an Australian journalist referred to the World Summit 2005 as an opportunity, intended to be the UN’s “crowning glory, a justification for its existence and a triumph for Kofi Annan, the Nobel Peace prize-winning secretary-general” (Lewis, 2005), the Department of Public Information focused its resources and strategies on the support of the summit in terms of attracting maximum media coverage for the leaders who were expected to attend, the UN, and the secretary-general. It could not afford to fumble this rare opportunity. In the planning stage, the department set four principles to promote the summit: strategic planning; better use of new information and communications technologies; closer system-wide coordination; and proactive outreach.

Its tactical implementation was initiated by disseminating information about the report as a key player for the summit; the department's tasks began with preparing for the "In Larger Freedom" report and promoting it. After setting up press briefings and distributing press kits about the report, the department enjoyed a significant amount of media coverage for the report. The ideas and recommendations made under the name of Annan in the report were described as "bold" (*The Wall Street Journal*), "sweeping" (Fox News), and "far-reaching" (Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*), according to the 2005 Report of Committee on Information (p. 3). The special report was also covered by prominent news outlets, such as *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Financial Times*, *De Morgen*, and *Le Soleil*.

For the 2005 World Summit preparation, the department launched a two-week advertising campaign to raise public awareness of the event, targeting residents in New York City who would be subject to inconveniences such as traffic jams, limited access to public places, and intense security checks in some areas where world leaders might gather. To alleviate their anticipated pain, the campaign designed to inspire their cooperative spirit was named "Everyone Is A Delegate" ("UN to NY," 2005). The campaign's name contained the message that now that New Yorkers were also going to be influenced by the outcome of the summit, they would act like one of the delegates by making sacrifices for success of the event. Regarding the result, the campaign sent the message that the summit would tackle global challenges that affect New Yorkers' lifestyles such as human rights promotion and global warming alleviation. The campaign with the message of New Yorkers' diplomatic behavior and consideration aimed to encourage them to think of themselves as one integrated unit of the UN, as the integration

propaganda stresses the individual adaptation to the social setting generated by the UN and the world's powerful figures.

The campaign contained an apology, including the fact that the event would cause some inevitable frustration by commuters. It also appealed to New York's sense of itself as both a community and as an international city. "The UN wants to show its appreciation to the people of this great city and thank them in advance for their patience and understanding," said Shashi Tharoor, the UN under secretary-general for Communications and Public Information ("UN to NY," 2005, para. 5) "The campaign is inspired by the warmth and humor of New Yorkers themselves." The department spread the message on subways, buses, telephone booths, and at all area airports, including local network and cable television throughout the tri-state area (New York, New Jersey and Connecticut). The campaign was hoped to create New Yorkers' positive attitudes toward the UN since the city is such "an integral part of the UN family" (para. 8). The message emphasized that New York City and its residents were to be part of the UN integration ideal.

While the campaign message was delivered to people in the tri-state area, the department staff strived to make personal contact with more than 250 journalists, columnists, editors, and television and radio producers, pitching pre-summit stories to the media in every corner of the world, Tharoor reported in his official presentation before the UN Information Committee members and UN press corps on December 10, 2005. He said such one-on-one contacts resulted in some 125 interviews and background briefings by senior officials for the journalists, and when the summit began, more than 3,500 accredited journalists covered the event ("Promotion of 2005," 2005).

Tharoor said that the department's Internet operation – which attracted about 45 million hits on the UN website during the three days of the summit, including more than 180,000 viewers from 175 countries “who had watched the webcast of the summit live” – was a great success from an information distribution perspective (“Promotion of 2005,” 2005, para. 14). Not only was the communication power of the Internet praised, but its practicality was also underscored. He said, “For the first time, audiences had been provided with the option to watch the live webcast in either the original language or interpreted into English” (para. 15). In addition, the department posted a group photo of the world leaders, which was downloaded more than 3,000 times before the summit ended (“Promotion of 2005,” 2005). Those figures indicated that the Internet and the UN website with its high-quality content became essential tools to reach global audiences quickly and widely in a cost-effective manner, Tharoor concluded (“Promotion of 2005,” 2005).

The 2005 World Summit, the largest historical gathering ever of 150 international leaders for the three days of meetings and talks (not 170 as expected due to member nations' domestic affairs) had its grand opening with Annan's keynote speech on September 14. The speech can be described as the gist of his message for integration and the UN's willingness to play the dominant role in constructing one governmental entity under UN leadership. He told the leaders that “millions of lives and the hopes of billions” still depended on their pledges to address extreme poverty, hunger, and lack of access to education (“UN World,” 2005). “For the first time, you will accept, clearly and unambiguously, that you have a collective responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity,” he said (“UN

World,” 2005, para. 1). After warning that ignoring the basic principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law for the sake of expediency would undermine confidence in collective institutions, he stressed, “That is why a healthy, effective United Nation is so vital” (para. 1).

He went on to say that if the UN reform was properly utilized, the UN could combine power and principle for the service of “all the world’s peoples” (“UN World,” 2005, para. 2). And the UN could be a forceful body to deliver “integrity, impartiality, and ability to those peoples,” he said (para. 2). However, such strong remarks were merely a calculated maneuver to get to his final message intended for the presidents, prime ministers, monarchs, and thousands of journalists representing the 150 countries. He declared, “Whatever our differences, in our interdependent world, we stand or fall together” (para. 3). This declaration manifested the strategic message of his integration ideal. His declaration not only indirectly criticized U.S. President George W. Bush, who declared the 2003 war on Iraq against Annan’s opposition, but also insinuated that the UN – not the United States – should play the key role in resolving international conflicts and issues. Annan added, “We have seen that even the strongest amongst us cannot succeed alone” (para. 5). He referred to the United States as the strongest but one that would not succeed with its sole power in addressing international problems without the UN. Bush was listening to Annan.

The summit went smoothly, and the leaders adopted “a historic outcome document,” according to the UN News Centre (“Annan Calls,” 2005). The document beginning with the statement, “We, Heads of State and Government, have gathered at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 14 to 16 September 2005,” summed up

thus: “a unified stance by the international community on a broad array of crucial issues from combating poverty and promoting development to unqualified condemnation of all forms of terrorism along with the acceptance of collective responsibility” (UN Secretary-General Report, 2005, p. 2). The document called for timely and decisive collective action when national authorities manifestly fail to protect populations from war crimes, ethnic cleansing, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Interestingly, the document accommodated Annan’s ideology of integration, noting, “We believe that today, more than ever before, we live in a global and interdependent world. No state can wholly stand alone” (p. 2).

The UN indentified the document as “a major breakthrough” because it elicited unambiguous commitment by all participating leaders, who promised to raise an additional \$50 billion by 2010 for fighting poverty (“Annan Calls,” 2005). They also agreed to fight terrorism in a way that would make the international community stronger and terrorists weaker while strengthening UN reforms (2005). A day later, Annan in his address to the sixtieth anniversary of the General Assembly, urged the 150 leaders and their governments to set out a series of actions to implement the pledges made at the summit, which he hailed for making progress “across a broader front than on any other single occasion in the 60-year history of the Organization” (“UN World,” 2005, para. 3). Lastly, he reaffirmed the summit’s outcome by highlighting the agreement to taking collective action to protect civilians as one integrated group in the world (“UN World,” 2005).

After the summit, the department pitched the message that the UN had proved to the world that it was capable of organizing and finishing jobs as a powerful entity by



having the world leaders gather together at the same time in the same place to nurture global humanitarian consensus for further development and security. More importantly, the department's messages highlighted – while Bush was struggling to handle the terrorists – that no single, sovereign country would be able to stand alone and solve international problems without the help of the international community; the UN could be the unified sovereignty that took care of problems caused by the 191 member countries. In correspondence with Annan's integration ideal, the department spun the messages through press releases, media briefings, speeches, web-postings, and talks with journalists. Selective retention and perception (Festinger, 1957) were in evidence, not surprisingly.

Such communication methods were used to shed light on the UN's success in hosting the once-in-a-generation summit event, in which the UN seemed to gain the momentum to integrate the world under its leadership. Restoring confidence in the UN with the leaders' endorsement for Annan's ideals and implementation was Annan's vehicle for integration. However, the department's efforts to disseminate the messages and its rosy-tinted spinning were confined within the area of the UN headquarters in New York, as so many skeptical views of the summit, the UN, and the outcome were raised outside the UN.

There were 3,500 journalists at the summit from all around the world, as Tharoor said. Their job in general was to cover their leaders, not the UN or the secretary-general, except as their leaders happened to have a personal meeting with Annan. Their coverage was focused on what the individual national leader said while meeting with other leaders. For example, *The New York Times* published an article about the summit's opening day

that focused on what Bush said in his speech (Sanger & Hoge, 2005). The article began, “President Bush, facing an array of world leaders who are deeply divided on how to define terrorism or act against nuclear proliferation and poverty, struck a conciliatory tone at the United Nations on Wednesday” (Sanger & Hoge, 2005, para. 1). *Bua News* of South Africa reported that “President Thabo Mbeki is expected to address today [at the summit] . . . [and] will also have a bilateral discussion with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan” (“President Thabo,” 2005, para. 2). *Korea Times* noted, “He [President Roh Moo-hyun] is scheduled to attend a reception hosted by U.S. President George W. Bush at the U.N. headquarters and hold a dinner meeting with Korean residents at a hotel later in the day before the U.N. meeting” (Choi, 2005, para. 1). And “The Czech Republic has deep interest in the improvement of the United Nations’ work and the strengthening of its role, Czech Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek said in the discussion at the UN World Summit in New York,” (“Czech Republic,” 2005, para. 1). As expected, many articles had been reported in the same fashion until the summit adopted the UN-described “historic outcome document.”

### *Criticism of Summit*

The U.S. and international media criticized – not long after the summit was over – that the outcome document represented the UN’s ineffectiveness and anemic performance. Simply put, the document not only was quite vague in many areas with lack of specific action plans, but also merely reaffirmed past commitments with lack of anything substantial. *The Toronto Star* described the summit with one word: “Feeble” (“The UN,” 2005). The newspaper stated that Annan’s ambitious ideas were subverted at every turn by the United States and other countries with hollow rhetoric for bold reform.

The summit failed to allow Annan to “hire and fire on merit alone, which would be the best defense against corruption and incompetence” (“The UN,” 2005, para. 10). Suffice it to say that such countries did not want a strong UN and confident secretary-general.

*The Australian*, a day before the summit’s opening, predicted that the summit would not be able to fulfill Annan’s dream because of the Oil-for-Food scandal, which had tarnished the reputation of the UN and Annan (Lewis, 2005). The paper’s projected outcome of the summit was humiliation for the UN, since Annan’s UN reform opportunity had already disappeared in the scandal (2005). Rather, the summit would serve to question “whether the UN will have much of a future,” the paper predicted (Lewis, 2005, para. 3). It also offered a detailed scenario that world leaders, including Junichiro Koizumi of Japan, Hu Jintao of China, Toni Blair of the United Kingdom, Vladimir Putin of Russia and President Bush, would sign off on a wide-ranging accord, and then, Annan would declare that the world came together to take action on grave global threats that require bold global solutions; then, “negotiations come up short, failing to break through entrenched opposition . . . what a joke this will be” (para. 9). The scenario turned out to be prophetic regarding the summit.

From the perspective of those outside of the UN, the summit ended up supporting the views of those who believed the UN was a waste of U.S. or developed countries’ taxpayers’ money, which was used to pay for such things as cocktails for diplomats. Even a former UN official who worked for Annan between 1997 and 2003 contributed a critical column to *The New York Times*, writing, “The United Nations summit meeting last week should be the last of its kind. It allowed world leaders, once again, to over-promise and under-deliver on behalf of an organization that few of them genuinely wish

to equip for success” (Mousavizadeh, 2005, p. 15). The column argued that because the UN practices were too compromised and its potential was too limited, the summit failed to strengthen international commitments to prevent tens of thousands of needless deaths from poverty as well as give Annan the power to bypass patronage and rely on merit in choosing and retaining senior officials (Mousavizadeh, 2005). It made a radical argument that Annan, in failing to reconstruct UN leadership, needed to consider doing away with its governing structures and letting UN agencies and programs such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) operate independently for the sake of efficiency (Mousavizadeh, 2005). The conflicting views of the summit between parties inside the UN and outside the UN generated far different story outcomes, as the narrative paradigm explains that telling a story with different rationality and fidelity can be understood in a different way. The UN rationalized the meaning of the summit as the historic and largest event in world history, whereas critics of the UN understood the summit as a poorly produced hyperbole that was not a story worth telling.

It is hard to deny that the 2005 World Summit was a rare opportunity for the world to reorient the way that 191 UN member countries (or at least the 150 summit - participating countries) actively performed common action aimed at alleviating poverty, promoting human rights, and eradicating terrorism under UN leadership. Even bigger than disappointment with the summit outcome was that a fundamental reform opportunity for the UN to gain global administrative power had failed. In the report “In Larger Freedom,” Annan proposed a grand bargain that offered wholesale changes to UN management structure to lead the organization toward structuring a more accountable and

transparent system, which would eventually give him more authority (2005). He aimed to reform and enlarge the Security Council, the Human Rights Commission, UN General Assembly and Economic and Social Council with the creation of both a peace-building commission, which would be assigned to build coordinative relations with countries in conflict, and a human rights council, which would replace the discredited Human Rights Commission. He planned all these changes to be achieved as a package supported by the leaders at the summit so the General Assembly had no choice but to approve his reform package. Whereas Annan's report set the bar high in theory, the summit outcome in reality disappointed many in terms of the critical issues for him and the UN.

An *Irish Times* editorial identified the unsuccessful Annan ambition as “fudge” (“Reform of UN,” 2005). It elaborated why his ambition had no chance to succeed with the following three reasons: (1) although the summit outcome document of forty pages included creations of the council and the commission, it postponed decisions on the details of the two new bodies. In other words, there would be no specific date or implementation for the creations; (2) the document valued the global partnership for development on trade, aid, and debt relief for the developing world, but there were neither new commitments nor an action plan. It was just another repetition of lip service for indebted countries; and (3) there was no agreement on how to reform the Security Council in the document because of China's refusal to support permanent membership for Japan (“Reform of UN,” 2005). The editorial concluded: “The days of world leaders turning up at summits and making promises which were then shelved are gone” (2005, p. 11). Therefore all Annan's “constructive proposals” described by a *New York Times* editorial (“The Lost,” 2005, p. 28) to reform the UN in correspondence to the historic

gathering of the largest number of global leaders would be labeled as a failed attempt unless such lip services were turned into action. Not surprisingly, the summit precisely corresponded to *The Australian's* scenario published the day before the summit. The same paper a few days later praised former Australian foreign minister Gareth Evans, who said, "The final summit document would produce nothing but generalization and weasel words and commit nobody to anything could hardly have been more accurate" (Nason & Lewis, 2005, p. 21).

### *Oil for Food*

It would be unfair for the UN and Annan to embrace all the criticisms from the media, because three unfavorable occurrences, which weakened the reputation of Annan and the UN, sprang up before the summit. The first mishap was presented with the final report of the Oil-for-Food program, in which the UN was designated to supervise the multibillion-dollar oil exchange for humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people. The program was launched in December 1996 with the approval of the Security Council. While Iraqi oil was sold to purchase food and medicine for the Iraqis, it turned out that the Saddam Hussein administration, UN officials, transnational corporations, and French and Russian politicians colluded to manipulate the processes. So they gained personal, illegitimate profits. In 2004 Annan ordered Paul Volcker, a former U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman, to investigate the conspiracy. And Volcker produced the final investigation report on September 7, 2005, a week before the summit. Volcker criticized the Secretariat, which was supposed to be in charge of preventing the program from being corrupt and defectively operated. The report found the program mismanaged and poorly administrated within the UN and by contractors ("Annan Stresses," 2005). Volcker

viewed the administrative structure and practices of the UN as clearly incapable of handling the extraordinary challenge presented by the program. However, Volcker pointed out that there existed an ambiguous responsibility in term of commanding the program as the Secretariat shared its supervising responsibility with the 661 Committee under the Security Council. As a result, Volcker concluded, “no one seemed clearly in command” (“Annan Stresses,” 2005, para. 8).

In response to the report, Annan announced before the Security Council that he fully accepted the criticism and admitted that he and his staff failed to keep up with the UN’s responsibilities for accountability, integrity, and effective performance (“Annan Stresses,” 2005). “There are hard lessons for all of us to learn,” he said (“Annan Stresses,” 2005, para. 2). He also apologized for his son Kojo’s involvement in the scandal, saying, “I was not diligent or effective enough in pursuing an investigation after the fact, when I learned that the company which employed my son had won the humanitarian inspection contract” (para. 3).

However, he quickly shifted gears to defend himself and his organization by citing a part of report that “the wholesale corruption within the Programme took place among private companies manipulated” by Saddam Hussein’s government (“Annan Stresses,” 2005, para. 4). Annan went on to say that the report’s findings stressed the importance of his proposed management reforms in his report of “In Larger Freedom” so his reform plans would strengthen oversight and increase transparency while he “should be allowed to carry out this functions effectively, taking day-to-day decisions on the deployment of staff and resources without having to wait for prior approval from the General Assembly, or this Council, or their various committees” (para. 7). He urged that

the reform plans aimed at strengthening his power and the UN's credibility be adopted by the General Assembly "by next week's summit" (para. 8). It turned out that Annan shrewdly used Volcker's report and his testimony before the Council to push the adoption of his proposed reform package by associating it with the 2005 World Summit.

His responses and requests stirred provocative reactions from the media. "Kofi Annan failed to curb corruption and mismanagement at the United Nations," *The New York Times* reported (Hoge, 2005, p. 6). The paper's next-day article bluntly pointed out that the scandal deeply undermined the reputation of Annan and brought "calls from Republican lawmakers in Washington for his resignation . . . before more than 170 presidents and prime ministers are scheduled to take up the issue of reforming the United Nations at a summit meeting" (Hoge, 2005, p. 10). Annan had to wrestle with the damaged reputation and pressure for resignation, which significantly dampened his authority and discolored the meaning of the summit. There was no doubt that the accusations for his failed leadership inflicted unrecoverable damage on his reform plans aimed at integrating the 191 member countries into the one world under UN leadership.

*U.S. UN Ambassador John Bolton*

The second occurrence, which deprived Annan of the image of competency before the summit, was derived from President Bush's appointment of John Bolton to UN ambassadorship. On August 1, 2005, Bush used a congressional recess to appoint Bolton to be the U.S. permanent representative to the UN. Bolton, known for his eccentric character and for anti-UN opinions, was described as a "notoriously undiplomatic" and "congressionally unacceptable" person for the position ("The Lost," 2005, p. 28). Not only did Bolton play a key role in sinking Annan's reform proposals at the summit, but



he also wielded his power to turn Annan into a figurehead for the UN until his second term ended. Bolton once said that “there is no United Nations” and declared that the United States was the one that should decide how the UN works (“John Bolton’s,” 2005, para. 1).

Unlikely to approve Annan’s ideal of the UN integrating the world under UN leadership, Bolton as the newly appointed U.S. ambassador laid out his framework to discourage Annan’s reform proposals, first aiming to make the summit outcome document a less meaningful, conventional piece of paper. About a month before the summit, diplomats from 170 countries were finalizing the draft of the UN summit agreement, which was supposed to be born as the summit outcome document on September 16. However, Bolton’s interference in the draft-making process transformed the content of the draft from the world version of the outcome draft to the U.S. version “with hundreds of deletions and insertions” in favor of Washington’s taste (Borger, 2005, para. 1).

In the process, Bolton made dramatic changes to the draft opposing the Kyoto protocol on climate change and the International Criminal Court’s legitimacy. According to Borger, the draft reflected Bolton’s belief that “the assertion of US interests should almost always take precedence over the search for compromise with an international community” (2005, para. 3). *The Washington Post* backed up Borger’s opinion, reporting that “Less than a month before world leaders arrive in New York for a world summit on poverty and U.N. reform, the Bush administration has thrown the proceedings in turmoil with a call for drastic renegotiation of a draft agreement” (Lynch, 2005, para. 1). In the final draft, Bolton succeeded in eliminating new pledges of foreign aid to impoverished

nations, scrapping provisions that called for action to halt climate change, strengthening language to underscore the importance of taking tougher action on terrorism, and imposing greater oversight of UN spending (Lynch, 2005).

Bolton seemed a die-hard fan of agitation propaganda, which used to be practiced by demagogues to destroy the government or the established order. He exerted the full weight of U.S. diplomatic power to agitate the commitment of other countries' diplomats – at least, those who had supported Annan's plans to reduce global warming and increase economic assistance for developing countries. Although his unilateral diplomatic endeavor to press other UN diplomats to agree with him generated media criticism, he used such criticism to spread his agitation propaganda against the UN. Asked by a journalist what he thought of a *New York Times* editorial accusing him of “all muscle and no diplomacy,” Bolton said, “There are some things that make me happy in my job. And that was one of them” (Senior, 2005, p. 5).

Borger (2005) noted that Bolton did not care about revealing his tendency toward annihilating the UN's world role by both deleting a provision providing the UN “with the resources needed to fully implement its mandates” and eliminating another provision encouraging “pharmaceutical companies to make anti-retroviral drugs affordable and accessible in Africa” in regard to the UN playing the main role in fighting AIDS. Bolton through the draft process accomplished his dream that the United States should be the one making the UN work when it wants it to work, and “that is exactly the way it should be,” he said (“John Bolton's,” 2005, para. 4). For his mission he played hardball with the UN and Annan, and his strategy for and performance in the game handsomely repaid his boss, George W. Bush.

Despite the vehement domestic and international opposition to his choice of Bolton as ambassador, Bush maneuvered to give the post to Bolton, saying, “John Bolton’s a blunt guy” who could “get the job done” at the UN (“John Bolton’s,” 2005, para. 6). The “job” description was that Bush would not accept any entity that would become a threat to the United States’ status as sole superpower at the international level. In particular, Annan’s motivation and movement to escalate the UN’s status, even possibly over the United States, while the United States was mired in the war in Iraq, could not be condoned by the Bush administration. So Bush allowed Bolton to maximize his U.S. diplomatic power to place controls on the UN. Going against international opinion expressed by the UN was a joy for Bush.

It is important to note that the relationship between Bush and Annan did not get into the resentment stage until Annan’s opposition to the war in Iraq was announced. Annan told the BBC the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq was “illegal,” and the action should have been made by the Security Council, not the United States (“Iraq War,” 2004). His message was obvious that since the United States was just one of the 191 UN member countries, all important decisions such as waging war needed to be made by the UN, the only international government. Bush viewed Annan’s message as extremely offensive because he was struggling to win the presidential election again; the election was fifty-one days away. The timing provoked angry sentiment from U.S. Republicans, and the sentiment was embodied with Bolton’s revenge on Annan. In this sense, the United States was an intelligent entity that recognized the integration strategy of the UN unifying all the member countries into a sort of world government that could curb the rights and influence of the United States.

### *Developing-World Reactions*

The last occurrence, although the impact was not as strong as the other two, stemmed from the developing world's disappointment with the draft. Before the summit began, developing countries already perceived the upcoming summit as a glass-half-empty event. An African journalist who covered the summit said that the public and journalists in Africa had the perception that issues close to their heart such as poverty, AIDS treatment, and debt relief would be downplayed by the draft-making process, while issues such as terrorism and UN reform took the spotlight ("Promotion of 2005," 2005). The African journalists had the sense that nothing would be accomplished for the world's poor regions, meaning that the summit would wind up reaffirming the developed world's terms and conditions. In addition, they predicted that the U.S. media and major international media would insufficiently cover African-related issues as the summit was proceeding. In fact, their concern proved correct. Even though the Department of Public Information tried to project the development and poverty elements of the summit, U.S. media felt that those issues of poor countries had been publicized enough in earlier coverage ("Promotion of 2005," 2005).

Another concern from the African public regarding the possible failure of the summit was Annan's proposal in the draft to create a new Human Rights Council. In general, developing countries cannot afford to invest their financial and human resources in promotion of human rights while simultaneously striving to pursue economic development. Rather than being concerned with a wide range of social and economic issues, they focus on choice and concentration, mostly for economic sustainability ("Development: Hopes," 2005). The most urgent endeavor in poor countries has been

attaining food and water. Therefore, compared with developed countries, they often have poor human rights records. More disappointingly, the draft merely reaffirmed the commitment of developed countries to provide 0.7 percent of their national income in aid without timetables and specific action plans to offer real aid. “It is sad that the UN itself is producing drafts which show that it is failing to think outside the box, and failing to include the developing countries’ views sufficiently,” an NGO activist said about two weeks before the summit (“Development: Hopes,” 2005, para. 4). “And that could get weakened further because of the U.S. position” (para. 4). As a result, the media focused on issues and messages that the United States and Bolton intended to sell, including Annan’s failed pitch for a UN reform package and one integrated government under UN leadership.

According to the theory of press nationalism, the media prefer to use government officials as news sources because they can produce quick and credible newsworthy comments. The U.S. media were busy copying and printing what Bush and Bolton said of the summit and the UN, rather than offering more stories about developing countries’ struggles and Annan’s plan to make the summit successful. In short, the 2005 World Summit outcome document was nothing but a big disappointment to the developing world as they relinquished their hope by anticipating that the summit would not achieve what the UN and Annan planned (“Development: Hopes,” 2005).

#### Discussion of the Four Cases

##### *The 2004 UN Global Compact and The Goodwill Ambassador Program*

Petty and Cacioppo’s elaboration likelihood model (1986) suggests that understanding the two message deliberation routes is central to the message crafting

strategy for persuaders. The central route is effective in targeting motivated and active processors of information, while the peripheral route is useful to persuade message receivers who are neither capable nor interested in information. However, both routes aim for message receivers' attitude changes and help message creators and persuaders build the fundamental strategy of message production targeting the two groups of message receivers, depending on whether motivation and ability are embedded into their cognitive process in examining information.

Secretary-General Annan proved that he was a skilled message strategist by using both routes. He chose the central route to persuade business leaders to consider cooperating with the UN in hopes of a decrease in human rights violation, labor discrimination, and damage to the environment. Annan's centrally routed messages, casting a spotlight on the creation of new business ethics in the era of globalization, penetrated business leaders' minds in which a pursuit of profits would no longer be achieved with only cost reduction strategies. Rather, business prosperity would require social and international engagement in the efforts to take care of the business-relevant issues of human rights, labor standards, and the environment.

As Annan pointed out, the emergence of new communication technology helped consumers overcome geographical boundaries and time restrictions of information flow, so that a company's misconduct could cause a fall in product sales because of its damaged reputation. Based on the guidance of UN activities and humanitarian values, Annan directly sent a message to the leaders: cooperate with the UN for better global business opportunities. The leaders and the business community responded to Annan's messages by making a pledge to comply with the ten global compact principles; wherever

and whenever they operated a business, they would increase the quality of employee life and the environment. Annan's direct, constant, and repeated messages aiming at the global business community elicited cognitive agreement among business leaders and the eventual participation in the 2004 UN Global Compact Summit. There have been some concrete outcomes that emerged gradually. The Coca-Cola Company, which produces its flagship beverage products in 50 countries, joined local water partnership programs to conserve community water sources with its new water recycling equipment (UN Report Global Compact, 2008). IKEA announced that it would not accept child-labor-produced products from its suppliers and their sub-contractors, formulating its own child labor code of conduct, "The IKEA Way on Preventing Child Labour" (UN Report Global Compact, 2008, p. 30). And UC RUSAL (Russia, Aluminum) became the first Russian company to "complete the monitoring and analysis of its greenhouse gas emissions" (p. 36).

In raising awareness for the UN's activities and issues, Annan took the peripheral route approach of message dissemination to the general public. He used celebrities to galvanize source credibility for peripherally routed messages. While embracing the already existing Goodwill Ambassador Programme, he created the program of UN Messengers of Peace in the year of his inauguration. He valued such celebrities' fame and power to attract media coverage. He asked celebrity ambassadors and messengers to put their names into messages so they could raise global support for UN work. Some celebrities – such as Michael Douglas, Muhammad Ali, and Angelina Jolie – drew significant media attention and U.S. and global public awareness. Such coverage might have been successful in inducing positive attitudes toward the UN. But there exists a flaw

regarding the use of peripherally routed messages: they are short-lived. When such celebrities' media coverage waned, so did their messages.

It should be noted that the department played a key role in supporting Annan. A barrage of press releases, personal contacts with journalists, and media briefings were implemented to underscore Annan's messages. Although it is not certain how many media outlets attended the 2004 Global Summit and the 2002 messenger and ambassador meetings, the department made an effort to invite more media personnel to the events. That was part of Annan's UN reform strategies: positive portrayals of the UN in a greater number of media outlets.

#### *The Ten-Story Project*

As noted above, many international news stories were "slipping off the radar screen," so the department with the recommendations from Annan and the General Assembly launched an initiative titled "Ten Stories the World Should Know More About." Tharoor hoped to use media power to raise awareness of the plight of underprivileged people who could be helped by journalists influencing rich governments and people through their reporting. The idea of unveiling significant world issues that need humanitarian aid and – if necessary – military intervention was grounded in the use of media power. However, the department had been well aware that journalists were flooded with news, and many times urgent stories from the developing world would be ignored despite the UN's attempt to make such stories go viral.

The secretary-general and the department received many moving stories of human beings in despair, and those stories deserved to be shared with more people around the world. The media were central to the story-sharing process. After experiencing the



frustration of stories overlooked by the media, the department adopted the new strategy of news dissemination: storytelling.

As Fisher's narrative paradigm offers the belief that some stories are better at satisfying an audience in narrative rationality because of values that set the narrative paradigm's logic of good reasons, the department created more descriptive and more human-featured stories in a narrative format to the media. The department also provided statistical data to support the validity of its stories. According to the narrative paradigm, good stories include rationality and coherence.

The ten-story project was groundbreaking because a majority of UN-distributed information turned to either news briefings or press releases, both of which are considered inadequate news sources, meaning that the UN correspondents regarded them as "staged" news opportunities that, while pegged to actual events or times, had little news value ("Public Information," 2004). "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About" was narrated in the soft news strategy to create a new way of offering news material to the correspondents with real human-interest, touching stories.

The ten-story project clearly consists of "a good story" rather than "a bad story" if evaluated by Fisher's narrative paradigm, arguing that if the story contained rationality to be understood and shared by storytellers and story listeners, it would have the foundation for a good quality of communication and a good story of persuasion. The thirty stories introduced between 2004 and 2006 met the five presuppositions of narrative paradigm. For example, as one of the presuppositions says, the world is a set of stories; the department introduced a set of stories that had not taken the limelight in media coverage, especially in U.S. media. Another presupposition is people identify a good story with

their experiences of history, culture, and character. The stories made appeals to billions of people who experienced or are experiencing such hardship in the international community. They share human suffering, and their stories deserved to be shared in media coverage. More importantly, such stories inspired the international community to make decisions on the basis of good reason and rationality regarding humanitarian attention and work. With accurate statistical evidence and real people featured, the stories gained fidelity and credibility as well. Overall, the world is a set of stories from which people choose and tell, and Annan wanted to influence the choosing and telling (Fisher, 1987).

Despite the ambitious endeavor of storytelling, the ten-story project was terminated after the 2007 list. The department did not explain why, but the reason can be traced to 2004 when UN correspondents unfolded their skeptical opinions on the program. In a press briefing, one UN correspondent said that the ten stories were “not worth covering” because they had been already reported before the new millennium (“Press Briefing,” 2004, para. 11). Such stories were unlikely to “burst onto the radar screen” of his editor (para. 8). Another journalist pointed out that “news tended to be about the unexpected. Many of the stories on the list were very good, but generally would be better reported from the region concerned,” particularly in Africa (para. 13). The news values of proximity meant that African stories did not often engage U.S. audiences.

Journalists at the briefing further expressed their concerns with the department’s lack of understanding of the press. One journalist said that the United Nations was not necessarily transparent in sharing information with journalists about places that were about to “blow”; and journalists suffered from “press conference fatigue” covering people who addressed correspondents simply because they were in town rather than

because they had a focused bit of news to share (“Press Briefing,” 2004). One of the correspondents even was offended with the ten stories, claiming, “the department [should] not provide a kind of early warning system in reporting and journalists [should] be those who select stories” (“Press Briefing,” 2004, para. 10). Most importantly, the correspondents did prefer news information from personal “chats” with senior UN officials rather than such “staged” news distribution (para. 15).

In response to the correspondents, Tharoor, head of the department, said that the department tried to give stories found to be compelling “in terms of audience interest” and not of press interest. (“Press Briefing,” 2004). He told the correspondents that it was difficult to believe that “the story of AIDS orphans in Africa was not worth covering” (“Press Briefing,” 2004, para. 5). But he did not intend to demean their principle of selecting stories. His message for them was to ask for more consideration for the underreported stories. “The list was not a criticism or an attempt to tell journalists how to do their jobs,” he said, and he told them not to jeopardize the relationship between the press and the UN (para. 3).

Based on the co-orientation model, the difference between the group of the department’s staff (A) and the group of UN press corps (B) toward the media coverage of UN projects and activities (X) was derived from the different orientation toward stories, and they shared the same feeling that they needed to work out to close the difference toward newsworthiness and value of such stories. The co-orientation toward each group basically is associated with feelings or thoughts toward the ten-story project’s news value, but the two groups’ negative attitudes toward each other also functioned as the drive for widening the difference. As the co-orientation model explains that members of

either or both sides have incorrect perceptions of the other side's position when it comes to issues of mutual interest (coverage of UN activities and projects), the two groups could not help but recognize the difference unless the group A allows the group B to have more personal "chats" with senior officials on the record in this case. Although they did not see the same value on the ten stories in terms of reporting, there is no doubt that they maintained the communication equilibrium in the social environment as the UN staff and the UN correspondents. Their relationships would hardly be jeopardized as long as one group tries to modify its attitude toward the other group.

Regarding the coverage of the launching of "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About," on May 4, 2004, the day after the ten-story project was announced, only one African news outlet, *New Vision*, reported the launching of the project, according to this study's search of the major global news outlets in the LexisNexis data base. No major U.S. news outlets apparently reported it. Moreover, only several new companies were found to cover the project's relevant topics. For example, the last story of the ten 2006 stories was Cote d'Ivoire's October elections. Only BBC International, Africa News, and Xinhua published a total of twenty-nine stories about the event with this study's LexisNexis search. No news articles from major U.S. news companies were found.

The lack of coverage in the project and the event in U.S. media is not uncommon, as press nationalism (proximity) shows that national interest is the fundamental impetus for directing media coverage and tone. Herman and Chomsky (1998) argue that U.S. media were likely to cover foreign events or international conflicts through the processes of using credible sources that were also accessible to journalists. Chang (1989) claims

that the U.S. media shift their coverage toward a foreign country in response to the U.S. government's foreign policy. Cote d'Ivoire seemed too small, irrelevant, and poor to attract the U.S. government and media attention. Also, the country did not have U.S. government officials present to inform the media about the elections. Lastly, the UN's ten-story project seemed too obviously foreign and uninteresting to grab the interest of U.S. media. It lacks proximity.

### *The 2005 World Summit*

Secretary-General Kofi Annan's reform strategies to construct a strong UN that could be a true leader of the world were initiated when he took office on the first day of 1997, hoping to reorient the UN aimed at adapting its internal structures and culture to new expectations and challenges from the international community. Before the last day of 2006 – his last official day as secretary-general – he hoped to see his reforms break through so the UN would have become the true commander armed with authority, power, and commitment to not just the international community but rather the internationally integrated community under UN leadership.

Ellul (1967) might have offered Annan the strategy of integration propaganda over that of agitation propaganda to create a global community under UN leadership. As integration propaganda aims at making the target audience meet the propagandist's expectation and reshape his or her thoughts and behavior, Annan – while agitating the presidents, prime ministers, and kings to consider the United States to be a troublesome country that could not take the lead in maintaining world peace and security – laid out the plan of the permanent international setting under UN leadership with his ambitious report announcement, entitled "In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human

Rights for All” (2005). The report stressed that the world could build a better and safer planet through collective security and a global partnership. Witnessing the United States being swamped in the war in Iraq and the war against terrorism, Annan urged each individual UN member state to integrate and adapt itself to the globally constructed setting by sharing Annan’s integration ideal and belief.

Throughout the process of his reforms, Annan thought the UN would be more accountable and transparent. Based on the reformed UN structures, he dreamed of giving more “authority to the secretary general” (Nason & Lewis, 2005, p. 21). He expected that the new UN would gain more public support and build its strengths. In doing so, no individual country, not even the United States, would go over the UN’s head. He wanted to set the rule of international law when Bush in 2003 launched the Iraq war against the Security Council’s opposition. Annan said, “One of the great ironies of that period was the manner in which the United States – which had done more than any other country to establish the UN – found itself in the position of being the main obstacle to reforming it” (Annan, 2012, p. 145). As Annan expected, “most of [Annan’s] heroic reforms have been dismantled, watered down or shelved” (2005). The teamwork of Bolton and Bush can be explained by Ellul’s agitation propaganda (1965, 1967), which is used by demagogues to tear down an existing system.

Demagogues in hopes of toppling the current system and leaders in a totalitarian system tend to be experts at creating sentiment formed by lies, emotions, delusions, and resentments when they implement agitation propaganda; such sentiment is likely to lead the intended audience to demonstrate violent reactions. For example, the Iraq war, which started in 2003 and lasted until late 2009 with 100,000 casualties, was based on the Bush

administration's "fabrication and wishful thinking," *The Telegraph* reported ("Iraq War," 2013, para. 7). The Bush administration's misinformed campaign (critics would say "lies") about the weapons of mass destruction possessed by Saddam Hussein, emotions of the U.S. public still horrified by the September 11 attacks, delusions of Hussein's military forces being capable of dropping bombs on U.S. soil, and resentment toward Arab terrorists functioned as an optimal combination for the administration to create anti-Arab sentiment among the general public.

Ellul (1967) argues that propaganda as an instrument can produce persuasive messages and promote effectiveness. It can be understood that Annan might have imagined an organization that could prevent people in the world from suffering poverty, crimes, and wars through persuasive messages. His ideal organization could have been founded under the process of integration. As Ellul (1967) argues that another aim of integration propaganda is unification and reinforcement, Annan sought a way of unifying the UN member states and reinforcing his integral ideal into their minds. However, the reality Annan faced torpedoed his dream. Criticisms of his failed leadership for the UN went viral, and Annan's long-time dream to achieve a new strong UN through the summit event could not help but lose steam. Annan's hope for a stronger UN that could create one true government for all people was blocked by the combination of Bush's interference, the Oil-for-Food scandal, and the developing world's disappointment in the UN's incapacity. In sum, Annan's integration propaganda failed to overcome the combination of obstacles.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

This study illustrates the ways in which the United Nations strived and often struggled to reorient its image with its communication strategies and communication implementations. In doing so, it contributes to the broader understanding of restoring damaged images associated with media and public relations. This study also makes a modest contribution that may help others understand how the international organization with no commercial advertising could strategize to build positive public relations via special events, projects, and speeches in promotion of media coverage. More importantly, this study evaluates the ways of the UN seeking the efficient and effective means of distributing messages by aiming to inform the target audience and the general public of the importance of the organization in addressing global issues that any independent country alone could hardly resolve, including the United States.

Kofi Annan's strategic communication plans occurred in a particular time and context, but they are rooted in timeless theories. This conclusion will first elaborate on the historical context, and then briefly return to the application of the theories discussed at length at the end of the preceding chapter.

### History

The UN knew that it could not strengthen its existence without public support during the Boutros-Ghali era while confronting criticism, which was rooted in Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda but was used to turn the UN into a political scapegoat for the U.S. government, according to Boutros-Ghali. In any event, the UN image was damaged and needed repairing. The repairing process requires a comprehensive approach to creating and maintaining identity (what is regarded as an organization's consequence of



comparison and differentiation), image (what is perceived as a reality for an organization), and reputation (what is generally believed about an organization), according to L'Etang (2008).

Kofi Annan, the seventh secretary-general of the UN, prioritized his first objective to be gaining public support for the UN. He believed that the general public should be informed of how the UN engaged in humanitarian work helping and saving billions of people around the world. Such information as Annan wished would educate the general public to consider the UN a leading organization capable of resolving problematic international issues, and then would persuade them to build a positive attitude toward the UN. In doing so, the UN after all would have a new image as an indispensable or irreplaceable international organization. The new image would lead to a good reputation bestowing influential power on him and his organization. Based on the comprehensive approach, Annan sought to increase the organization's image by using messages and information in close cooperation with the media.

As brand specialist Percy (2008) argues, an organization's identity drives its image, which informs its reputation; Annan recognized that his image-repairing process for the UN began with the basis of the UN identity: maintaining international peace and security as a unique international organization (see the UN Charter Preamble, 1945). The maintenance of world peace and security requires preconditions of advocacy for fundamental human rights, larger freedom, sustainable economic development, and independent sovereignty. In this sense, the UN's identity was established based on the preconditions of advocacy to maintain world peace. Building a good image of an

organization cannot be achieved unless the organization has a solid identity that characterizes the consequence of uniqueness at the organizational level.

Departing from the solid UN identity, the department published a promotional booklet, entitled “We the People: the Role of the United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” at the arrival of the new millennium along with globalization (2000). In the booklet, the department reaffirmed the following identity of the UN:

We remain the only global institution with the legitimacy and scope that derive from universal membership, and a mandate that encompasses development, security and human rights as well as the environment. In this sense, the United Nations is unique in world affairs (UN Booklet, 2000, p. 68).

The booklet also included a survey result conducted by the UN and the Gallup International in 1999 to seek global public opinion on the UN. Known as the UN Millennium Survey, it was “the largest survey of public opinion ever conducted – of 57,000 adults in 60 countries, spread across all six continents” (UN Booklet, 2000, p. 15). It found that most people around the world viewed “the protection of human rights” as the most important task for the United Nations, followed by peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance (p. 16). It was not surprising to Annan and the UN that more than half of those who answered the survey judged the performance of the UN to be dissatisfactory (p. 16).

Based on the survey result, the UN pledged to continue to support the interests of people around the world with its unchangeable objectives such as peace, prosperity, social justice and a sustainable development in the twenty-first century, while keeping up with its professional focuses on reducing extreme poverty, investing in education, promoting health, combating AIDS, expanding debt relief program, achieving economic

growth, protecting the vulnerable, reducing the dangers of nuclear weapons, and reducing the threat of global warming (UN Booklet, 2000, pp. 19-65). As a result, the UN hoped to have “a vital and exalting role to play” in building the new century safer and more equitable to people in the world (p. 80).

Drawing on this promising identity, Annan, targeting an audience worldwide, claimed that the old image of the UN as a “distant talking shop” with no solutions that matter to people could switch to a transparent and effective organization that can resolve international problems (UN Report Renewing the United Nations, 1997, p. 82). Part of his reform plan in 1997, which declared to place communication functions at the heart of the UN management, created a culture of communications in pursuit of creating the transparent and effective image of the UN in the mind of the audience. In line with Annan’s plan, the department reoriented its structure and strategy to support Annan’s UN reform.

A culture of communication, the media guidelines, the ten-story project, celebrity endorsements, the 2004 Global Compact, and the 2005 World Summit were part of Annan’s and the department’s efforts to build the good image of the UN in hopes of attracting better and broader media coverage of the UN role and activities. The media in the end were expected to disseminate the core message that “the United Nations is working on issues that matter to people everywhere and as a result is helping to improve their lives” (UN Report Questions Relating to Information, 2000, p. 2). However, Chapter 4 of this study showed that the efforts did not receive much coverage, and some was even negative, such as the coverage of the world summit. The main reason was derived from the fact that many UN activities were not interesting to the media. The

UN's main focus on addressing the chronic world issues of developing countries' poverty, human rights violation, and lack of resources was "not worth covering" ("Press Briefing," 2004, para. 11). Furthermore, such stories not only had been already reported before the new century, but also were too weak to meet the interest of audiences in developed countries.

The department admitted that it struggled to convey the message that the UN was "an indispensable organization to the peoples of the world" and the information about the UN's hard work in developing areas because the subjects the UN were working in such as poverty, human rights, and education were not charming to "the lay person" or reporters of "newspapers, radio, television and now the Internet" (UN Report Questions Relating to Information, 2001, p. 11). In addition, the department doubted if media in the developed world even cared about such subjects in the age of "information overload" (p. 11).

The unsympathetic media in the UN's major work areas tended to go with the reporting trend of "carrying increasingly specialized information to increasingly narrow audiences," rather than covering broader issues of human related matters (UN Report Questions Relating to Information, 2001, p. 11). The department offered evidence of the media coverage trend of U.S. media on behalf of developed countries: The United States experienced "the 65 percent reduction in the [broadcast] time allocated to world affairs by the major networks since 1980" (p. 11). Amid the trend of media outlets and the aloofness of journalists about issues of developing countries, the department, despite its brisk effort of using every means of communications, was prone to the media-reporting trend because of "the relatively low level of interest" in UN messages (p. 11).

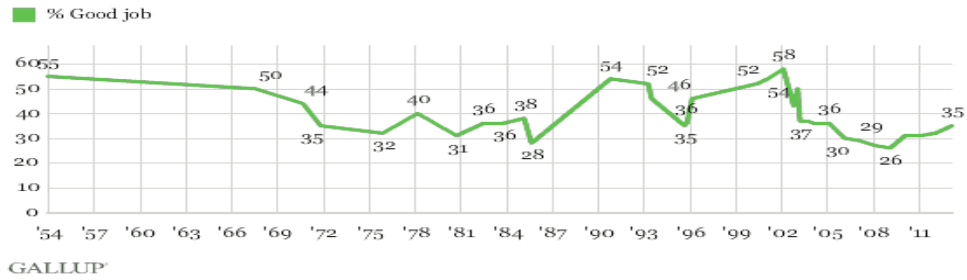
### *Image of the UN*

It is obvious that Annan and the department made efforts: opening the UN to the media, organizing events for the media, and customizing messages through the media, all of which aimed to reorient the image of the UN. For Annan, the negative images such as “distant talking shop” “bureaucratic” “blathering” “incompetent” and “corrupt” institution must be banished, so that the UN could regain public support that would serve to empower the organization to become an indispensable organization (see chapter 1). Since January 1 of 1997, Annan’s and the department’s plans and activities in building a better image of the UN with strategic messages through media dissemination – generally speaking – did not bear fruit. In August 2005, Marchese and Simmons evaluated Annan’s nearly nine years of performance as secretary-general. They concluded that the UN was “no longer perceived as an effective global body whose legitimacy and authority” were respected (Marchese & Simmons, 2005, para. 1). They offered poll evidence to support their argument. The poll conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation in the same year found that the general perception of the UN was of an organization that was “incapable of effectively resolving international affairs” and “outlived its usefulness” in working for “modern realities” (para. 3). In addition, public confidence and trust at that time was at an all-time low. Marchese and Simmons argued that the “troubled and controversial image” of the UN, which had lasted over the last few decades, was grounded in the perception that the UN was not effective at confronting the challenges relevant to the international community. Even after the big, historic events and production of persuasive messages, the ruling image of the UN in 2005 was to stray “further away from ‘doing good’ and closer to out-dated, bureaucratic, and ineffective” (para. 5). The poll also found that most

U.S. citizens did not have “a sound understanding” of what the UN was and what the UN was doing. This founding would have been too disappointing to Annan and the department as their primary goal from the beginning of the reorientation of UN communication was to inform the UN role and activities of both U.S. and international publics. Marchese and Simmons claimed that the UN was “at a critical juncture in its bid to regain trust and renew its ability to inspire the international community, but the damage to its “tainted image” was too significant (para. 10).

In 2005, about one year before Annan’s retirement, the “tainted image” of the UN was a big loss to Annan and the department. However, it is important to raise a question about if the efforts Annan and the department made to increase public awareness of the UN role and its importance had not borne fruit at all throughout the history of Annan’s two-term administration. Regarding the fact – as noted earlier – that the press gave “the benefit of the doubt” to Annan and the UN in his first term as secretary-general, it seems reasonable to assume that the general public, especially in the United States, might have given the UN a little break in line with the press. So this study uses the result of Gallup polls, a representative sampling of public opinion or public awareness concerning the UN to understand whether the U.S. public support for the UN was unchangeably low throughout Annan’s era (The Gallup United Nations, 2013).

*Do you think the United Nations is doing a good job or a poor job in trying to solve the problems it has had to face?*



*Figure 4. U.S. Public Support for the UN over Time*  
(Source: [www.gallup.com/poll](http://www.gallup.com/poll))

When Gallup asked the U.S. public the question of “Do you think the United Nations is doing a good job or a poor job in trying to solve the problems it has had to face?” the answer to “yes” was: 36% (1996), 50% (1999), 58% (2002), 37% (2004), 36% (2005), and 30% (2006).

As the graphic shows, the U.S. public was gradually seeing the UN doing its job positively during Annan’s first term and negatively during his second term. The first year of Annan’s second-term, 2002, which reflected Annan’s first-term evaluation, recorded the UN’s peak ratings since the Gallup took its first poll in 1954. Annan’s reform plan and strategy aimed at gaining public support for the UN seemed to gain a momentum for a further drive for “a culture of communication” in his second-term as secretary-general.

Responding to another question of “In your view, does the United Nations play a necessary role in the world today, or not?” the public answered as follows:

Table 1. UN Role

	Yes, does	No, does not	No opinion
1997	85 %	11 %	4 %
2005	64 %	34 %	2 %

Source: Gallup website. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/116347/united-nations.aspx>

The positive response dropped in Annan's second term. A similar trend of negative evaluation toward the UN was found with the question of "Should the United States give up its membership to the United Nations, or not?"

Table 2. UN membership

	Yes, should	No, should not	No Opinion
1996	17 %	77 %	6 %
1997	9 %	88 %	3 %
2005	13 %	85 %	2 %

Source: Gallup website. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/116347/united-nations.aspx>

This poll shows that when Annan took office in 1997, the public gave a more positive support for the UN in comparison to Boutros-Ghali's last year in the office. However, the support fell a year before Annan's retirement. The bottom line of such declined numbers of public opinion was the UN's credibility problem rooted in the Oil-for-Food Program. (see Chapter 4, pp. 124-126).

#### *Annan's Waxed and Waned Dream*

The Gallup polls showed that the general public was gradually building a positive attitude toward the UN until the war in Iraq and the Oil-for-Food scandal broke out. Annan's first term was applauded with the highest rating of 58 percent in the history of the UN. His and the department's strategic plans and efforts to repair the damaged image of the UN through communication activities seemed to take off in a smooth path, but he and the department were not able to overcome the scandal, which made all of the strategies and activities go down the drain. By committing himself to reform of the UN, Annan dreamed of the resurrection of a strong, influential UN. To achieve his dream, his



first step was to open the UN and its officials to the media to build a mutual relationship with journalists for better coverage of the UN role and work. Since he did not take media coverage for granted, he sought to create ambitious, fresh events to attract more media coverage of the UN. He also was not reluctant to use himself as a bully pulpit to spread his and the UN's messages to persuade the general and target audiences to build positive attitudes toward his organization. To that end, the 2005 World Summit was intended to become his final masterpiece to declare the newly reformed UN with its new image of transparent and indispensable global organization to integrate all of the 191 member states under its leadership.

The department kept up with Annan's guidance and instruction. In its new structure with the three divisions, the department developed a clear mission statement:

The Department of Public Information's mission is to manage and coordinate United Nations communications content – generated by the activities of the Organization and its component parts – and strategically to convey this content, especially through appropriate intermediaries, to achieve the greatest public impact (UN Report of Reorientation of United Nations Activities in the Field of Public Information and Communications, 2002, p. 4).

It was likely that the department was about to understand and utilize the concept of strategic communication with the new structure. The department was determined to focus on generating greater impact on an audience worldwide by developing focused messages, better attracting new audiences, prioritizing the allocation of its limited resources among mandated activities, and identifying new programs (UN Report of Reorientation, 2002, p. 5). It was seeking a greater way of informing the audience of the organization's "indispensable work to achieve the greatest possible impact on the hearts and minds of the peoples of the world" (p. 13).

As the department was facing an unprecedented test generated from the scandal, it strengthened its monitoring of media by making use of new technologies to respond to misinformation in the media. It focused on addressing strong criticism of alleged corruption and mismanagement in the Oil-for-Food Program with rapid response to any media sources (UN Report Continuing Reorientation of United Nations, 2005).

Unfortunately, the Oil-for-Food scandal was an invincible obstacle to overcome for both Annan and the department. Annan understood that the obstacle was built by the United States. Being uncooperative from the beginning stage of the Bush administration's war plan in Iraq, the UN was criticized as "the world's biggest bureaucracy" (Gardiner & Spring, 2003, p. 1), "a toothless debating society" (Feulner, 2003, p. 3), and "a glorified debating society" (Gardiner & Phillips, 2004, p. 2) by conservative critics. In other words, such anti-UN critics strategized to cast a spotlight on "widespread corruption, mismanagement and incompetence" within the UN as well as to expose "a deeply rooted culture of secrecy" at the heart of the UN Secretariat (Gardiner, 2005, p. 2). The critics of the UN were not afraid to express their resentment of the UN not supporting Bush's war in Iraq. When Annan defined the war as "illegal," it was the straw that broke the camel's back. The United States did not miss the opportunity of punishing him with the scandal, which tarnished the UN image and his leadership. Senator Coleman's call for Annan's immediate resignation led Annan to have a nervous breakdown (Gordon, 2005), and Bush's appointment of Bolton as U.S. ambassador to the UN served as a symbolic sign of announcing the end of Annan's era and his dream.

Not only was Bush's endorsement for Bolton "terrible news for the United Nations," but it also epitomized that Bush clearly had "little respect for either the United

Nations or international diplomacy in general,” a *New York Times* editorial claimed (“Ambassador Bolton,” 2005). The paper argued about two months before Annan’s retirement that secretary-generals in reality “cannot succeed without Washington’s active cooperation” (“An Impossible,” 2006). The paper, seen “as a leading source for credible, objective news,” summarized Annan’s second term (John, 2010, p. 380). Another editorial declared that the UN still maintained “its tattered image” around the world (“Darfur Needs,” 2006). In its October editorial, the paper pointed out that the UN over the preceding few years embraced serious damage such as the scandal, accusation of peacekeeping operators’ sexual harassment, and Annan’s fractured reforms (“The Worst,” 2006). It advised the next secretary-general to strive to build an alliance with the Bush administration, hostile, aloof, and constructively unsupportive, but the biggest financial contributor to the organization.

Annan (2012) admitted that the U.S. role remained central in the UN system and Bush’s “right wingers want to destroy the United Nations” (p. 363). Annan hoped to rebuild a strong United Nations that could not be agitated by a single member country. Throughout his reform process, Annan wanted to establish a system that would authorize secretaries-general to make a decision relating to UN management such as hiring their own staff and allocating budget to UN activities by their own judgment, but Annan had “no real powers to help him carry out decisions” (PBS Kofi Annan Center, Secretary-General power section, 1997). If Annan had been given an authority to create a new UN position to hire his own version of John Bolton, the UN could have defended itself better against Bush’s power.

Annan's 2012 memoir does not indulge in counterfactual history, but it is tempting to imagine him beginning his initiatives after the advent of social media such as Facebook (2004), YouTube (2005), and Twitter (2006). Strategic communications employees working under Annan's orders could have communicated directly to social media users without having their filtered mediated by the traditional mass media. It is intriguing to think of Twitter links with embedded YouTube videos calling attention to the UN's ten stories projects, or Facebook accounts of UN celebrity spokesmen drawing attention to selected news topics. Annan, however, was a product of his times, and he tried to use the communication tools available to him as best he could.

#### Cases and Theories: A Final Analysis

This study argues that the finish line of Annan's marathon as secretary-general was to ultimately integrate the 191 UN member states into one global community under the UN's leadership. To accomplish his ambitious goal, Annan began with the reform plan of the UN in 1997. The bottom line of the reform plan was to restore the damaged image of the UN since the 1967 Israeli war cost the UN public support (UN Oral History Interview with Hottelt, 2005).

Along with the creation of a culture of communications and the media guidelines, Annan organized the four events discussed in this dissertation in assistance with the department. The celebrity messenger program, the 2004 Global Compact, the Ten-Story Project, and the 2005 World Summit were designed all and in part to inform the general and target audiences of what the UN was doing and how the UN was performing its job to improve the quality of life in the world. If the general public knew about how the UN as an indispensable organization was performing good deeds for people in desperate

situations, Annan believed that the UN would regain public support, and the damaged image could be repaired eventually.

In making efforts to show that the UN was able to operate civil, political, and business tasks at the international level, Annan met with celebrities, business leaders, and political leaders throughout the events. He also spurred the UN's pivotal role in assisting poor people in developing countries. That is why the ten-story project was organized. With the four events, he expected more media coverage of the UN in a positive light, in comparison to his predecessor's era. As this study shows, Annan received a positive response from journalists when it comes to his efforts to build a mutual relationship with the media. Although there is no strong direct evidence that Annan's mutual relationship with the media probably helped the UN receive its record-high positive response from the U.S. public at the first year of Annan's second term, the good relationship would not detract from Annan's authority and the role of the UN.

Constructing the UN's open culture to the media, Annan expected positive media coverage of the UN and his leadership. In doing so, public support would increase, and he could achieve his dream of giving birth to a new, powerful UN that leads the international community to comply with the UN leadership. The 2005 World Summit in his mind was the finalization of his dream in hopes of announcing the UN-led integrated global community at the event.

His vision, however, did not materialize. Knowing that the most important factor en route to his dream was heavy and positive media coverage, Annan and the department strategized to invite more media outlets to the UN-organized events. Personal contact

with journalists, media briefings, press releases, and speeches were conducted to inform the media of the UN's upcoming events.

Unfortunately, the outcomes did not meet Annan's and the department's expectations:

- Few celebrity ambassadors and messengers were successful in generating media coverage for the UN, and such coverage and celebrity effectiveness were short-lived.
- The global business leaders were persuaded with their better business practices in performing corporate social responsibility, but the small group of target audiences would not expand to persuade the general public to build a positive attitude toward the UN.
- The ten-story project was a fresh attempt to call for more media coverage of marginalized people and countries, but journalists were discouraged from reporting the poor people's stories because of the principle of news values or news worthiness.
- The 2005 World Summit resulted in inviting an army of journalists all around the world, but what the UN most received was negative coverage.

#### *Theory-based Assessment*

These outcomes of the UN-organized events can be explained by the theories presented by this study. The peripheral route of the elaboration likelihood model explains why few UN celebrity ambassador and messengers were effective at disseminating the messages of the UN. Celebrity endorsements were destined to short-term effectiveness, according to the route. On the other hand, the central route of the elaboration likelihood

model helps understand why Annan's continual messages were influential on the global business leaders.

The narrative paradigm and co-orientation model provide an understanding of the gap between the department and the UN correspondents in terms of covering stories about the UN. The correspondents tend to seek both stories about conflict and new, quotable remarks in exclusive personal discussion regarding UN stories, whereas the department offered them press releases, media briefings, and pre-arranged interviews, all of which are considered "staged" news events by the correspondents. Despite the fact that the department and the correspondents agreed on the importance of the UN coverage, they have a different orientation toward values of news stories. The department with the ten-story project in the narrative form tried to address the complaints of the media about the UN not providing interesting stories, but the gap between the two groups was not narrowed, for their orientations toward the project differed significantly. However, it is unlikely that the relationship would go sour, because they tried to close the gap to communicate with each other in the social setting, according to the co-orientation model.

Integration propaganda and press nationalism explain why the 2005 World Summit served U.S. interests, rather than those of the UN. Annan detected an opportunity to strengthen the UN as an irreplaceable international organization while taking advantage of the U.S. distraction in the war against Iraq. He might have believed that sending a message of the powerful, influential UN at the international level while highlighting the struggles of the Bush administration could integrate the UN member states under the UN leadership. But the Bush administration was not an easy opponent to Annan. Bolton's agitation propaganda and the U.S. media corresponding to the U.S.

government's foreign policy dissuade Annan to achieve his ultimate dream. Press nationalism suggests that copying and reporting whatever powerful government officials say of foreign policy with few questions asked is a common practice of journalists.

The outcomes might have been different if a popular U.S. president had a cordial relationship with Annan. If the president were a staunch advocate for the UN, the media would cover more stories of the UN. Even UN correspondents would have more open orientation toward UN-oriented news events in a positive light. As the editorials of *The New York Times* suggest, Annan's deterred dream might have been expected when he expressed his animosity against the most powerful country's president.

#### Action Public Relations Plan

As mentioned earlier, the UN is not allowed to employ commercial advertising to boost its image. Because of its nonprofit, international identity, the UN has little choice but to turn to a public relations approach in order to enhance its public image. There is no doubt that Annan and the department made titanic communication efforts. But the outcomes, as this study shows, are not encouraging, even though Annan made an appropriate approach to the reorientation of the UN's communication practices in generating a media friendly culture of the UN.

Although it could sound like 20/20 hindsight, the UN could have strategized to use TV programs in broadening relations with the general public. The use of TV does not mean only TV news. Making the UN's own TV programs with more human-interest or comedy stories would have been likely to improve its image. For example, a "30 Rock"-like sitcom or a "West Wing"-like drama could serve as some kind of breakthrough in the UN's strategic communication. If the budget is tight, providing access to the UN



headquarters for media corporations as a TV or movie set would not be a bad idea to attract publicity, as the White House and the Rockefeller Center are frequently used in the media for commercial purposes.

For an international organization the size of the UN, it is a bit startling how the organization has been reluctant to develop its public relations strategies. It seems necessary for the UN to hire professional public relations agencies to improve its image. The hiring of course can cost the UN money. If there is no budget for public relations agencies, the UN can make another exception of receiving a donation from the private sector. In September 1997, Annan for the first time throughout the UN history received a one billion dollar donation from Ted Turner. The money was used for programs such as cleaning up land mines, peacekeeping, disease eradication, and refugee assistance, all of which were to “go to U.N. causes” (“Ted Turner,” 1997, para. 2).

Whereas advertising is considered a controlled medium, public relations is viewed as an uncontrolled medium. It means that advertising requires money loss in exchange for gaining effectiveness of messages measured by sales, while public relations uses significantly less money than advertising, but has to deal with a diffuse impact of messages. Therefore, as the old saying goes, public relations prays for space, while advertising pays for space. There is no shame that the UN seeks free publicity, but it is disappointing that it did not get as much free publicity as Annan wished.

Taking a detour strategy can be an alternative. Rather than looking for direct media coverage, the UN can make U.S. government officials and politicians speak for the UN. To achieve the outcome, the UN needs to reopen its Washington Information Center, which had been shut down since 2002, due to its heavy maintenance cost. The center was

the UN's lobbying control tower toward the U.S. government and Congress. As press nationalism suggests, U.S. media prefer to quote officials and politicians. Lobbying is one way of practicing public relations in an effective way. However, it also needs money to spend.

For the UN, public relations practices can be only performed through the department's budget approval by the General Assembly. Unless the department gets enough money to invest in public relations practices, or U.S. media are motivated to cover more activities of the UN, it seems difficult for the UN to improve its image through public relations. However, it should be noted that Annan pioneered sloggling through a difficult path, and if the Oil-for-Food scandal had not occurred, the UN would have had a higher public support rate. This study suggests that it is time for the UN to open its New York building and its staff to TV and film producers to be used as sitcom and movie settings, even if some concerns could arise such as a mockery of the UN to become the butt of a joke. To inform the general public of good work of the UN, however, an urgent mission of the UN seems to help more publics become aware of and familiar with the existence of the UN. In other words, the UN's image has sunk so low, it has little to lose in trying new approaches to build support in the United States.

#### Limitations of Study and Future Research

This study represents an international organization's communication strategies and practices over a 10-year period. Its most significant limitation is that it does not discuss the UN's Internet strategy to inform and persuade more people in the world, although the organization has operated its website since 1995. Another limitation is that this study gets into neither the analysis of TV coverage of the UN nor that of international

coverage of the UN. Additionally, although there was personal communication with UN officials whose information could have contributed to this study, they refused to be quoted, even on the condition of anonymity.

By extension, this study could serve as a starting point for a more in-depth study of how the UN has strategized to broaden its target audience at the local level with its localized communication messages. The department knows the importance of winning hearts and minds of the foreign target audience, but there seems to be a lack of studies about the topic.

The UN is currently headed by Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon, who is going to retire in 2016. His communication strategy to improve the organization's image could be examined. Content analysis of the UN's Internet, TV, radio, and print coverage can produce a more objective outcome of coverage of the UN. In addition, interviews with UN correspondents and the department's former staff could give enriched information about the strategic communication of the UN.

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