

IFEX

CAMPAIGNING FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

A HANDBOOK FOR ADVOCATES
INTERNATIONAL FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION EXCHANGE

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Geoffrey Chan and Rachael Kay

HANDBOOK COORDINATORS

Tell us Your Campaign Stories

We encourage IFEX members and other non-governmental organisations to tell us about any additional campaign tools or techniques that have been used successfully for free expression campaigning. As the handbook is likely to be updated in the future, we would welcome your comments and suggestions. Please write to: campaigns@ifex.org

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Preface

Through the power of the Internet, IFEX's Action Alert Network serves as a vital early warning system for the global community about free expression violations.

When journalists, writers and human rights activists are jailed or harassed for doing their work, IFEX alerts mobilise rapid responses, resulting often in the releasing of individuals and the saving of lives.

The alerts thus play an important role – but only after the fact.

The importance of this unique handbook is that it addresses the environment in which the abuses are enabled. It introduces proven campaigning techniques that enable free expression advocates to effect change in a greater number of ways. It gives us vivid examples of how these techniques have been used to force governments to act in less repressive ways.

Most importantly, we learn that by doing skillful, tactical and strategic campaigning – of the kind described in this handbook – free expression advocates can maximise their resources to become even more powerful agents of change.

Rod Macdonell

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IFEX CLEARING HOUSE

Introduction

Since IFEX's founding in 1992, the members of the International Freedom of Expression eXchange have made great use of the Action Alerts Network to raise awareness of free expression violations around the world. The spotlight of national and international attention has, on many occasions, led to the release of jailed journalists and writers, and sent a message to violators that the world is watching their every step.

While it is difficult, if not impossible, to say that there is a cause-and-effect relationship between the issuing of an alert and the release of a jailed individual, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence that suggests alerts can make a difference when used in combination with other strategies.¹

Many in the IFEX community have been asking how they can build on, and go beyond, issuing alerts to have an even greater impact in defending and promoting freedom of expression. With this question in mind, the IFEX Clearing House has produced this handbook to give members a "toolbox" of ideas, best practices and resources for campaigning.

The need for more concerted campaigning on free expression issues is increasingly urgent today. Threats to freedom of expression go far beyond the arrest and imprisonment of those

whose writings and opinions challenge the powerful – although that still occurs with alarming frequency in some countries.

Governments and other forces are employing more sophisticated methods to restrict freedom of expression. In the aftermath of 9-11, many countries have passed sweeping anti-terrorism laws that pressure journalists to reveal their sources and leave them more vulnerable to arrest and prosecution. Criminal defamation laws are being used to hinder proper scrutiny of the activities of public officials, business leaders and others. Meanwhile, Internet censorship is spreading worldwide as governments find new ways of limiting citizens' expression and access to information on the World Wide Web. And violence against journalists and other media workers remains an ever-present danger in many places.

¹ Kim Brice. An Evaluation of the International Freedom of Expression eXchange, Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries (HIVOS), 2003.

In this context, IFEX members need to be equally, if not more, creative than the perpetrators of abuses in fighting back. While alerts remain an important first stage of action, they can have far more impact as part of broader campaign strategies that use multi-pronged approaches to defending and promoting freedom of expression.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

Section 1 focuses on campaign strategies. Mats Abrahamsson, a former Greenpeace campaign coordinator and founder of the Swedish consultancy Selene, shows you:

- How to develop a strategic framework for campaigning that helps campaigners choose the activities that can best meet their objectives and avoid rushing into activities that misuse time and resources (Section 1.1)

- How to conduct a “power analysis” that identifies the powers at play and how they interact in order to deploy limited resources where they can have the greatest impact (Section 1.2)
- How a Greenpeace campaign convinced Coca-Cola to stop using ozone-destroying chemicals in all its refrigeration equipment (Section 1.3)

Section Two shows an example of an IFEX member – the Media Institute of Southern Africa – that has realised the need to build on, and go beyond, the issuing of alerts by developing a strategic vision for defending freedom of expression. (chapter 7).

Section Three provides 10 campaign tools that IFEX members can use to compliment the issuing of alerts. These tools can be used separately or in combination with each other as part of a campaign. Each tool comprises:

- A Toolbox of tips, ideas and questions to consider;
- A Best Practice Case Study of an IFEX member or other organisation that has successfully used the campaign tool;
- A list of Resources for further information.

Of course, your organisation has to carefully consider which tools will work best to meet your particular goals. The tools described here will not necessarily be appropriate in all cases, nor are they a comprehensive list of all the possible tools. But we hope that this information and these examples will provide inspiration and guidance for those looking to make their freedom of expression work more effective.

A man in a dark suit and white shirt stands in a room. The wall behind him is covered with numerous newspaper clippings and photographs. In the foreground, a table is cluttered with stacks of papers and documents. The entire scene is rendered in a monochromatic, high-contrast style with a yellowish-orange tint.

Section 1 Developing Campaign Strategy

1

A Strategic Framework for Campaigning

BY MATS ABRAHAMSSON, SELENE

Summary There are a multitude of techniques available to campaigners today, both in the North and in the South. This paper provides a brief description of a practical model developed by Selene to help campaigners build a strategic framework for their campaigns. Instead of plunging headlong into activity, campaigners are advised to go through the steps of defining their objectives, making a useful “power analysis”, developing a convincing communication strategy and then using insights gained in this process to choose the activities that can best be used to reach the objectives.

WHAT IS CAMPAIGNING?

There are many attempts made to define “campaigning.” For practical purposes, I will define it here as: *An organised public pursuit of social change*. “Organised” to set it apart from spontaneous outbreaks of protest against an injustice etc., and “public” to distinguish it from commercial campaigning (i.e. advertising campaigns) and from various campaigns by state authorities (e.g. to reduce crime rates or to stop drug trafficking).

All campaigning is about communicating and all communication is about influencing (and being influenced by) other people. While campaigning in yesterday’s society may have been a one-way activity, successful campaigning today almost always includes a two-way communication process.

When campaigners want to influence a decision-maker, they have basically two options:

- 1 Direct influence (i.e. traditional lobbying)
- 2 Indirect influence (where one turns to a part of the “public” to gain support for one’s case, as in alliance-building and public-opinion building)

STRATEGY

One of the most common mistakes campaigners make is to fall into the “activity trap.” One goes straight from good intentions into full activity mode – with or without activity plans. The result is often misused resources, frustration and, ultimately, failure. By pausing a little and doing some homework on strategy, campaigners can have a much better chance of channeling their resources towards the outcome(s) they are after.

1.1

A strategy helps one make better choices. To aid campaigners in building a strategy, four very basic questions can be used:

- 1 What do you want to change?
- 2 Who has the power to make that change?
- 3 What can convince them to make the change?
- 4 What should you do to convince them?

The answer to the **first question** can be found in the **Campaign Goal or Objective**.

The answer to the **second question** can be found in a **Power Analysis**.

The **third question** can be answered by developing a **Communication Strategy**.

The **fourth question** should provide you with a **Plan of Activities**.

DEFINING CAMPAIGN GOALS OR OBJECTIVES

The importance of well defined objectives is probably known to most campaign managers. Still, the lack of such objectives is one of the primary reasons why many campaigns fail. Every time one begins a new campaign, one should go through the task of defining these objectives and see how they relate to each other.

Objectives need to be discussed, agreed upon and shared among all team members who are working on a campaign. Although a short term objective can be a step in a longer term strategy, working with more than one objective creates confusion and a lack of guidance in difficult situations. If there is more than one objective, they should be clearly defined in order of prioritisation.

DEVELOPING A POWER ANALYSIS

While the goal of campaigning is to convince powerful people to make change, it is important to remember that one must first determine who ought to be targeted. By taking a closer look at those who wield power and how they can be influenced, campaigners – many of

whom operate with limited resources – will make better strategic choices. A power analysis can be a useful tool for developing a campaign strategy (see “The Power Analysis”, Section 1.2).

By doing a power analysis, campaigners will gain a better understanding of the playing field – a good starting point in developing a Communication Strategy.

DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

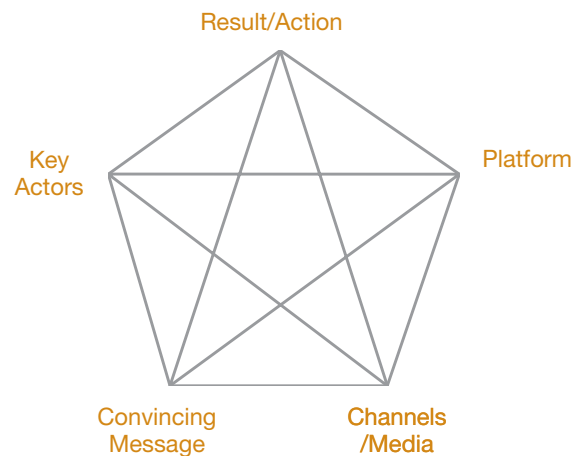
Once you know what you want to change and who has the power to do it, you need to find a way to convince them to do so. Most people today are flooded with information and it is a challenge merely to make oneself heard above the background noise.

The key to successful communication is **knowing and understanding your audience**. You need to know what motivates them in general and what could motivate them to change. Campaign communication is too often built on campaigners’ motives rather than on the motives of those they want to influence.

A communication strategy needs to be built with:

- **The Key Actors** – identified in the Power Analysis
- **The Convincing Message** – the argument(s) you believe will be compelling enough so that your target audience will make change
- **The Platform** – the mechanism with which you make your voice heard. Your organisation's reputation, its access to decision-makers and media, or eye-catching activities, are examples of what can create a platform
- **The Channel/Media** – a description of what modes of communication will be used, e.g., personal meetings, emails, advertisements, op-eds, etc.
- **The Result/Action** – the communication needs to be very clear and precise about what type of action you are expecting from each key actor

These five components form an interconnected whole. There should be a certain level of congruence between them and they need to be developed together.



An example of a successful communication strategy was the “Don’t Mess with Texas” campaign launched by the state of Texas. Public littering was proving costly and unsightly, and most of it was being done by young men aged 15-25. The government asked a communications company to devise a public relations campaign.

It used the slogan “Don’t Mess with Texas” and recruited a rock star to do a television advertisement. In the first week of the campaign, littering was reduced by 30 per cent. Although the campaign objective was improved public hygiene and cleaner streets, the message – aimed at young men – tapped into local patriotism and male chauvinism (“You’re a real Texan if you don’t litter”).

CHOOSING CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

The best campaign activities are always the ones that convince those who have the power to make change to do so. The campaign activities should be developed out of the Communication Strategy so that they will be the ones that are most likely to communicate the Convincing Message.

The campaign activities can be chosen from among your organisation's arsenal of techniques. Campaigners are encouraged to test new ways of communicating by seeking inspiration from other groups and by developing new techniques. When treading on new ground, campaigners must remember that there needs to be a certain level of congruence between the activity, the message and the reputation your group has in society.

Traditional campaigning often produced detailed activity plans for the whole duration of the campaign. In modern society, where the flow of information is enormous and messages are constantly competing for attention, it is often better to “plan for the unplanned.” With a strong strategy as a foundation, campaigners can often seize opportunities when they arise and, by reacting to outside events, leverage the impact of their activities to a much higher degree.

In modern society, where the flow of information is enormous and messages are constantly competing for attention, it is often better to “plan for the unplanned.”

In this context, campaigning can be seen as an ongoing dialogue between a campaigning group and other actors. Listening becomes as important as talking.

EVERYDAY CAMPAIGN STRATEGISING

Let’s use an everyday example to illustrate how a simple campaign strategy might be developed.

Suzie is upset. She wants ice cream but her mother does not allow it. However, her father might be sympathetic. He works long hours

and rarely gets to see his only daughter these days. Suzie decides to try to convince him.

She develops a **Campaign Objective**: “I want ice cream.”

She develops a **Power Analysis**: “Mother says I can’t have ice cream, but I might be able to convince father. He’s so busy that he rarely gets to spend time with me.”

She decides on a **Communication Strategy**: “I’m my father’s only daughter. I know he feels bad for not spending enough time with me. I’ll work on his guilt to get what I want.”

She finds a **Campaign Activity**: One day, Suzie phones her father at work just before he is about to leave the office. “Dad, I love you. I missed you so much, I cried all day today when you were at work. Can you buy me an ice cream when you get back?”

She achieves her **Campaign Objective**: Suzie’s father comes home with a big tub of ice cream.

The Power Analysis – a Tool to Build Effective Campaigns

BY MATS ABRAHAMSSON, SELENE

Summary Campaigners are advised to spend some time analysing the powers at play and how they interact in order to help them deploy their resources where they have the greatest impact. Three practical tools are presented, which used together, can help build a Power Analysis. Campaigners are urged to implement these tools in a team effort to improve results, enhance team building and develop a common understanding of the campaign environment.

POWER ANALYSIS

Every campaigner knows that campaigning is about influencing people to make change. But who do we actually attempt to influence? All too often the answer is based on a very shallow analysis and, in most cases, on what has routinely been done in the past.

Advocacy groups often get stuck in the problem analysis. While a thorough understanding of the problem itself is a necessary foundation of any campaign, focusing too much on the problem can be very time consuming and often lets the ones who can make change “off the hook.” Shifting attention to the real powers behind the problem will help campaigners get results.

Three basic questions to ask when building a Power Analysis are:

- 1 Who has the power to make the change?
- 2 Who has the power to influence those who can make the change?
- 3 Who do you have the power to influence?

THE KEY ACTORS LIST

To help you in this task, there are some tools available. The most basic is a “**Key Actors List.**” It is simply a list of those actors¹ whom you believe have an ability to affect the outcome of your campaign. A creative way to validate this list, and possibly build it further, is to ask the key actors on the list (some or all) who they think should be on it. The more you know about the actors and what drives them, the better you will be able to ascertain how they can be influenced.

¹ An “actor” can be an individual, group, institution etc. that has the power to influence the situation.

1.2

THE KEY ACTORS TABLE

The second tool is the “**Key Actors Table**”, where each actor is rated and categorised according to a number of factors. An example of such a table is given below, but it should be noted that the factors used can be adapted to suit the needs of any particular campaign.

In this table, the five columns are used as follows:

- **Actor** – the name of the individual, group or institution
- **Driver** – the forces that motivate or drive an actor in a particular issue
- **Process/risk** – assesses the likelihood of an actor changing his/her position on an issue

and the risks involved in targeting them (eg. A government minister who appears supportive of your cause may not be the best target if s/he is not very influential in the cabinet)

- **Influenced by** – other actors who can likely influence this particular actor
- **Influences** – other actors who are likely to be influenced by this actor

ACTOR	DRIVER	PROCESS/RISK	INFLUENCED BY	INFLUENCES

THE KEY ACTORS MAP

An even more dynamic tool that can be used to analyse key actors and the way they interact is the Key Actors Map. Start by drawing a two-dimensional diagram.

Key actors are mapped out in the diagram according to their “power” and “position.” “Power” indicates the level of ability to influence *on a particular issue*.

On the “Position” dimension, actors are rated according to how “positive” or helpful

their views are to your cause. Those who are most helpful are placed furthest to the right of the diagram.

A creative way to build the Key Actors Map is to use “post-it” stickers and a large sheet of paper (a flip chart can be useful). This way, the position of each actor can be discussed and changed in the process of developing the map. Actors can also be categorised with different colours on the stickers.

Sometimes actors that do not seem, at first glance, to be very important to your cause can create problems if neglected. A “risk factor” can be added to the map to highlight this issue. Each actor is analysed according to risks associated with it and those that contain special risks are given a red star.

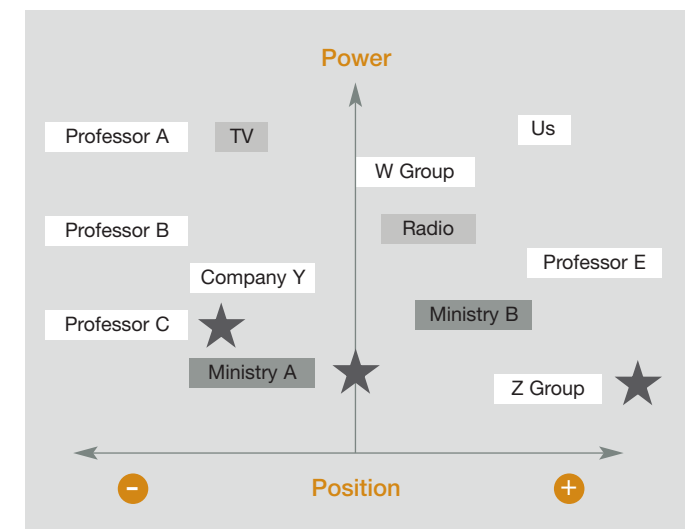
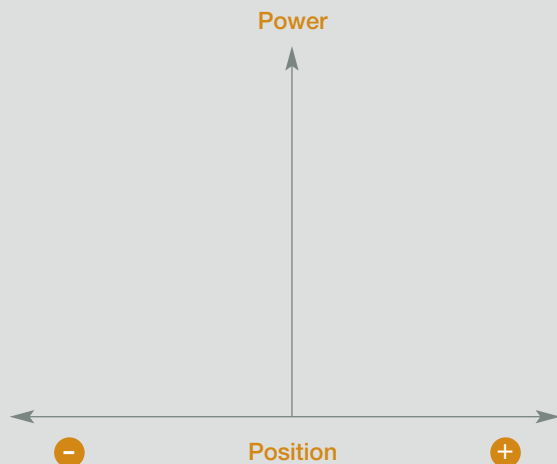
Key actors that are positioned in the middle of the map tend to be the ones who can be influenced the most as they are more vulnerable to persuasion (they tend to be moderates).

IMPLEMENTATION

The Power Analysis tools offer simple and descriptive strategic analyses. By reviewing these documents at regular intervals, campaigners can recognise trends and changes. They can be used in campaign evaluations if these changes are linked to the campaigner’s own activities.

The use of these tools is also a good starting point in developing a Communication Strategy since they identify the key actors, their positions, what drives them, and the changes you want each of them to make.

To improve results, the development of the Power Analysis should always be done by the entire campaign team. This will help to strengthen the team by allowing members to collectively identify where they agree and disagree, and arrive at a consensus.



An Effective Campaign: Greenpeace and the “Coke Spotlight”

BY MATS ABRAHAMSSON, SELENE

As recently as the year 2000, Coca-Cola had a policy of using cooling systems in its soft drink machines that relied on hydrofluorocarbons (HFC’s) – some of the most potent global warming gases ever produced. For many years, Greenpeace had successfully campaigned against the use of these substances, but parts of the industry still refused to give in to a total ban. Research was conducted on where HFC’s were being used and some analysis was done on where Greenpeace could have the most impact. Coca-Cola was chosen as an appropriate target, the reason being that “if Coca-Cola would fall, the rest of the [soft drinks] industry would more easily follow.”

On June 1 2000, Greenpeace and the Canadian media watchdog Adbusters launched an Internet campaign. They accused Coca-Cola, one of the main sponsors of the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, of undermining the games’ Environmental Guidelines because of its world-wide use of HFC’s.

In advance of the Sydney Olympics, Greenpeace developed the Coke Spotlight, a “rogue” or “spoof” website of Coca-Cola. The website (<http://www.cokespotlight.org/>) featured a comprehensive campaign kit, which included stickers, posters, postcards and e-mail images that anyone could download and use to lobby Coca-Cola. The site mainly targeted young Internet users, particularly college students in the United States.

Among companies that used HFC’s, Coca-Cola was considered one of the most vulnerable to a brand attack. Coca-Cola was spending millions of dollars to maintain its brand image and college students were thought to be one of its important customers.

While “revealing the truth behind the trademark”, the Coke Spotlight also provided students and other Internet users with letters to send to Coca-Cola’s then-Chief Executive Officer, Doug Daft. Greenpeace’s information technology director, Brian Fitzgerald, said that “roguing” offered a way to inject controversy around a trademark and associate a brand with environmental criminality. “Coca-Cola was sensitive about HFC’s because Coke was a global brand and was facing a global campaign that

1.3

COCA-COLA WAS SENSITIVE ABOUT HFC'S BECAUSE COKE WAS A GLOBAL BRAND AND WAS FACING A GLOBAL CAMPAIGN THAT COULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE PRODUCT AND ON THE CORPORATION'S 'GOOD NAME.'

could have an impact on the product and on the corporation's 'good name.'"

The cost of the campaign was extremely low. Part of one person's work-time was used to set up and maintain the website. Part of other people's time was taken for some media work and direct lobbying of Coca-Cola officials.

The planning stage lasted several months and included intensive contacts with Coca-Cola. The actual implementation was very straight forward and once launched, the campaign took on a life of its own, spreading by word-of-mouth (or rather, word-of-email) across the world.


In this campaign, Greenpeace had learned from mistakes made in earlier attempts to create Internet-based campaigns. One important lesson was that the campaign target had to be

sensitive to a specific form of attack. This time, everything went very smoothly.

On 28 June 2000, Coca-Cola announced that it would phase out the use of HFC's in its refrigeration equipment by the next Olympic Games in Athens in 2004. It pledged to expand research into refrigeration alternatives. It also said it would require its suppliers to set specific target dates for using HFC-free foam insulation and refrigeration in all new cold drink equipment by 2004.

By the time the Athens Olympics Games opened in July 2004, Coca-Cola had adopted a policy of not purchasing any new HFC-based cold-drink equipment where "cost efficient alternatives were commercially viable and available."¹ Coca-Cola also pledged to reduce its energy consumption by 40 to 50 per cent by 2014.

¹ Coca-Cola: Environmental Refrigeration Policy
<http://www2.coca-cola.com/contactus/faq/refrigerants.html>



Section 2
Going Beyond Alerts

2

Going Beyond Alerts: MISA and the SADC Journalists Under Fire Campaign

WE HAD THE ALERTS.
THEN WHAT?

2.1

Many in the IFEX community have been asking how they can build on, and go beyond, issuing action alerts in order to make their freedom of expression work more effective. The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) is one IFEX member that set out to answer this question.

Since 1994, MISA has monitored media freedom and freedom of expression violations in the Southern African Development Community (SADC)¹. The organisation has become very efficient in generating alerts and distributing them through the IFEX network.

However, MISA started to raise questions about the effectiveness of its alerts as advocacy tools. “MISA’s Action Alerts are an excellent tool for advocacy as they strengthen the cause of freedom of expression. Unfortunately the issuing of an alert does not guarantee the protection of journalists,” says Zoé Titus, MISA’s Regional Programme Manager for Media Freedom Monitoring. “We had the alerts. Then what?”

MISA recognised that more practical follow-up to action alerts was needed along with more effective support to journalists. MISA set out to hear the views of media workers who had been victims of freedom of expression violations to find out how it could more effectively assist people in similar circumstances. Through this

process of consultation, MISA developed the “SADC Journalists Under Fire Campaign,” which aims not only to expose media-freedom violations, but also to provide practical support to victims and lobby for an environment that is supportive of freedom of expression.

BACKGROUND STUDIES

MISA commissioned two consultants to look into ways to follow up effectively on its alerts. The research was initially developed in Southern Africa by MISA and a consultant from the region, then work-shopped and later taken up by a consultant from the Netherlands.

¹ MISA’s work focuses mainly on Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Other SADC countries are the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritius and Seychelles.

The Southern Africa consultant was also commissioned to analyse the Action Alerts that MISA had issued between 2000 and 2002. The consultant's task was to identify trends in media harassment, propose effective follow-up actions for the various types of violations and identify journalists and media workers that are frequently "under fire."

The analysis revealed that widespread media freedom violations were not limited to Zimbabwe, but were also taking place in other SADC countries. The study identified the 12 most common media freedom violations, led by restrictions on the movement of journalists,

JOURNALISTS HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT THE VIOLATIONS THEY HAD SUFFERED AND WHAT ELSE COULD HAVE BEEN DONE TO SUPPORT THEM.

arrests and verbal threats. This information, which highlighted priority areas requiring remedial action, helped MISA to critically assess its programmes and decide whether they needed adjustment.

The Dutch consultant explored possible North-South cooperation in addition to further defining strategies for follow-up to Action Alerts.

CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOPS

In conjunction with the studies it commissioned, MISA organised two consultative workshops involving 19 journalists from 10 countries who had been victims of freedom of expression violations. The workshops gave journalists an opportunity to talk about the violations they had suffered, the effect of those violations on them, whether they had received any support, the forms of support that had helped them most and what else could have been done to support them.

The first workshop, in July 2002, included journalists who had been under fire and a core group of MISA information officers from Zimbabwe and Zambia – countries which

were regarded as media freedom hotspots. This workshop opened up discussion on how to improve the effectiveness of MISA's activities.

In May 2003, a much larger group of participants took part in the second workshop, including MISA advocacy and information officers from 10 SADC countries, victims of media-freedom violations and other human rights and free expression organisations. The two consultants presented their reports to this forum and participants met in working groups to make specific recommendations for MISA's future activities.

JOURNALISTS UNDER FIRE PROJECT DOCUMENT

The recommendations from the second workshop formed the basis of the "SADC Journalists Under Fire" campaign project document, which outlines strategies and activities for information gathering and dissemination, direct support to journalists whose rights are violated, advocacy and lobbying, specialised training and targeted research.

INFORMATION STRATEGY, INCLUDING ACTION ALERTS

MISA and its national chapters plan to continue monitoring media developments and distributing action alerts. MISA's information strategy also includes:

- Writing articles on local journalists who have been victims of media freedom violations for a regional news digest;
- Distributing the news digest to news organisations, embassies, political officials and international human rights groups;
- Encouraging national media organisations to make use of the digest.

THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCLUSION MISA HAS REACHED IS THE NEED TO ENHANCE DIRECT SUPPORT TO JOURNALISTS WHOSE RIGHTS ARE VIOLATED.

While its information strategy remains vitally important, MISA has realised the need to emphasise other strategies to complement it.

DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO JOURNALISTS

The most important conclusion MISA has reached is the need to enhance direct support to journalists whose rights are violated. "When a journalist is arrested, it's a very dramatic event," says Titus. "Journalists and their families need to know that someone is standing ready to support them." Although MISA had provided some direct assistance to journalists in the past, it was often on an ad-hoc basis, rather than in a systematic and organised way.

The programme of direct support to journalists, which emerged from the two consultative workshops, includes measures such as:

- Visiting journalists in jail;
- Providing medical support through emergency funds;
- Providing trauma counseling;
- Mobilising journalists to attend court cases to display solidarity;
- Providing rapid legal support to detained journalists;
- Providing financial support to families in which a jailed journalist is the sole breadwinner;
- Identifying safe places in case journalists need to go into exile and funding to support journalists in exile.

In enhancing its direct support to journalists, MISA aims to build on existing activities in certain countries. For example, a Media Lawyers Network, facilitated by MISA-Zimbabwe, ensures that when a journalist is arrested or detained for questioning, a lawyer is available within an hour in almost any part of the country. MISA's network of advocacy hubs across the country makes such rapid legal assistance possible. MISA-Zimbabwe also has a legal defence fund, which pays lawyers for their work and makes money available to secure the release of journalists. Similar national legal defence funds are managed by MISA's Zambia and Botswana chapters. MISA has acknowledged a particular need to expand the legal support available to journalists in Malawi and Swaziland.

ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING

MISA plans to expand its advocacy and lobbying efforts to address priority issues in each country, such as ending the ban on The Guardian newspaper in Swaziland and reforming defamation laws in Lesotho. MISA also seeks to lobby national, regional and international human rights bodies to ensure that media freedom violations feature more prominently on their agendas. Other lobbying targets MISA aims to reach include embassies

of African governments, local ministries of foreign affairs (to question foreign policy on countries where violations are occurring), SADC intergovernmental bodies and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Such advocacy and lobbying activities are not new for MISA. For example, the regional secretariat has for some time provided funds to chapters to reform or repeal repressive media legislation in their countries and to lobby for better laws. As of March 2001, MISA had already re-positioned itself as an advocacy organisation.

However, MISA has come to more fully recognise the importance of advocacy work to create an environment supportive of freedom of expression, rather than merely issuing alerts when violations occur.

Furthermore, the Southern Africa consultant's report emphasised the need to speed up legal reform efforts. It called for national chapters to prioritise one or two laws for reform and to make serious concrete efforts, such as engaging lawyers and launching legal challenges, which go beyond raising public awareness.

TRAINING

Although training is no longer a programme priority, MISA recognises the value of "targeted and programme-related" training that supports its advocacy and lobbying activities. Proactive training ensures that journalists are equipped with skills that help them avoid running into difficulties in the first place.

RESEARCH

The recommendations emerging from the workshops led MISA to add a research element to its campaign. One research priority is to investigate cases where crimes against journalists have gone unpunished. Another is to develop a better understanding of the institutions of the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Commonwealth and the European Union and how they can be used to promote freedom of expression. MISA also hopes to launch a project to ascertain whether patterns of media freedom violations can be used as an early warning system of emerging conflicts in a country.

CAMPAIGN LAUNCH AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

The "SADC Journalists Under Fire" campaign was formally launched on 3 May 2003, World Press Freedom Day. Since then, activities have focused largely on Zimbabwe, where threats to freedom of expression have been particularly prevalent.

MISA REGIONAL INFORMATION AND LOBBY TOUR

One example of MISA's efforts to supplement its alerts with lobbying activity came in response to the 12 September 2003 closure of The Daily News and Daily News on Sunday. MISA believed a targeted advocacy campaign to highlight media repression in Zimbabwe was needed. The regional secretariat launched a lobby tour of six SADC countries – Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia – in late September and early October 2003. "These countries were selected because of their strategic importance in the SADC and their potential to positively influence the human rights situation in Zimbabwe," says Titus.

The Zimbabwean delegation included a number of working journalists, editors, MISA staff, media lawyers and civil society activists.

MISA's national chapters were critical to the initiative's success as they were responsible for arranging press conferences and interviews, public discussion forums, and meetings with media organisations, press clubs and government ministers. Alongside these activities, the regional secretariat coordinated the production of print and online resource materials.

WHILE MISA'S MEDIA MONITORING PROGRAMME WAS ONCE A STAND-ALONE ACTIVITY, IT IS NOW PART OF A BROADER, MORE PRO-ACTIVE STRATEGY.

“This regional publicity and lobby tour was one of MISA's major successes of 2003,” says Titus. “There was tremendous interest and coverage of the tour at national, regional and international levels. We learned a great deal from the experience and intend to follow up with similar activities.” (For more information on lobbying governments, see the case study of the International Press Institute's mission to Israel, page 96)

NATIONAL CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

To date, MISA chapters in Zambia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have actively implemented aspects of the “SADC Journalists Under Fire” campaign.

MISA-Tanzania reported a very successful campaign launch on 3 May 2003, which enjoyed wide media coverage. In response to the launch and the chapter's lobbying activities, the Director of Criminal Intelligence dropped all charges against freelance journalist John Maziku, who was facing a contempt of court charge for allegedly “insulting” parliament in 2001.

MISA-Zambia has continued to give financial support to members facing serious financial difficulties through its Threatened Media Fund loans. The Zambian chapter has purchased a printing machine for The Monitor, a privately-owned newspaper whose reporting has at times angered the authorities. It also assisted three freelance journalists to set up home offices by purchasing camera and computer equipment.

As part of the Journalists Under Fire campaign, MISA-Zimbabwe has assisted journalists from The Daily News and Daily News on Sunday with space for meetings, e-mail facilities at MISA-Zimbabwe's office and legal

funding. The chapter's Emergency Fund has also assisted The Tribune, an independent weekly newspaper, with the purchase of three computers following the theft of 20 computers from its offices.

CONCLUSION

Building on the findings of consultations with journalists and the evaluation of its activities, MISA is working to complement the issuing of alerts with a range of other actions to support journalists. “In a nutshell, the SADC Journalists Under Fire campaign should be seen as a renewed ‘holistic’ approach to media freedom monitoring and advocacy,” says Titus. “While MISA's media monitoring programme was once a stand-alone activity, it is now part of a broader, more pro-active strategy.”

MISA's more comprehensive strategic vision provides a valuable example of an organisation that is developing additional ways, beyond the issuing of alerts, of defending freedom of expression.

A crowd of people, including a child holding a protest sign, with a yellow tint. The child is holding a sign that reads "Down With Harassment Of PRESS -DUJ".

Section 3
Campaign Tools and
Best-Practise Case Studies

3

Section 3 Index: Toolbox, Case Studies and Resources

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IFEX Joint Actions

NOTE: This is a campaign tool that has been specifically designed for members of IFEX. However, it can be adapted for use by other human rights organisations.

TOOLBOX

HOW TO INITIATE AN IFEX JOINT ACTION

IFEX members have the opportunity to use the Action Alert Network to get other member groups to sign on to their letters and petitions (or, alternatively, to encourage them to write their own appeals and take other actions). An e-mail appeal urging IFEX members to participate in the action and indicating a deadline for responses is first sent through IFEX's internal e-mail list.

Once the deadline for responses has passed, and as many IFEX members as wish to sign on have indicated their interest, the final statement is distributed externally to the international community as an IFEX Joint Action.

ADVANTAGES

Using the IFEX network for joint actions has the following advantages:

- It is a fast and effective way to rally international support among the IFEX membership for your organisation's local campaigns
- The response rate of IFEX members to an appeal is typically quite high
- The ability to point to a wide range of international support can give added force and legitimacy to a campaign
- There is little or no cost to members, other than the time spent drafting an appeal and distributing the final product
- It builds relationships among IFEX members and can lead to future joint campaigns
- It allows other IFEX members to support your group's campaign without requiring them to make a major commitment of time and resources

Although there are several advantages, it is worth keeping in mind that a joint action does not have the same long-term effect as involving other members in a more comprehensive, multi-faceted campaign. Since the commitment of other IFEX members is usually limited to a one-time response to your group's appeal, the relationships that develop may not be as strong as in a more comprehensive campaign.

PLANNING YOUR IFEX JOINT ACTION

Be clear about what you want other IFEX members to do

- Think carefully and communicate clearly about the specific action that you would like other IFEX members to take. Is it to sign on to a letter? To support the creation of a committee? Should they communicate with you or with the IFEX Clearing House?

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- Are you accepting signatures from organisations that are not IFEX members? If so, you may want to ask IFEX members to encourage other groups to sign on as well. Bear in mind that some IFEX members may be reluctant to add their names to a list that includes non-members with whom they are not familiar.

Whether to emphasise your group's initiative or the action's international nature

- You should specify whether you would like the statement to be presented as something that your group initiated and others signed on to, or whether you would prefer to emphasise the international nature of the action—that is, a joint action by all the signatories (in which your group would be listed as just another signatory).
- In most cases, it is appropriate to highlight the fact that your group initiated the joint action. However, in some contexts where security is a concern, local groups may prefer to downplay their involvement and emphasise the international aspect of the action in order to avoid reprisals.

Leave enough time for responses

- Give enough lead time for other IFEX members to respond—a week to 10 days is usually needed.

Making the most of a joint action

Your organisation needs to think about how it will seek support from IFEX members and make use of a joint action once all the signatures are gathered. Options that members have used in the past include:

- Issuing a press release;
- Holding a press conference;
- Presenting the joint action to the authorities during meetings with them;
- Sending a joint letter to authorities by e-mail, fax, etc.;
- Conducting an independent inquiry after gaining the support of fellow IFEX members for the initiative.

A caveat

- The fact that a certain number of IFEX members have signed on to your joint action does not mean that the entire IFEX community has endorsed it. You should keep this

in mind when communicating about the joint action.

AN ALTERNATIVE OPTION

Most commonly, members choose to ask others to sign on to an appeal they have drafted. Another option is to have an internal notice sent to IFEX members asking them to send their own letter (or take some other kind of action, such as taking their concerns to an ambassador in their own country, sending a letter to newspapers, etc.). Typically this involves providing an example of the kind of letter you would like other members to write, which they can use to prepare their own letters sent on their own behalf.

The advantage of this option is that a letter coming from another IFEX member will in some circumstances have more weight than a signature added to a joint action. The disadvantage is that the response rate will sometimes be lower since it requires more time and effort from other members. It is up to your organisation to decide which option is likely to be most effective in your particular case.

If you choose this option, you will likely need to follow up the IFEX internal appeal

with phone calls to encourage members to write their own letters. A practical consideration is that it is easier to get signatures from other members than to get them to write their own letters.

DRAFTING AN INTERNAL APPEAL FOR SUPPORT

Accuracy

- As with issuing alerts, factual accuracy is essential. Do your own original investigation to confirm the facts. Other IFEX members who sign on trust that your group has done the research properly. Inaccuracies reflect badly on everyone who has signed. They also reduce the likelihood that IFEX members will sign on to future appeals from your group.
- Other IFEX members who have received the appeal may point out inaccuracies before it is distributed externally. But getting it right the first time avoids having to correct the appeal and ask IFEX members to re-sign the new

version. Also bear in mind that it is highly unlikely that a second, corrected appeal will elicit the same response rate as the first one.

Avoid making unsubstantiated statements

- Avoid unsubstantiated claims or vague hypotheses. They end up causing more harm than good and undermine the credibility of the rest of the appeal (and that of the signatories).

Cite international treaties and national constitutions

- Where appropriate, make reference to relevant points found in international treaties signed or ratified by the state responsible for the violation in question, such as Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- It may also be worth referring to free expression provisions in the constitution of a country where a violation has taken place.

Make it easy to read and understand

- Begin your appeal with a very brief summary of the issue and an expression of your position with regard to it.
- Use plain language and avoid slang.
- Use short sentences and simple grammar.
- Break up long paragraphs.
- Define your terms.
- Provide the full names of political organisations, movements, etc. in addition to acronyms.

Provide the essential details

- Provide good concise explanations of the key facts.
- Explain the relevance to freedom of expression.

Explain the context

- Don't assume that other IFEX members will be familiar with the details of your case.
- Provide the necessary background information in a concise manner.

Do a thorough job of editing

- You may want to solicit comments from other groups before getting final approval within your organisation and sending it out through IFEX.
- Provide the necessary background information in a concise manner.
- Check spelling. Make sure names are spelled correctly throughout.
- Avoid repetition.

GETTING A BETTER RESPONSE

Follow up with other IFEX members

- Once an appeal is sent out to the IFEX membership, you may get a better response rate if you follow up with other members by phone.
- If you wonder why certain members have not signed on to your appeal, it may be worth contacting them to find out. This can also help your group learn how to write more effective appeals in the future.

Making revisions to gain wider support

- Sometimes members may want to sign on to an appeal, but do not do so because they object to a particular point within the text. You might want to make revisions if it allows more members to sign on. On the other hand, your group may not want to alter its message significantly if that would reduce its impact with the target audience.
- One option, which can help avoid having to revise your appeal once it has already been sent to the full list of members, is to ask for feedback from a couple of other IFEX members beforehand.
- It is ultimately up to your organisation to decide how much you are willing to revise the content of the appeal in response to others' feedback and to gain additional signatures.

Communicating after the joint action

- After all the signatures are gathered and the joint action is released, it is worth thanking the signatories and informing them what your group did with the action as well as any results that came from it. This kind of follow-up encourages members to sign other appeals in the future.

IFEX – NEWS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION COMMUNITY

INTERNAL APPEAL – CHINA (HONG KONG)

8 November 2002

HKJA urges IFEX members to sign appeal protesting proposed national security law
SOURCE: Hong Kong Journalists Association (HKJA)
(HKJA/IFEX) – The following is an HKJA internal appeal:

IFEX INTERNAL APPEAL: EXAMPLE 1

Dear colleagues,

We would like to draw your attention to an issue of critical importance to freedom of expression and press freedom in Hong Kong and hope that you would be able to lend us your support.

Article 23 of Hong Kong's Basic Law calls for the enactment of laws to protect national security, subsequent to the resumption of Chinese sovereignty. On 24 September 2002, the Hong Kong government published proposals to implement Article 23. The Hong Kong Journalists Association (HKJA) feels these proposals give excessive weight to national security at the expense of civil liberties, especially freedom of speech and press freedom.

We also strongly object to the manner in which the proposals are being implemented. The government is asking the public to respond to a consultation document which only outlines the prospective legislation. The public can only guess the legislation's actual wording and, on this basis, the government is dismissing the concerns of many as being ill-informed. The official plan is to close the consultation period on 24 December 2002.

We ask you, as supporters of a free press, to sign on to the protest letter below that will be sent to the Hong Kong government asking that draft legislation, in the form of a White Bill, be presented first to the public for comment, and demanding that safeguards guaranteeing freedom of expression are incorporated into the new laws. Our briefing paper on Article 23, which outlines our concerns in detail, can be found at www.hkja.org.hk.

We plan to hold a press conference on 24 November to present this joint protest letter to the Hong Kong government. If as many IFEX members as possible sign on it will send a stronger message.

IFEX members interested in signing on should contact the IFEX Clearing House at ifex@ifex.org by noon (Eastern Standard Time) on 15 November.

Yours sincerely,
MAK YIN TING
HKJA Chairperson

IFEX INTERNAL APPEAL: EXAMPLE 1

To: Secretary of Security, Mrs. Regina Ip, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, People's Republic of China

On 24 September 2002, the Hong Kong government published proposals to implement Article 23 of the Basic Law, with the aim of enacting the relevant legislation by July 2003.

We, the undersigned organisations, express profound concern that these proposals give excessive weight to national security at the expense of civil liberties, especially press freedom and freedom of speech.

Those most seriously affected include all who work with ideas and information. They range from academics to artists to journalists to securities analysts to publishers and distributors of newspapers, books, periodicals and films. The wide net cast by the proposals covers even the words and deeds of a broad range of foreigners with links to Hong Kong, such as the expatriate executives of multinational firms. We believe the existence of such laws is bound to have an intimidating effect, causing people to censor themselves and chilling public debate.

We are deeply concerned that under the proposed Article 23, all permanent residents, including foreign nationals who meet a seven-year Hong Kong residency requirement, could be prosecuted for what they say in and outside of Hong Kong.

In addition, the proposed law's definition of "seditious publications," under which those who publish information inciting others to "commit treason, secession or subversion" or "endangering the stability of China and Hong Kong" can be jailed for seven years - is so broad, Hong Kong's university librarians have voiced the worry that much of what is on their library shelves could be deemed seditious.

These provisions would have a chilling effect on all individuals, groups and enterprises engaged in the business of information exchange and thus would violate the spirit of Article 19 of the United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This states that: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

We are deeply concerned that Article 23 gives the Secretary for Security wide authority to ban local and foreign political organisations. In some cases a mere declaration by the Chinese government that an organisation endangers China's national security is sufficient grounds for a ban – with limited possibility of appeal in the Hong Kong courts, thus increasing the possibility of Chinese government intervention in Hong Kong.

We also strongly object to the manner in which the proposals are being implemented. Your government is asking the public to respond to a consultation document which gives only an outline of the prospective legislation. The public can only guess at the actual wording of the legislation and, on this basis, your government is dismissing the concerns of many as being ill-informed. The detailed draft legislation will be revealed in February 2003 when it is presented to the Legislative Council. By then, there would be limited opportunity for substantive debate or counter-proposals.

The main stated purpose of the Basic Law is to be a cornerstone for “one country, two systems,” the concept by which Hong Kong is to retain its way of life distinct from the socialist system of mainland China. Thus the Basic Law stipulates that Hong Kong's personal freedoms, common-law legal system and market economy should remain unchanged for 50 years beyond 1 July 1997.

Today, five years after the handover, there is no evidence of Hong Kong being a source of threats in any way to national security.

We urge the Hong Kong government to present the draft legislation first to the public for comment. Only after making revisions to reflect such comment should the government present the legislation to the Legislative Council.

We also urge the Hong Kong government to:

- Repeal the offences of sedition and seditious publications.
- Ensure that meaningful safeguards for free expression are incorporated in the new laws, according to the Johannesburg Principles on National Security, Freedom of Expression and Access to Information.
- Ensure that prosecution under Article 23 can take place only if there is an intention to incite violence, and there is a direct and immediate connection between the expression and the likelihood or occurrence of violence.
- Ensure that no person is punished for disclosing information in the public interest if the benefits to the public outweigh the harm that disclosure may cause.

For further information, contact Mak Yin-ting at the Hong Kong Journalists Association, Flat A, 15/F, Henta Commercial Bldg., 348-350 Lockhart Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong, tel: +852 2591 0692, fax: +852 2572 7329, e-mail: hkja@hk.super.net, Internet: <http://www.hkja.org.hk/>.

The information contained in this internal appeal is the sole responsibility of HKJA. In citing this material for broadcast or publication, please credit HKJA and the other groups.

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IFEX Joint Actions

CASE STUDY

HONG KONG JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION AND THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST ARTICLE 23

CONTEXT Hong Kong, a former British colony, became a special administrative region of China in 1997 under the principle of “one country, two systems.” China agreed to give the region a high degree of autonomy and to preserve its economic and social systems for 50 years from the date of the handover.

The Basic Law, Hong Kong’s mini-constitution, sets out full democracy as an eventual goal. However, Article 23 of this document also requires the territory to outlaw acts such as treason, subversion and secession; sedition (including publishing, selling or displaying a “seditious publication”); theft of state secrets (including the unlawful disclosure of government information that could endanger national security); and political activities by foreign organisations.

In September 2002, the Hong Kong government released proposals to implement Article 23. Five months later, it introduced a National Security Bill to enact the Article. Opponents said the provisions in the proposed bill could, among other things, lead to the outlawing of groups already banned in mainland China, threaten the right to hold peaceful demonstrations and undermine the rights of journalists and non-governmental organisations.

On 1 July 2003, the sixth anniversary of the handover of Hong Kong to China, half a million people took to the streets to protest the draft bill. A few days later, the government withdrew the bill.

The shelving of the bill was a major achievement for Hong Kong’s democratic forces, although there are fears that Beijing will re-introduce it at a later date. In their 2004 annual report, the Hong Kong Journalists Association (HKJA) and ARTICLE 19 note growing unease over whether the Chinese and Hong Kong governments are still intent on protecting the region’s core values, including freedom of expression.

In November 2002, the Hong Kong Journalists Association (HKJA) launched an appeal for international support, primarily through the IFEX network. The appeal was part of a campaign to safeguard freedom of expression and other rights from proposed national security measures, which were designed to implement Article 23 of Hong Kong’s Basic Law (see “Context”).

“We had repeatedly stated that it was unnecessary to enact new legislation to implement Article 23,” says HKJA’s former chairperson, Mak Yin-ting. “On the contrary, we thought that the existing laws should be improved so that human rights in Hong Kong would not be undermined.”

HKJA joined with other local non-governmental organisations in the Civil Human

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Rights Front to oppose the enactment of Article 23, which it believed posed a threat to all those who work with ideas and information—including journalists, academics, artists, publishers, film distributors and librarians.

In just one week, HKJA collected signatures from 879 local journalists, roughly 45% of the territory’s journalists, who opposed the government’s measures. The association also appealed for international support.

GIVEN IFEX’S WIDE NETWORK, WE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE A GOOD CHANNEL TO RALLY INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.

BUILDING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

“During our discussions of how to express our opposition, I realised that it was important to raise concern among the international community on the matter,” says Mak. “The Hong Kong government would consider the international community’s reaction during the legislative process. Given IFEX’s wide network, we thought it might be a good channel to rally international support.”

HKJA drafted an internal appeal, which IFEX distributed electronically to its more than 50 member organisations. After learning how many members had signed on to the appeal, HKJA issued a press release to the public and the government highlighting the international joint action. It also held a press conference that received widespread local media coverage.

“In my mind, IFEX is an effective tool to launch an international appeal,” says Mak. HKJA also wrote directly to other organisations asking for support, but this was more labour-intensive than reaching many groups quickly through the IFEX network. The

majority of overseas groups that ultimately signed on to HKJA’s call for support—19 out of 29—were IFEX members. HKJA also lobbied foreign diplomats in Hong Kong to express their concerns over the security measures.

The IFEX signatories included the World Association of Newspapers, which represents more than 18,000 publications on five continents, and the International Federation of Journalists, with 500,000 members (see <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/32239/>) and <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/17894/>). HKJA was able to say it had the support of organisations based in 155 different countries, with a collective membership of at least half a million, including frontline journalists, media industry executives and owners, writers and cartoonists.

The association also sent a thank you letter to IFEX members. “Apart from showing our gratitude, I think it’s good to encourage IFEX members to respond to internal appeals,” says Mak.

In addition to signing HKJA's joint action, a number of IFEX members, including Freedom House, Human Rights Watch and the Committee to Protect Journalists, also sent their own submissions to the Hong Kong government criticising the bill.

CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

An IFEX joint action makes use of e-mail's capacity to rapidly mobilise support at little or no cost. As a result, the only cost to HKJA was the time—about a week—spent by Mak and another executive committee member on drafting and revising the appeal, obtaining the support of the association's executive committee and writing a press release to highlight the joint action's results. No separate fundraising was needed.

IMPACT

"It's difficult to single out the effect of the IFEX joint action," says Mak. She notes that while the Hong Kong government was aware of the international community's reaction, it initially chose to go ahead with the bill. However, concerns expressed by foreign consulates and chambers of commerce (whose members included many large foreign companies) eventually forced the government to scale back sections of the draft bill. "International concern clearly prevented the government from taking repressive measures to achieve its aims," adds Mak.

"It's also difficult to determine the impact of the international reaction on the Hong Kong people," says Mak. "I've heard individual citizens say that they were impressed by what

local journalists and other professions did, as well as the reaction from overseas. Some started to have a closer look at the issue, opposition grew and eventually half a million people took to the street on 1 July 2003."

The direct cause of the bill's withdrawal was the 6 July resignation of the Liberal Party leader from the Executive Council, which left the government without enough support to pass the bill. "However, the Liberal Party leader's resignation was linked, in part, to the demonstration on 1 July," notes Mak.

On the whole, the IFEX joint action was a small, but significant, part of the overall effort to oppose the Bill. IFEX members are encouraged to make use of such joint actions to gain support for their own campaigns.

Cyber-Activism

TOOLBOX

INTERNET TOOLS THAT CAN BE USED IN A CAMPAIGN

CONTEXT The Internet has developed in leaps and bounds since IFEX members first began using online tools in the 1990s. Indeed, most members now have their own websites and are adept at using e-mail and other tools to share information and coordinate joint actions. However, cyber-activism goes far beyond the setting up of websites and email listserves. New technologies are now making possible more sophisticated tools that can enable free expression advocates to better mobilise public support and develop campaigns.

The following is a sampling of Internet tools that IFEX members might consider using as part of a campaign.

BLOGS

Weblogs, more commonly known as blogs, are easy-to-build personal websites that allow an individual to post information about any topic imaginable at any time. In the past few years, they have emerged as a powerful tool for journalists and free expression activists. Blogs are a cheap, accessible and versatile tool that can be integrated into any campaign.

One of the greatest strengths of the blog is its immediacy. During a crisis situation, print and television media can take hours, days or even weeks to publicise events. With a blog, anyone with access to the World Wide Web can receive information the moment a blog is updated by its author. This can allow free expression advocates living under repressive regimes to reach a global audience with

information that would otherwise be difficult to obtain through traditional media.

Blogs are also excellent tools for spreading information about your organisation or campaign. If your blog concentrates on a single issue or region, there is a good chance it will be found by people searching the web on that topic. As a blog's reputation travels by "word of mouth" on the web, the mark of its popularity and credibility is judged by how many other websites link to it and vice versa. The more links a blog possesses, the greater its chances of being located and read by others.

A blog can also serve as a clearing house for people within a region. Information can be sent from a person in a restricted country to someone living in a safer place before being published online. Blogs describing conditions in

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countries with severe censorship, such as Iran or Burma, often function this way.

How Iranians Use Blogs to Highlight Free Expression Conditions

In Iran, where the growth in Internet usage is the fastest of any Middle Eastern country, blogging has become enormously popular and is being increasingly used as a tool to oppose censorship. Hundreds of “bloggers” are finding ways of sharing information and mobilising support and international attention on free expression conditions in the country. When authorities banned the websites of three pro-reform newspapers and arrested several of their journalists in August 2004, dozens of bloggers mobilised coordinated protests.

They copied content from the banned sites onto their own web pages and renamed their sites after the newspapers, daring Iran’s Internet censors to shut down their sites. In the end, there were simply too many sites for the government to censor. The bloggers also gathered hundreds of signatures in support of the jailed journalists, one of whom was released the following month.

Examples of Free Expression-Related Blogs

Back to Iraq

<http://www.back-to-iraq.com/>

A blog run by freelance US journalist Christopher Allbritton, a former Associated Press reporter who filed independent, unembedded dispatches during the Iraq war. His stint was made possible by donations totaling US\$14,000 from his blog’s 1 million readers.

Stop Censoring Us

<http://stop.censoring.us/>

A blog that monitors Internet censorship in Iran.

Sudan: Passion of the Present

<http://platform.blogs.com/passionofthepresent/>

A “one-stop” blog listing reports, video clips, daily updates and information sources about the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan.

China Digital News

<http://journalism.berkeley.edu/projects/chinadn/en/>

A project of the Graduate School of Journalism, University of California, Berkeley, this blog serves as an information network and discussion forum on human rights and the “information revolution” in China.

Online Blog Publishing Tool Sites

These sites offer free software for the easy creation and maintenance of a blog as well as tutorials for first-time bloggers.

- Word Press
<http://wordpress.org/>
- Blogger.com
<http://www.blogger.com>
- Grey Matter
<http://noahgrey.com/greysoft/>
- Live Journal
<http://www.livejournal.com/>
- Movable Type
<http://www.movabletype.org/>

MEETUP.COM

This free tool (www.Meetup.com) allows people with similar interests or causes to arrange face-to-face meetings on any subject imaginable in almost every country in the world. You can search for existing groups that have formed around a particular topic (e.g. press freedom) in your locale or start up a new group. Meetup.com will then suggest meeting venues in the city of your choice. People with similar interests can find your topic and sign on as

members of your Meet-up group, after which a vote is taken to choose a venue at a certain date. Meetup.com will then send a message to the members of your group with the location of the agreed venue and meeting date and time.

Since its creation in 2002, over 1 million people around the world have joined Meetup groups in more than 40 countries.

An example of a free expression-related topic that has been created on Meetup.com is <http://censorship.meetup.com/>

WEB-BASED PETITIONS

For many free expression advocates, petitions have often been an effective tool for rallying public support around a cause. Increasingly, advocates are turning to web-based petitions, which are able to reach greater numbers of people in a much quicker way. Several websites offer free online petition tools that can be custom designed to suit individual needs. These tools allow campaigners to gather signatures, collect donations and host online discussions.

FREE ONLINE PETITION TOOLS

- iPetitions.com
<http://www.ipetitions.com/index.html>
- Petition Them
<http://www.petitionthem.com/default.asp>
- Petition Spot
<http://www.petitionspot.com/>

TEXT MESSAGING (SMS)

Text messaging, or Short Message Service (SMS), is an increasingly popular form of communication between mobile phone users in dozens of countries. Amnesty International (AI) Netherlands has found a creative way of using this technology to mobilise public action against torture and to recruit new members.

In 2001, as part of AI's global campaign against torture, the Netherlands section incorporated text messaging into its Urgent Actions. On the country's most popular Saturday night television programme, AI invited thousands of mobile phone users – mostly

young people – to sign up as voluntary “SMS activists.”

These activists were asked to respond to urgent action appeals whenever AI notified them in a text message about detained individuals who were in danger of being tortured. In November 2001, more than 6,000 responded to an appeal to support jailed Uzbek poet Yusuf Dzhumaev. He was released on 29 December. Forty-four per cent of the activists who responded were below the age of 20. The appeal also resulted in more than 500 new members joining AI's Netherlands section, many of whom were joining for the first time.

For more information on how AI Netherlands makes use of SMS, see: <http://database.newtactics.org/NewTactics/CaseInformation.aspx>

Cyber-Activism

CASE STUDY

WWF'S PANDA PASSPORT AND THE MAUI'S DOLPHIN CAMPAIGN

CONTEXT Maui's dolphins—formerly known as North Island Hector's dolphins—are the world's smallest and rarest marine dolphin. The dolphin is critically endangered. There are thought to be no more than 100 in the world today.

With such low numbers, just one death every seven years will seriously threaten the species' chances of recovering. Since March 2001, seven dead dolphins have been found in New Zealand's waters, five of them due to fishing. WWF believes the actual number of deaths could be much higher.

The most significant threat to Maui's dolphins is from set net fishing. Dolphins do not seem able to detect the fine nylon nets and get caught in them. Unable to reach the surface to breathe, they drown within a couple of minutes.

In 2001, New Zealand's fisheries minister banned commercial and recreational set netting within most of the dolphin's range. However, following a legal challenge by fishers, the commercial ban was overturned.

THE PANDA PASSPORT

WWF, a conservation organisation with a global network active in over 90 countries, has made innovative use of the Internet in its environmental advocacy through its "Panda Passport." This tool allows people to campaign for the environment no matter where they are in the world. The Panda Passport provides concise calls to action on important environmental issues. According to WWF, "The whole idea behind Passport is that it makes it easier for people who are short on time to have a big say on critical issues."

The Passport allows individuals to participate in campaigns by sending e-mails, petitions, or faxes to decision-makers at no cost to themselves. In some cases, participants can edit and print a letter to post to targets that are more responsive to mail. Other campaigns let people send an e-mail or letter to WWF's conservation staff in the field to show encouragement for their work. Some campaigns allow people to make a personal commitment, such as buying ecologically-certified wood or switching to renewable energy.

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The Panda Passport offers people rewards for participating, in addition to making them feel that they are contributing to conserving the planet. Each time someone takes an action, they receive a stamp in their virtual passport, allowing them to move up in status from a Level 1 Campaigner to Level 2, 3 and so on. Campaigners can print out an official certificate of thanks which displays their campaign status. They can also download unique screensavers, wallpapers and web banners.

THE PANDA PASSPORT MAKES IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE SHORT ON TIME TO HAVE A SAY ON CRITICAL ISSUES.

“We’ve received a lot of good feedback about the rewards,” says Sarah Bladen, Online Campaign Manager at WWF’s secretariat in Geneva (WWF International). “They make people feel more a part of the campaign.” In the future, Bladen would like to develop more sophisticated rewards for participating in passport actions.

To take action with Panda Passport, individuals have to register. The programme will not send out anonymous messages because they are not effective, according to WWF. Names and addresses are included with messages to targeted government or corporate officials. Registration also allows WWF to contact people quickly by e-mail when an emergency arises and their help is needed.

For more information, see <http://www.passport.panda.org>

THE MAUI’S DOLPHIN CAMPAIGN

One highly successful application of the Panda Passport is the campaign in 2002 and 2003 to protect the Maui’s dolphins off the upper west coast of New Zealand’s North Island. The campaign ultimately led to a ban on set nets in the area.

INITIAL CAMPAIGN PLANNING AND OPTIONS

“The Maui’s dolphin was critically endangered,” says Bladen. “We urgently needed to campaign for a set net ban to help protect it.”

WWF-New Zealand (WWF-NZ) asked the international secretariat’s communications department in Switzerland for suggestions to help their efforts. Representatives of the office’s press, TV, photo and website units met to

discuss how they might support the New Zealand chapter. These units sent back concrete proposals for Panda Passport actions, a television story and an international press release to tie into the launch of the campaign. The international secretariat also sent an extensive list of questions to WWF-NZ to clarify their needs and possible actions, such as:

- What is the *overall tone* that you want for this campaign? Are you trying back-room lobbying with light public pressure, or is heavy pressure from overseas as well as domestically needed?
- What is the campaign’s *overall message*?
- Who is the *key audience*? Is it the government to put in place the right legislation? Is it the fishermen catching in the area? Are there several groups that we need to pressure, and what is the timing for each of these?
- What is the *time frame*? Is there a key time to pressure the minister?
- What species are the fishermen catching in this area? Where is this fish sold and to whom? (Is it going to big companies, to Europe, etc., which would give another angle for pressure?)
- Do you have photos of the dolphin (alive as well as dead) that we could use?

The international secretariat suggested creating a Panda Passport action targeting appropriate officials or companies, depending on the target audiences. It also offered to draft the introduction to the action, but WWF-NZ would have to draft the text for the target(s) and provide the title, name and contact details. The New Zealand office could choose as many targets as it liked and provide personalised text for each target.

FAX OR E-MAIL?

WWF-NZ also had the choice of a fax or e-mail campaign, each of which has advantages. “Fax can often be stronger as it’s tangible and very visible when faxes start pouring through the target’s machines,” says Bladen. However, fax campaigns tend to collapse after a few days when the fax machines back up.

“We generally try to see if we can use e-mail before fax since it costs less,” says Bladen. “And if you can get an e-mail address that goes straight to the appropriate person, it’s probably better than sending the message to a fax machine that might be in an office down the hall.”

“Fax is more of a shock tactic,” notes Bladen. “It’s applicable in a rapid response situation when you want an immediate show of concern.”

LAUNCHING THE ACTION

WWF-NZ reviewed the questions and decided to move ahead with press releases and the Panda Passport option. The use of television and photos were ruled out at first due to the rarity and elusiveness of the dolphin.

“Going out with a rapid fire e-campaign was seen as necessary, given how dire the situation was for the Maui’s dolphin,” says Bladen. “Recent efforts to engage in a dialogue with the Ministry of Fisheries had drawn a blank, so it was time to shine an international spotlight on this issue and put the ministry in the hot seat. We wanted to encourage the minister to make the right decision.”

WWF chose e-mail over fax in this case as a result of the cost factor and because it was able to find an appropriate e-mail address. “We used the ministry e-mail address and not the minister’s so that we could continue

our constructive relationship and very open dialogue with the minister,” says Bladen. “We didn’t set out to frustrate and annoy, but to show that this was not just a national issue. The rest of the world is watching!”

A Panda Passport action targeted the Minister of Fisheries and urged the New Zealand government to:

- Immediately ban set netting and pair trawling within four nautical miles of shore, including in harbours;
- Establish a marine mammal sanctuary covering the dolphin’s entire range;
- Urgently develop and implement a species recovery plan for all Maui’s dolphins.

Following the creation of the Passport action, an e-mail action alert was sent to all 30,000 Passport holders around the world, plus another 30,000 on WWF’s e-newsletter list, and a press release went out to the international media. (The number of passport holders has since grown to 50,000).

POWER OF IMAGES

The international secretariat's photo unit eventually secured photos for use, which gave a boost to the campaign. "Strong compelling images speak a thousand words," notes Bladen. "This is especially so in international campaigns that rely on people who do not necessarily have strong English skills."

"Images are the 'heartstring puller' in our work for species conservation," says Bladen. She adds that images are particularly important with Internet campaigning, since people generally do not like reading a lot of text online.

"In these kinds of campaigns, it's a matter of mobilise first, educate second," says Bladen. "Visuals can mobilise people and turn them on."

STRONG COMPELLING IMAGES SPEAK A THOUSAND WORDS.**CAMPAIGN RESOURCES**

The Panda Passport action did not cost any additional money other than the time of existing staff. A passport action could, if

necessary, be set up in an hour or less, but Bladen ideally prefers to have between two weeks and a month of lead time. This allows time for planning and consulting, selecting the appropriate targets, developing compelling website content, gaining endorsements from scientists and others, and marketing. An estimated 20 to 30 hours of work, including Bladen's time and that of the staff at WWF-NZ, were involved in putting together the New Zealand passport action.

Although launching a passport action is not particularly costly, the initial development costs of the system were "substantial." Bladen estimates the cost was in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, although an exact figure is difficult to determine as the system's development has been ongoing. Now that the international secretariat has set up the system, WWF's national offices can make use of it at no cost without having to reinvent the wheel each time.

"Online tools have great advantages, but the hardware and software to make it work are substantial," says Bladen. She notes that ready-made online advocacy tools are available today, possibly at lower cost than when the Panda Passport system was launched in 1998. Groups considering using such online tools need to

weigh the pros and cons of going with an off-the-shelf system versus developing one tailored to their specific needs.

The Panda Passport system also has a running cost borne by the international secretariat. This includes management, error-fixing and upgrades of the Panda Passport application, server and database management and a part-time response manager who answers the hundreds of e-mails each month from passport holders with questions, praise, complaints, etc.

CHALLENGES

WWF faced relatively few major challenges during the campaign, other than to keep up the pressure after the minister's original ban on set net fishing in 2001 was overturned in court and to keep up the momentum for full protection of the Maui's dolphin.

Bladen points to a longer-term challenge facing all groups that rely on e-mail in their campaigns. Just as ordinary people feel increasingly overwhelmed with e-mail and spam, decision makers in many countries are swamped with e-mails, and its value as a campaign tool has eroded. This is particularly the case in the European Union and the United States, where decision-makers get e-mails "on every issue under the sun." Bladen notes, "It's not a very

effective use of time, for example, to write to George Bush to tell him to sign the Kyoto Protocol on climate change.”

“Using e-mail is becoming more and more challenging,” says Bladen. “Many of us are looking for the next new thing—moving beyond simply e-mailing the authorities—even though we’re not sure yet what that will be.”

WITHIN FOUR DAYS, THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES RECEIVED 5,000 E-MAILS.

For now, Bladen recommends thinking carefully about who to target with e-mail. “In places that are not regularly in the international spotlight, such as New Zealand or Mozambique, e-mail can still be quite effective,” she says. “A few hundred messages to the authorities in such countries can still be powerful, as long as they’re amplified by other local action.”

IMPACT

Within four days of the Panda Passport action being set up, the fisheries ministry received 5,000 e-mails. The campaign launch attracted extensive media coverage, including the BBC, CNN Asia and Reuters. WWF-NZ’s web traffic also doubled at the peak of the campaign.

At the time, WWF-NZ told the international secretariat, “... the Maui’s e-mail campaign is a fabulous success! We got a phone call at 9 a.m. Monday morning from the Ministry of Fisheries asking for a meeting ... The Ministry said the large number of e-mails they were receiving was most inconvenient. Their [communications] manager rang and said it was inhibiting their ability to do business.”

After meeting with the minister, WWF-NZ responded by urging Panda Passport holders who had not sent an e-mail to do so. Several WWF Network offices around the world, in particular WWF-US’s Conservation Action Network, posted information and links to the web action on their sites and alerted their activists. The number of messages to the minister continued to grow, with the total eventually reaching 15,000. (The Panda Passport system

comes with a tracking tool that automatically tallies the number of actions taken.)

The fisheries minister eventually put in place the emergency measures recommended by WWF. In early 2003, about 12 months after the campaign’s launch, the minister announced a ban on set nets from inshore waters of New Zealand’s North Island’s upper west coast to protect the Maui’s dolphin.

Ironically, when the minister announced his decision, he communicated it, without WWF’s knowledge, to all Panda Passport activists who took action on this campaign.

WWF hailed the decision as “a wonderful victory for conservation.” In addition to making effective use of online campaign tools, Bladen attributes the success to strong planning, strong on-the-ground presence and expertise, and the case’s urgent and compelling nature which generated activist and media interest.

The campaign continues to push for a full species recovery plan and further measures to protect the Maui’s dolphin from trawl fishing.

For more information, see <http://www.wwf.org.nz/dolphin>

CYBER ACTIVISM – RESOURCES

ActionWorks.ca – *Provides cutting-edge online tools for campaigning*
<http://www.actionworks.ca/>

American Civil Liberties Union –
Online Strategies: Activism Gone Digital
<http://www.aclu.org/TakeAction/TakeAction.cfm?ID=12834&c=242>

Aspiration – *Connects Non-Profit Organisations with Software Solutions that Maximise Impact*
<http://www.aspirationtech.org/>

e-Advocates – *a leading US-based Internet advocacy consulting firm*
<http://www.e-advocates.com/index.html>

Greenpeace – *CyberActivism Community*
http://www.greenpeace.org/international_en/features/details?item_id=486962

ItrainOnline.org – *Internet Training Resources in English, French, Spanish*
<http://www.itrainonline.org/>

Inter American Press Association – *Anti-Impunity Campaign Featuring Online Protest Letter Actions*
<http://www.impunidad.com/>

Martus – *Software Programme for Documenting Human Rights Violations*
<http://www.martus.org/>

MoveOn.org – *How Internet Technology is Changing Activism*
<http://www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml?i=20030804&c=1&s=boyd>

Network for Good:
<http://www.networkforgood.org/npo/advocacy/>

Peekabooby – *Resources for Circumventing Internet Censorship*
<http://www.peek-a-booty.org/>

Techsoup – *The Technology Place for Non-Profits*
<http://www.techsoup.org/index.cfm>

The Virtual Activist - *A Training Course*
<http://netaction.org/training/>

World Wildlife Fund - *Panda Passport*
<http://www.passport.panda.org/>

Harnessing Legal Expertise

TOOLBOX

HOW LEGAL EXPERTISE CAN STRENGTHEN A CAMPAIGN

CONTEXT The idea of human rights, including the right to freedom of expression, is more than a philosophical or moral concept – it is embodied in law. The scope and meaning of the term “human rights” is defined by international law, while most human rights violations are also violations of national law.

Lawyers, judges, magistrates, academics, law students and others who are familiar with the theory and practice of law have a vital role to play in human rights work, including protecting the right to freedom of expression.

ADVANTAGES

Getting people with legal expertise involved in your campaign offers several advantages as the legal profession is:

- Influential within most countries;
- Well informed and adept at communication;
- Widely respected internationally;
- Linked through its national professional associations;
- Linked internationally through personal and professional contact, professional associations and membership of international associations.

Among the benefits of working with lawyers and their organisations are the following:

1 **Technical advice for your organisation or campaign**

They can work as legal consultants to campaign coordinators and those lobbying inter-governmental organisations and national governments.

2 **Links between the freedom of expression movement and the wider legal profession**

They can reach colleagues – through local or national law societies, bar associations and academic institutions – to raise awareness and encourage unified and, where appropriate, high-profile campaigning on specific cases or issues.

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3 Defence of victims of freedom of expression violations and promotion of legal reform

They can make legal representations about individual cases or about broader freedom of expression issues, presenting the legal arguments supported by international law.

WHAT LEGAL EXPERTS CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOUR CAMPAIGN

Review or propose draft legislation

Having legal experts involved can be vitally important when new government legislation impacting on freedom of expression is proposed and requires comment, or when your organisation campaigns to promote new legislation.

Meet the media

Participation by a leading lawyer in a media event – for example, a press conference to launch a country report in which legal concerns are a major issue – can help you win coverage in the legal community as well as the wider media.

Make a statement

A public statement of support or concern by a respected legal organisation or individual lawyer can be specific or general:

- A specific statement, such as on the need for detained journalists to have access to lawyers, doctors and relatives, may be useful to highlight the issue.
- A general statement, such as one supporting your organisation's work, can be quoted when needed – whether in seeking contact with government officials or seeking support or action from individual lawyers.
- A short statement can be signed by all relevant organisations and individuals as a simple and quick way of showing the level of support on an issue.

WRITE A LETTER

- An official letter written by a respected legal organisation or a prominent member of the legal community to government officials and appropriate embassies can be a good indication of the level of concern within your community on a human rights issue.

- A letter from an individual lawyer on official paper looks impressive and immediately makes clear the status of the author.
- Such letters also illustrate that the wider community shares your organisation's concerns.

PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL SOLIDARITY

Ask lawyers or legal organisations in your country to contact their counterparts in a target country and offer their support as co-professionals on human rights issues. This demonstration of concern and professional solidarity may also lead to opportunities for exchange visits and the sharing of expertise and resources.

Publicise your organisation's concerns in the media

A regular human rights column in a legal publication published by your country's bar association or law society could feature appeal cases, or thematic and country issues, using information from the IFEX network, with the legal focus emphasised. From time to time, space may be available for longer, feature-length articles by a lawyer, taking up human rights and freedom of expression issues from a legal perspective.



In the general media, a leading lawyer sympathetic to your organisation's concerns could write an opinion piece for a newspaper.

In the general media, a leading lawyer sympathetic to your organisation's concerns could write an opinion piece for a newspaper.

Copies of articles in the legal or general press on issues in other countries may be sent with a cover letter to the relevant embassy, asking for a comment or response.

Help raise funds

Your organisation could ask a respected legal figure to appeal to lawyers for donations as you plan fundraising events of interest to members of the international legal network.

Increase awareness

Arrange a presentation at a university during the induction period for law students. Sponsor a human rights lawyer to speak at a public meeting.

Contact others

Contact other professionals or organisations that may have a particular interest in a case.

Join a delegation

Where broader legal issues or individual legal cases are involved, it can be effective to have legal professionals join delegations that meet with government officials or travel to other countries.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What national associations representing lawyers exist in your country?
- Do these associations have subcommittees or individuals with responsibility for human rights?
- Have leading lawyers' or legal organisations made public statements on domestic or international freedom of expression issues?
- Are particular lawyers or legal organisations likely to influence your government's policy in relation to freedom of expression?
- Are there lawyers or legal organisations in a target country with influence on freedom of expression issues? Have they made statements or taken a position on these issues?

- How do legal organisations in your country communicate with their members; for example, through what types of publications?
- Are there specialised legal media? Do the publications accept articles from non-lawyers?
- Are there particular lawyers who write media columns or provide editorial opinion in the general media?
- Are lawyers or legal organisations affiliated to international bodies that may be able to take action, such as sending a letter raising freedom of expression concerns?

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Amnesty International Campaigning Manual, 2001. 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom. <http://www.amnesty.org>

Harnessing Legal Expertise

CASE STUDY

ARTICLE 19 AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT CAMPAIGN IN CROATIA

CONTEXT Croatia's political context offered a number of opportunities for campaigners seeking a freedom of information law. Since Croatia was one of the last remaining countries in Central and Eastern Europe to adopt such legislation, campaigners could make use of regional comparisons and peer pressure.

Croatia's desire to enter the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) also enabled international organisations to influence the country's reform process. Among the criteria for EU membership are "the existence of stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities."

During the rule of former president Franjo Tudjman, the EU had refused to invite Croatia to start membership talks due to the regime's authoritarian tendencies. A new government under President Stjepan Mesic, who was elected in February 2000, aimed to stand out as an example of a successful transition to democracy and a free-market economy in order to gain entry into the EU and NATO. In February 2003, Croatia submitted a formal application for EU membership, becoming the first country in the Western Balkans to begin accession negotiations.

In autumn 2002, ARTICLE 19 launched a campaign, in collaboration with the Croatian Helsinki Committee (CHC), for a Freedom of Information Act in Croatia in line with international standards. At first, campaigners faced a low level of awareness among Croatian civil society and the government about the need for such a law – a key part of the legal foundation for a modern democracy. Yet by October 2003, the country's Parliament had voted to adopt the Act on the Right of Access to Information.

NATIONAL PARTNERS, INTERNATIONAL EXPERTISE

A key element of the campaign was ARTICLE 19's collaboration with strong national partners to communicate the case for a freedom of information law and to insist on the importance of key principles being reflected in the law. A coalition of 18 Croatian NGOs – led by the CHC and including journalists, human rights organisations, environmental groups, academics, and other activists – was involved in the national campaign. "The broad nature of the coalition increased the credibility of the campaign in

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the government’s eyes,” says ARTICLE 19 Europe Programme Officer Sara Buchanan.

ARTICLE 19 contributed its legal expertise to the domestic NGO coalition. In April 2003, ARTICLE 19 provided commentary on a declaration of principles produced by the domestic coalition and, in September, analysed the official draft law in light of international standards.

THE CAMPAIGN SUCCESSFULLY BROUGHT HIGH-LEVEL CROATIAN POLITICIANS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ONSIDE AS ALLIES.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE

The campaign sought to invoke regional peer pressure on Croatia. In March 2003, ARTICLE 19, the Open Society Justice Initiative and the CHC organised a regional seminar that brought together participants from across the region who shared their experience of promoting freedom of information legislation. “The accounts from activists and government officials from nearby countries, where such legislation had been introduced, motivated local Croatian activists to step up their campaign,” says

Luitgard Hammerer, ARTICLE 19’s Europe Programme Director. “They also generated a feeling among Croatian government officials that such a law was a real necessity.”

Campaigners also brought international attention and pressure to bear on the Croatian government by inviting high-level international guests to the regional seminar, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s (OSCE) Ambassador to Croatia and representatives from the Council of Europe, EU and NATO.

The Council of Europe’s adoption of a Recommendation on Access to Official Documents in February 2002 also provided an important reference for standards on openness, which governments throughout Europe are expected to apply.

BRINGING HIGH-LEVEL POLITICIANS ONSIDE

The campaign successfully brought high-level Croatian politicians and government officials onside as allies. Most notably, the CHC used its influence and contacts to get President Mesic to make an opening speech at the regional seminar in March 2003. The president’s desire to illustrate Croatia’s democratic credentials in order to join the EU was likely a key factor in his involvement.

MOBILISING PUBLIC OPINION

Croatian public opinion was mobilised through the launch of a simple statement of principles, drafted by the CHC, making the case for a freedom of information law. Campaigners successfully gained broad media coverage of the regional seminar, due in large part to the president’s attendance.

ASSESSING STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

“These campaign strategies were adopted after identifying the strengths within ARTICLE 19 and the Croatian Helsinki Committee and analysing the political environment in Croatia,” says Hammerer.

ARTICLE 19 had the capacity to provide legal expertise and organise a regional event with international and regional contributors, including its network of partners in other countries. Meanwhile, the CHC’s reputation and contacts with key political actors in Croatia enabled it to build a strong domestic lobby. Croatia’s political ambitions to join the EU and NATO also provided an opportunity to draw attention to its lack of freedom of information legislation.

CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

Key budget lines included in such a campaign were:

- Staff time for the project coordinator/campaigner and legal team at ARTICLE 19;
- Staff time for a coordinator/campaigner in Croatia;
- International travel to bring ARTICLE 19 staff, other international experts and participants from the region to Croatia for the regional seminar, roundtable and meetings with government officials;
- Accommodation and subsistence for the regional seminar;
- Venue, interpretation equipment and interpreters for the regional seminar;
- Translation of drafts of the Croatian law into English for analysis by ARTICLE 19 and translation of ARTICLE 19's analysis and publications on freedom of information into Croatian;
- Printing and dissemination costs;
- Optional: costs for producing a seminar report that can be used as another tool for public awareness raising work (one full time rapporteur who follows the conference and produces a report).

CHALLENGES**Confronting a Low Level of Awareness**

“The primary difficulty encountered was the low level of awareness in Croatia about the purpose of a freedom of information law,” says Hammerer. At the end of 2002, the Croatian government was preoccupied with passing a general media law and did not see the need for a specific law on access to information. The right to information was wrongly perceived as something exclusively concerning journalists, not the whole population.

In response, ARTICLE 19 and its allies launched an educational campaign, targeting the general public and government. The educational campaign drew on the experiences of other countries in the region to explain the concept of freedom of information and to embarrass the Croatian government for lagging behind regional trends and falling short of international standards.

The CHC's public awareness campaign centred on a Statement of Principles, published in April 2003, that explained in accessible language the underlying rationale of a freedom of information law and the main principles that a good law must reflect. An earlier campaign in Slovakia, which had developed nine core principles for a freedom of information law, served as a model.

IMPACT

This very successful campaign culminated in the adoption of a freedom of information law in less than 12 months. The CHC attributed the law's unusually swift passage to the international pressure demonstrated at the regional seminar. The recognition that Croatia was lagging behind others in the region, combined with the approach of elections, also seem to have added a sense of urgency in passing the law.

The law largely met international standards, but the CHC is continuing to lobby to strengthen it.

LESSONS

Among the reasons for success were:

- Campaigners took advantage of the opportunities presented by the political context;
- Campaigners learned from past successes in similar campaigns in other countries;
- Campaigners built a coalition that made use of the complementary strengths of different partners.

In addition to adding credibility to the campaign by showing a wide range of support, a broad coalition allows groups to tap into a greater array of resources and skills. In this case, the leading thinkers who developed the Croatian law were legal academics on the boards of different NGOs brought into the coalition. Groups that do not have legal expertise of their own may be able to build similar links with university departments and others with legal resources to expand their campaign capacities.

For more on coalitions, see “Working with Coalitions,” (Section 3.4)

COLLABORATION WITH ARTICLE 19

ARTICLE 19 also has some resources available to support local groups in analysing draft legislation in light of international standards and occasionally taking up specific freedom of expression cases. Those who approach ARTICLE 19 about the possibilities of collaboration should provide as much information as possible about the situation in their countries – e.g. the timeframe for adoption of specific laws, the context and significance of a particular case – so that ARTICLE 19 can judge whether it is able to offer support.

For more information, visit: <http://www.article19.org>

HARNESSING LEGAL EXPERTISE – RESOURCES

Amnesty International Campaigning Manual, 2001 (available as a PDF document from <http://web.amnesty.org/pages/campaigning-manual-eng>)

Andean Commission of Jurists:
<http://www.cajpe.org.pe/>

ARTICLE 19:
<http://www.article19.org>

Commonwealth Press Union – *Legal Support Programme* http://www.cpu.org.uk/legal_support.html

Conectus – *The Pro Bono Institute*
<http://www.conectas.org/site/en/index4.htm>

Freedom of Expression Institute –
Freedom of Expression Defence Fund
http://fxi.org.za/fxi_defence_fund.htm

GlobalRights.org - Promoting Justice:
A Guide to Strategic Human Rights Lawyering
http://www.globalrights.org/what_we_do/issue_s_we_work_on/human_rights_lawyering/promoting_justice.cfm

International Bar Association –
Human Rights Institute
<http://www.ibanet.org/humri/action.asp>

International Media Lawyers' Association:
<http://www.justiceinitiative.org/activities/foifoe/foe/imla>

Media Institute of Southern Africa
(Zimbabwe): <http://www.misa.org>

Media Law Advocates Training Program:
<http://pcmlp.socleg.ox.ac.uk/Advocates.htm>

Open Society Justice Initiative:
<http://www.justiceinitiative.org>

Organization for Security and Cooperation
in Europe – *Veronica Guerin Legal Defence
Fund*: <http://www.osce.org/fom/>

Rights Consortium:
<http://www.rightsconsortium.org/>

Stanhope Centre for Communications Policy
Research: <http://www.stanhopecentre.org/>

Zambia Independent Media Association –
Media Legal Defence Fund
<http://www.zima.co.zm/mldf.htm>

Working with Coalitions

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TOOLBOX

HOW COALITIONS CAN STRENGTHEN A CAMPAIGN

CONTEXT Cooperation among NGOs is likely to become increasingly common in the future. Coalitions – that is, temporary alliances to execute a particular campaign – are a specific type of cooperation that can be a very effective tool for campaigners.

ADVANTAGES OF COALITIONS

Pooling Resources

Coalitions can make possible major campaigns that are beyond the means of any one organisation. They create opportunities for cost-sharing among several groups, reduced duplication, and a division of labour that draws on the strengths of the various participants.

Sharing Knowledge and Networks of Contacts

Campaigns can benefit greatly from drawing on the varied expertise, local knowledge, connections and networks of contacts of the various groups involved in a coalition.

The sharing of databases and information technology can be mutually advantageous as well.

Getting the Message out to Multiple Constituencies

The different coalition partners can disseminate the campaign's message and key documents to

their members and constituencies, reaching a greater number and wider range of people than a single organisation acting alone.

Enhanced Profile and Credibility

A single organisation waging a campaign might be dismissed as a lone voice. A broad coalition shows that the campaign has widespread support. This can lead to increased access to decision makers and greater media attention.

Being able to draw on the varied expertise of the participating organisations can allow a coalition to appear well informed and to be taken more seriously.

Local and International Complementarity

Large international organisations may have expertise and financial resources that local groups lack. Meanwhile, local groups may have the local knowledge and ground-level contacts necessary for a successful campaign.

In cases where human rights defenders are working under the threat of violence in their own country, it can be helpful to have people working on the issue in a second country.

Supporting All Human Rights, Not Just Freedom of Expression

The right to freedom of expression is inextricably linked to other human rights – civil, political, economic, social, and cultural – outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There is increasing recognition that these rights are indivisible. Participating in a coalition with NGOs that have a broad range of mandates can allow your organisation to show its commitment to the full range of human rights, even if its own work is more narrowly focused.

POTENTIAL DISADVANTAGES

Although coalitions offer very significant advantages, organisations need to be aware of the potential disadvantages before deciding to enter one:

- Some degree of conflict is inevitable when the various groups in a coalition bring their own strengths and weaknesses, perspectives and personalities to the table

- Managing a coalition can be challenging and time-consuming. Without effective coordination and good internal communications, coalitions can break down
- A great deal of time, energy, and dedication is often necessary to create and re-create consensus among the partners
- Once a coalition is formed to run a campaign, individual organisations have to surrender some control over that campaign and turn it over to the coalition
- Being associated with some potential coalition partners - for example, those that advocate or condone violent tactics – may generate controversy. Coalitions that include politically-partisan organisations may not be in the best interest of groups trying to appear impartial

BUILDING EFFECTIVE COALITIONS

While there is no single universal set of rules for running an effective coalition, the following are some suggestions to consider:

- Don't immediately rule out unlikely allies. Organisations that disagree on one issue may be able to find common ground on another
- Be flexible and have an open mind – other organisations might want to do things differently. At the same time, be conscious of your organisation's "bottom line" in terms of the

- approaches and tactics it is willing to accept
- Identify a limited number of objectives that the coalition will work toward over a given time
- The coalition's management structure will require considerable thought. Some coalitions create an executive board comprised of a representative from each member organisation to prevent any one organisation from dominating
- Communicate regularly and share information
- Share any publicity generated by the coalition to reduce competition amongst member organisations
- Make sure the workload is fairly balanced among the coalition members
- Do not publicly criticise the actions of another coalition member
- Member groups should focus on the issue as a uniting factor, rather than competing among themselves
- If, in the end, your group decides not to form a coalition, your campaign can still benefit from endorsements and loose alliances with other groups

CONTINUUM OF JOINT ACTION

Organisations will vary in their commitment to a coalition. How organisations relate will range from total independence to a close-knit, structured coalition. The stages on this continuum are:

**Independence – Cooperation – Coordination
– Collaboration – Coalition**

Independence - organisations work in isolation on the same issues

Cooperation - organisations assist one another on an ad-hoc basis

Coordination - organisations always ensure that their activities take into account those of other organisations

Collaboration - organisations work together jointly and continuously on a particular project towards a common goal

Coalition - organisations have an overall joint strategy and function within an on-going structure, however loose it may be

Commitment:

Various organisations within the coalition will be at different stages on the continuum depending on how long they have been involved, the level of trust with regard to the other members, the amount of money/human resources they feel they can contribute, etc.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Before entering a coalition:

- Are the objectives and mandate of the coalition compatible with those of your organisation?
- Are the objectives realistic?
- Is there mutual agreement on the issue and the approach to campaigning on it?
- Is there mutual benefit from working together with other organisations?
- Is there enough mutual trust among the organisations and individuals involved to work together?
- Is this a ‘one-off’ collaboration to achieve a quick win? Or is the campaign a long-term one?
- Will your organisation have to give up an unacceptable degree of control?
- Is the work fairly divided among the coalition partners?

Evaluating coalition activity:

- Is the cooperation proving to be successful?
- Is it an effective use of resources?
- Are targets being reached?
- Have there been any negative effects so far?
- Is there a need to redirect efforts?
- Has the coalition been beneficial to all the partners involved?
- Is the visibility/credit/power that comes from the coalition’s accomplishments being shared fairly among the partners?
- What lessons have been learned for future campaigns?

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Working with Coalitions

CASE STUDY

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION INSTITUTE AND THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA'S ANTI-TERRORISM BILL

CONTEXT The introduction of the Anti-Terrorism Bill (ATB) in 2002 threatened South Africa's relatively high degree of media freedom. The struggle over the Bill took place within South Africa's "rich tradition of activism," which Simon Kimani Ndung'u, the Freedom of Expression Institute's (FXI) Anti-Censorship Coordinator, says is "a product of past resistance to the country's repressive apartheid-era policies."

In addition to the remnants of activism from the apartheid era, new non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations have emerged. These groups hold a critical and independent distance from the government, which is led by the African National Congress (ANC). Another key player is the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), an alliance partner of the ruling ANC, with 2 million members.

A decade of post-apartheid democracy has brought important advances, but many individuals and organisations are disappointed at the limited progress on key socio-economic issues, such as access to land, housing, water, electricity and health care. FXI aims to establish a link between the lack of progress on social and economic rights in South Africa and the incomplete development of civil and political rights, including the right to freedom of expression. The organisation maintains that the lack of delivery of socio-economic rights, worsening poverty, and growing inequality have direct links to rising censorship that has been used to prevent people from expressing critical views.

"We examined and utilised this context in order to give meaning to our campaign," says Kimani Ndung'u. FXI was able to find common cause with other organisations concerned over the ATB's threat to the rights to freedom of expression, association, assembly, demonstration and picketing.

In 2002, in the wake of the September 11 attacks, the South African government re-introduced the Anti-Terrorism Bill (ATB), officially known as the "The Protection of Constitutional Democracy against Terrorist and Related Activities Bill."

FXI argued that the Bill would seriously compromise fundamental rights and freedoms

since it failed to precisely define "terrorism." The vague and broad definition of terrorist acts could be used to proscribe a range of legitimate civil and political activities, such as demands for land, peaceful demonstrations, pickets or civil disobedience campaigns.

For example, FXI noted that the actions of organisations such as the Treatment Action

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Campaign, which campaigns for affordable treatment for HIV-AIDS, and the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee, which opposes electricity cut-offs in poor areas, could be criminalised as “terrorist acts.” FXI added that this type of legislation was not needed, especially given the government’s own statements about its ability to curtail domestic terrorist activities using existing legislation.

WE REALISED THAT WE COULD NOT MOUNT A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN WITHOUT A BROAD-BASED COALITION.

Since 1994, FXI had participated in a number of successful campaigns in which they had worked together with other civil-society organisations. “We looked back on these past successes and realised that we could not mount a successful campaign against the Bill without creating a broad-based coalition,” says FXI’s Anti-Censorship Coordinator Simon Kimani Ndung’u. A broad alliance was especially important in this case, given the sensitive nature of the issue of “terrorism” following

September 11. “We didn’t want to be the lone wolf howling against the wind,” adds Kimani Ndung’u.

The coalition included the South African chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA-SA), the Media Workers Association of South Africa, the Media Review Network, the Anti-War Coalition and social movement organisations such as the Anti-Privatisation Forum, the Landless People’s Movement, and the Treatment Action Campaign. Its goals were to:

- Raise public awareness and consciousness around the Bill and generate opposition to it;
- Call for more time for discussion of the Bill than that stipulated by Parliament;
- Engage with government and members of parliament;
- Have the Bill retracted or withdrawn.

Adopting a Programme of Action

In February 2003, FXI began by holding a series of planning meetings with NGOs, trade unions, religious groups, social movements and political parties to strike a consensus around key aspects of the Bill. These meetings led to the adoption of a programme of action.

FXI also commissioned a legal expert to analyse the Bill’s constitutionality, its desirability for South Africa, potential alternatives and a comparative analysis of anti-terrorism legislation in countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and India.

Media Strategy

The organisation then initiated a far-reaching media strategy to raise public awareness of the Bill. This included holding interviews with print and electronic media and sending opinion pieces to the newspapers. The coalition also identified sympathetic journalists who would be willing to write about the problems with the Bill, an important initial step in generating wider media coverage of the issue.

Publicity and Awareness Programme

Between March and June 2003, FXI put in place a publicity and awareness programme and held seminars and workshops, in addition to participating in public demonstrations against the ATB. These activities coincided with the distribution of approximately 50,000 leaflets, 100 posters and 1,600 stickers in four of South Africa’s eleven official languages.

Parliamentary Committee Hearings

By the end of April, FXI sent a written submission to a parliamentary committee examining the ATB, in which it pointed out the Bill's many flaws, the dangers inherent in such legislation not only in South Africa but elsewhere, and asking that the Bill be withdrawn. The campaign also encouraged other coalition partners, civil society organisations that were not part of the coalition and private individuals to send written comments to the committee and call for the Bill's retraction.

In June, FXI made an oral presentation before the parliamentary committee. Many other NGOs, community-based organisations, human rights bodies, lawyers' organisations and religious groups appeared before the committee, expressing an overwhelming view that the Bill should be dropped.

Following the hearings, the committee completely re-drew the Bill. By the time it was sent to Parliament for adoption in late November, the Bill had been redrafted no less than three times.

CHALLENGES

Uniting Different Perspectives

The main challenge faced within the coalition was that the various organisations came to the issue with different ideologies and approaches. For example, some organisations opposed the Bill in its entirety, while others only wanted to change a few clauses. From the outset, deep differences existed and some organisations eventually pulled out of the coalition.

"We were prepared to accommodate these alternative views up to a point to work together and try to move as a common force," says Kimani Ndung'u. "It's not always easy to bring on board everybody who sees things from a different viewpoint."

Overcoming Limited Resources

"Whereas we had a measure of organisational resources in terms of offices and office equipment, we found ourselves seriously lacking in financial means," says Kimani Ndung'u. FXI successfully approached a local funder for money to hold workshops and seminars in major cities and to print leaflets.

The creation of a wide coalition also allowed resource sharing. Different partners

took on specific roles such as printing leaflets, hosting meetings, and participating in media interviews. The partner organisations were also responsible for mobilising their own membership and constituencies for the workshops or demonstrations. The ability to draw on the financial and logistical resources of partner organisations took some of the pressure off FXI.

IMPACT

The campaign achieved a number of successes on the way to a significant victory.

"We first wanted to create widespread awareness of the Bill," says Kimani Ndung'u. "It was patently obvious to us that failure to achieve this goal would allow Parliament to disregard our views and pass the Bill with ease." Initially the ATB was virtually unknown, but FXI and its coalition partners succeeded in creating a public debate in much of the country. "There was a knock-on and snow-balling effect as the different coalition partners spread the word to their members and constituencies," says Kimani Ndung'u.

The coalition also succeeded in generating more media interest as the campaign progressed. "When the campaign began, there

was hardly any media discussion of the Bill,” says Kimani Ndung’u. “It wasn’t a ‘sexy’ issue at first for the media, but once people began talking about it, they couldn’t ignore it anymore.” Media outlets also came to realise they could be seriously affected by certain provisions in the ATB, and they became an active force for information dissemination and opposition to the Bill.

THERE WAS A KNOCK-ON AND SNOW-BALLING EFFECT AS THE COALITION PARTNERS SPREAD THE WORD TO THEIR MEMBERS.

General opposition to the Bill grew with time. Members of Parliament began contacting FXI and other coalition partners for information about the Bill. Even though some individual MPs privately opposed the Bill, they could not do so publicly as they had to support the position of their respective parties. (The ruling ANC and all the major opposition parties initially supported the Bill.)

The coalition also succeeded in extending

the time for public submissions, giving the public ample time to consider the Bill and its implications.

Finally, the Bill was shelved in late February 2004.

FACTORS BEHIND THE VICTORY

FXI says this victory owes itself to a number of factors. The coalition’s extensive lobbying efforts undeniably played a key role in making the government aware of the widespread opposition to the Bill.

The government was forced to draft and redraft the Bill to try and accommodate concerns from the various interest groups. FXI says this may have resulted in the eventual decision to shelve it as the government eventually realised that the Bill would never be sufficiently acceptable.

One decisive factor appears to have been the position taken by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which threatened to mobilise its members for a nationwide strike if the Bill was passed. Although COSATU was not a part of the coalition against the ATB, it eventually concluded that the broad definition of a “terrorist act” would violate workers’ constitutional right to strike

and, in effect, return South Africa “back to the days of apartheid.” Large-scale strike action would have tarnished the ruling ANC’s image in the run-up to the country’s third general elections, held in April 2004. The government likely feared alienating some of its core supporters and allies in COSATU.

“The coalition successfully raised awareness about the Bill, which would likely have been passed in secrecy without our efforts,” says Kimani Ndung’u. “But on our own we were not able to get the government to ultimately listen.” He emphasises that different forces played key roles at different stages, with COSATU’s action playing a key role near the end. “Our efforts publicised the Bill and eventually COSATU had to take a stand,” he adds.

In addition, FXI notes that the government did not want to lose votes from its Muslim constituency, which had fervently opposed the Bill from the beginning, fearing that its members would be particular targets.

The campaign against the ATB clearly illustrates the value of building a coalition and generating involvement by groups whose concerns extend well beyond issues of freedom of expression and journalists’ rights.

WORKING WITH COALITIONS – RESOURCES

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 Partnerships, Alliances, and Joint Ventures;*
 William Berquist, Juli Betwee, David Meuel

CIVICUS – World Alliance
 for Citizen Participation
<http://www.civicus.org/new/default.asp?skip2=yes>

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<http://www.iccnw.org/>

Community Toolbox: *How to Create Coalitions
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International Campaign to Ban Landmines:
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Celebrity Support

TOOLBOX

HOW CELEBRITY SUPPORT CAN STRENGTHEN A CAMPAIGN

CONTEXT: Why use celebrities? Celebrity sells. A celebrity endorsement of your campaign can make a real difference in terms of media coverage, public awareness and pressure on the relevant organisations. Celebrities set an example that people can follow and can add unique value to your organisation.

The positive benefits of celebrity endorsements include:

- Attracting new audiences;
- Raising funds by encouraging sponsorship and contributions;
- Mobilising public opinion and involvement;
- Contributing to the repositioning of an organisation in the public's perception;
- Reinvigorating a long running campaign.

The first questions are:

- How do you identify a potential high profile supporter for your cause?
- Who is appropriate?

Factors to consider are:

- What kind of celebrity do you want?
- Do you need celebrity endorsement at all? Consider what progress you are making and what exactly the support of a high-profile figure can contribute.
- Is your issue a matter of local concern? If so, you might want to contact a local luminary.
- Are there already high-profile figures speaking out in support of freedom of expression? If so, you might be able to elicit their support for your particular campaign.

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WHICH CELEBRITIES CAN HELP YOU

Each celebrity you consider will present certain advantages and disadvantages. Before approaching celebrities, weigh up their motivations, how much effort you estimate maintaining their interest will require and how much you believe they will serve your cause.

- Target celebrities who will appeal to your organisation's target audience. Be careful that your choice of celebrity will not trivialise the issue or undermine the message.
- Investigate which celebrities are likely to be sympathetic to your cause. Your organisation is more likely to develop long-term relationships with celebrities if they have a genuine interest or personal experience in the cause or field they will be promoting.
- Research potential celebrity endorsers to ensure that their histories will not come into conflict with your organisation or generate negative publicity.
- Celebrities should add value to your story. Think about how they will make a difference. Avoid seeking celebrity endorsements simply for the sake of having famous names tagged to your campaign.
- Many celebrities view charity work as essential to their self promotion thus not all those who accept your appeals for help will be altruistically motivated. However, this should not detract from the potential benefits that celebrity endorsements might offer your organisation. High profile celebrities wearing your organisation's logo in magazine features, for example, will attract the kind of attention that both parties desire.
- If you intend to employ celebrities as ambassadors or spokespersons, roles that take them beyond the remit of a promotional campaign, consider whom you approach. Certain celebrities are more adept at handling complex issues and will carry a story or promote a cause better than others.
- Be realistic about the size of your organisation, the issues you want celebrities to campaign for and the tasks you would like them to perform. 'A' list celebrities are unlikely to attend coffee mornings in aid of local charities, for example, whereas a 'C' or 'D' list celebrities might be much more likely to oblige.

RECRUITING A CELEBRITY

Celebrities and their agents receive requests for them to endorse charities and appear in advertising campaigns everyday. Your organisation's approach should be subtle but persistent and your campaign well packaged if you are to encourage celebrities to respond.

The first step is to make contact:

- Reach celebrities through their websites, agents, and your own personal contacts.
- Where possible make direct contact with the celebrity concerned. Many celebrities have agents who filter requests for support who can be an extra hurdle to overcome.

Once you make contact, explain what your organisation does and what is involved in your celebrity proposal:

- Tell celebrities what your organisation can offer them. Highlight the potential publicity benefits available through involvement with your organisation's campaign.
- Be specific about what you want celebrities to do for your organisation. Will the celebrities simply be involved in one campaign or would you like to foster a relationship which sees them emerge as the face of your organisation?

- Quite often, the causes that celebrities lend their support to are by their very nature long term, such as child poverty. If your cause is finite, do highlight this point. Their support need not represent a long-term commitment.

Once you secure a celebrity's backing, make them feel that their contribution matters:

- Personalise the relationship and keep the celebrities informed about the campaigns in which they are involved.
- Follow up any celebrity activities with an appropriate acknowledgement and thank you.
- Consider making patrons of those celebrities that are especially involved in your organisation's campaigns or have made a long-standing contribution to your organisation.

HOW TO USE THEIR SUPPORT

Give celebrities a range of options in terms of their involvement. Sometimes a statement is enough – you can put that on a press release. Obviously the best case scenario is if they pledge their full support but there are plenty of ways they can get involved. Be creative in your thinking. Remember that celebrities are very busy people so something that does not need to be too time-consuming is more likely to get some input. Some suggestions are:

- Getting celebrities to sign (and write) direct-mail appeal letters to existing and potential supporters asking for donations.
- Asking them to appear in promotional activities and campaigning appeals for television and radio.
- Speak at press conferences and interviews or as the main attraction at fundraising events.
- Participate in headline-grabbing activities that raise funds and awareness for your organisation.

- Asking them to use their network of contacts to get support for your organisation. The participation of celebrities in campaigning activities and media conferences can create media interest in events which might otherwise attract less publicity.

POTENTIAL PITFALLS OF CELEBRITY SUPPORT

Also, while many charities enjoy successful relationships with their celebrity endorsers, some problems have been known to arise. Ensure that your organisation considers the possible pitfalls of celebrity endorsements.

- Certain issues or campaigns do not lend themselves well to attracting celebrity endorsement and most celebrities are unlikely to support campaigns based around a taboo issue. Your organisation may also find it hard to track down suitable celebrity role models and backers for certain issues.

- Be wary of over-dependence on celebrity backers and ensure that fame and publicity do not overshadow your organisation's central campaign message.
- Devise a contingency plan for those times when celebrities might attract unwanted and potentially damaging media attention. Be prepared to respond to the media and decide under which circumstances to support celebrities and when to distance your organisation from them.
- Prepare your approach for dealing with demanding celebrities. For high-profile and costly campaigns consider asking celebrity backers to sign contracts with the charity which set out the terms and conditions of their work. In general, charities do not pay celebrities. You should, however, aim to cover expenses, including travel and accommodation.

TIPS

- Be clear about what you want done, when and why.
- Be clear about what support you are able to provide.
- Be clear whether or not a fee or expenses will be paid.
- Supply as much background information as necessary.
- Make sure that the celebrity's contribution will be worthwhile and will be seen by them to be worthwhile.

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Celebrity Support

CASE STUDY

THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO BAN LAND MINES

CONTEXT In 1991-92, several individuals and non-governmental organisations, including IFEX member Human Rights Watch, came together to coordinate their efforts under the banner of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL).

Today, the ICBL is a network of more than 1,400 groups in over 90 countries, including human rights, humanitarian, children's, peace, disability, veterans, medical, mine action, development, arms control, religious, environmental and women's groups. The campaign is committed to an international ban on the use, production, stockpiling and sale, transfer or export of antipersonnel landmines. It lobbies for:

- The ratification, implementation and monitoring of the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty
- Increased resources for humanitarian de-mining and mine risk education programmes
- Increased resources for landmine survivor rehabilitation and assistance

The ICBL's message can be summed up by its slogan: "Ban Mines! Clear Mines! Help the survivors!"

The campaign's efforts led to the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, also known as the Ottawa convention. As of July 2004, 143 countries have ratified or acceded to this international treaty banning the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of anti-personnel landmines. Another nine countries have signed, but have not yet completed their ratification process. Forty-two countries have not yet joined the treaty.

In 1997, ICBL and its founding coordinator, Jody Williams, won the Nobel Peace Prize.

For more information, see <http://www.icbl.org>

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and its member groups have received support from numerous celebrities in recent years, most notably the late Princess Diana of Wales. That support, which has complemented other campaign methods, has contributed to the campaign's successes, such as the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

However, the ICBL does not actually consider celebrity support to be a major part of its campaign toolkit. In fact, at the beginning of the campaign in the early 1990s, ICBL decided not to seek celebrity support.

"Since it was a political campaign advocating the elimination of a weapon, we felt celebrities might think it was too complex, too political,

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or too military,” says Elizabeth Bernstein, Coordinator of the ICBL. “While we felt our message and goal were simple and clear, we chose to focus on other tools at the start of the campaign, namely building awareness through experts in the field—landmine survivors themselves and organisations working in the field.”

The ICBL itself made no real attempt to gain celebrity support, but individual members of the network did begin to engage celebrities at the local level. “Our campaign is a loose coalition and each member is free to develop its own strategies for what works best in their own countries,” notes Bernstein. “We have no cookie-cutter campaign model.”

THE KEY THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND ARE CREATIVITY, PERSISTENCE AND USING CONTACTS THAT YOU MIGHT NOT EVEN KNOW YOUR MEMBERS HAVE.

WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FROM CELEBRITIES AND PROMINENT FIGURES

In 1992, founding ICBL member Handicap International launched an appeal in France for a landmine ban, and the first signatories included prominent figures such as soprano Barbara Hendricks and Bernard Kouchner, founder of Médecins sans Frontières and a leading French political figure. In subsequent years, Hendricks’ support has included helping Handicap International raise funds for mine victims in Cambodia.

National-level efforts to contact prominent figures include the Italian campaign’s work to gain the Vatican’s support, leading to the Pope’s call for a landmine ban in 1995. The Cambodian campaign, through work with Buddhist monks and nuns, also sought support from the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who both later became ardent campaign supporters.

Other celebrities who have supported ICBL member groups include Heather Mills McCartney and her husband, ex-Beatle Paul McCartney, who are the international patrons of Adopt-A-Minefield. McCartney has performed at concerts and charity benefits to raise funds for de-mining and promoted the “No More Land Mines” message during a concert tour in 2003.

Singer Emmylou Harris helped the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation launch a series of Concerts for a Landmine Free World, which have been supported by other artists including Willie Nelson, Bruce Cockburn, Bruce Springsteen, David Byrne and Lucinda Williams.

Actor Angelina Jolie has hosted a fundraiser for the ICBL, written op-eds in newspapers such as The Bangkok Post, and spoken out on trips as a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Goodwill Ambassador. Meanwhile, Queen Noor of Jordan has served as a patron of the Landmine Survivors Network and supporter of ICBL. She has made presentations to members of the U.S. Congress, met Secretary of State Colin Powell, spoken at international landmines conferences, and highlighted her landmines work during media interviews.

The celebrity most widely associated with the campaign was Princess Diana of Wales. In 1997, the British Red Cross took the princess to Angola, in what is now seen as a landmark event. The Landmine Survivors Network also took her to Bosnia later that year, just before her death, on the eve of the Mine Treaty negotiations in Oslo. “Photos of her in minefields appeared worldwide,” notes Bernstein. “Even



It's important for a campaign to be clear from the start about what a celebrity is being asked to do, what the goal of celebrity engagement is, and to then determine if the celebrity is comfortable with that level of engagement.

today, sometimes when I find myself in a remote spot and mention the ICBL, some people ask ‘is that the group Princess Di supported?’”

GROUPS WANTING TO GAIN CELEBRITY SUPPORT SHOULD DO SOME RESEARCH TO IDENTIFY PEOPLE LIKELY TO SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN BASED ON THEIR PREVIOUS WORK, INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCE.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

After the ICBL and its founding coordinator Jody Williams won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997, the campaign itself achieved “celebrity” status, and some celebrity contacts emerged as a result. “After winning the Nobel, doors clearly opened for Jody Williams and us in terms of first contacts,” says Bernstein. “But even without that advantage, it certainly never hurts to try.”

“A lot of it is about making the most of personal contacts,” notes Bernstein. “It’s often a matter of a board member or campaigner in a group knowing somebody who knows somebody who knows somebody.” For example, people involved in a campaign may know somebody working behind the scenes in the

film or music industry, or an agent, who can get a message through to a celebrity.

Bernstein notes that personal contacts have been used to get the land mines issue into the script of the popular American television show *West Wing*, just as the question of torture made its way into an episode of *ER*. In this case as well, simultaneous efforts by campaign members paid off: Jody Williams met writers of the show to encourage them to include the issue in a script, while the *Landmine Survivors Network* used its own contacts to do the same through different channels.

Bernstein suggests that groups wanting to gain celebrity support do some research to identify people likely to support the campaign based on their previous work, interests and experience. Research of this kind led the ICBL to make contact with Angelina Jolie, who had become aware of the devastation caused by landmines while filming the movie *Tomb Raider* in Cambodia.

Some celebrities also have a personal connection to an issue. A dramatic example is Heather Mills McCartney, whose loss of half a leg after being hit by a police motorcycle in London is clearly a factor behind her concern for amputees and other landmine victims.

The key things to keep in mind are “creativity, persistence and using contacts that you might

not even know your members have,” says Bernstein. “And if you don’t have the contacts, don’t be afraid to try anyway. If you are convinced that you have an important issue, a clear request and that certain people are likely to support you-then try it.”

CHALLENGES

Working with celebrities has major potential advantages in raising awareness of an issue, but it can also pose important challenges.

One question is the degree to which celebrities are prepared to take politically-controversial positions. “Like everyone else, some celebrities are more political than others,” notes Bernstein. “Some may not be comfortable with all of our political aims.” For the landmines issue, some celebrities preferred to restrict their activities to raising awareness and funds, avoiding activities related to calling on countries to change policy, such as urging the U.S. to join the international treaty.

“Any celebrity can offer support in a variety of ways, whether it’s garnering media attention, raising awareness, raising funds or supporting political advocacy objectives,” says Bernstein. “It’s just important for a campaign to be clear from the start about what a celebrity is being asked to do, what the goal of celebrity engagement is, and to then determine if the celebrity

is comfortable with that level of engagement.”

Another challenge is ensuring that the right message gets out. Bernstein points to the case of a film star who recently appeared at an anti-landmines event and made misleading statements that were quoted in the media. “You can’t control what they say,” she says. “The challenge is to find the time and method to do a proper briefing so that they are comfortable with the topic and can do more than just let people know a problem exists, but also what you want them to do about it.”

IT IS IMPORTANT TO SEE CELEBRITY SUPPORT AS A WAY TO COMPLEMENT OTHER CAMPAIGNING METHODS, RATHER THAN AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THEM.

A related consideration is that celebrities often work on more than one cause. It is important to consider whether the image of those other causes is consistent with that of your campaign. “This is not necessarily a problem, but be aware of other causes they’re linked to, as the media may ask them about

connections,” says Bernstein.

There is also the danger of the spotlight shining on the person rather than the issue. “The media will ask celebrities about their film projects and personal lives,” says Bernstein. “Most certainly know how to handle the media and get their own messages across, but you can encourage them to turn back such questions and focus on the campaign issues with tips such as ‘today I am here to talk about X.’”

Finally, one needs to be aware of celebrities’ motivations, which range from deep personal commitment to a preoccupation with improving their image. “You don’t want it to be just about getting good press for them as part of their comeback from a bad movie,” says Bernstein. If the celebrity’s commitment appears inauthentic, it may actually detract from the cause.

IMPACT

Celebrity support has played an important role in the ICBL’s successes, such as the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, and it continues to play a part in the campaign’s ongoing efforts.

“Diana’s role, for example, was to raise awareness of the issue worldwide, garner media

attention and thus support our efforts,” says Bernstein. These were important contributions in the run-up to the Mine Ban Treaty negotiations.

Celebrity support can clearly do a great deal to draw attention to an issue in conjunction with other elements of a campaign. ICBL and its member organisations have engaged in a wide range of activities to publicise its message, build support and raise funds. These include setting up tables in shopping centres, shoe pyramids in front of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, concerts in a public square in Maputo, bell ringing in schools and churches around the world, street demonstrations, marches and vigils in different countries and news conferences at treaty negotiation meetings.

It is important to see celebrity support as a way to complement and reinforce other campaigning methods, rather than as an alternative to them. Ultimately celebrity support can never replace the advocacy work of committed activists and organisations.

CELEBRITY SUPPORT – RESOURCES

Adopt-a-Landmine – *Ex-Beatle Paul McCartney and his wife Heather Mills McCartney help raise awareness of this anti-landmine organisation*
<http://www.landmines.org.uk/299>

American Civil Liberties Union – *Ad campaign used US celebrities to promote free speech*
<http://www.aclu.org/SafeandFree/SafeandFree.cfm?ID=13587&c=206>

Amnesty International – *Produced a series of videos in which multiple celebrities talk about different human rights abuses around the world*
<http://www.amnesty.ca/lightdarkness/light.htm>
http://www.amnesty.ca/support_amnesty/cry_for_justice/

Amnesty International – *Campaigning Manual*
<http://web.amnesty.org/pages/campaigning-manual-eng>

BBC iCan – *How to get celebrity and high profile support*
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ican/A2062531>

Jubilee 2000 – *Campaign for the relief of third-world debt has used U2 lead singer Bono as a spokesperson*
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/1799103.stm>

Media Trust – *Attracting and keeping celebrity support* http://www.media-trust.org/online_guides/celebrity%20support.pdf

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals – *Use of celebrities in a variety of campaigns, from advertising to musical DVDs to a celebrity vegan cookbook.* <http://www.peta.org/feat/dvd/>

United Nations High Commission on Refugees – *Hollywood actor Angelina Jolie Becomes UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador*
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/06/0618_030618_angelinajolie.html

Speaking Tours

TOOLBOX

HOW TO USE SPEAKING TOURS IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

CONTEXT A survivor of human rights violations telling their story in their own words is one of the most powerful ways of getting your message across. So too can the testimony of a human rights defender working on the frontline, or of a UN human rights official. Speaking tours can offer such people a platform and in many other ways open up good campaigning opportunities.

DEFINING OBJECTIVES

The first step in organising a speaking tour is to make sure you are clear about the purpose of the tour and what concrete objectives you hope to achieve. A speaking tour can contribute to specific campaigning and organisational objectives in areas such as:

- Media coverage;
- Lobbying;
- Motivating members;
- Fundraising;
- Outreach.

CHOOSING A SPEAKER

Speaking tours can involve anyone, but this section concentrates on speakers who are international guests and assumes that you will be responsible for deciding, organising and coordinating their program. Being clear about the purpose and priorities for the proposed tour

will help you decide who you should invite.

A survivor of human rights violations, or a relative of a victim, may be most effective in attracting media attention or getting public support. However, they may have little expertise in the policy areas important to your lobbying or experience of in-depth media interviews. Being aware of these issues can help to make sure you get the right person for the job you wish to do.

If the main purpose of the tour is to obtain media coverage, then you would probably need to:

- Pay particular attention to any language issues, as some media organisations can be very reluctant to use interpreters;
- Target parts of the news media that will be particularly interested in the issue or speaker;
- Decide what audience you are trying to reach.

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If lobbying is the most important aspect of the visit then language is less likely to be important (providing interpreters can be arranged). However, make sure that your speaker will contribute to your lobbying goals by making persuasive supporting arguments or statements, and carries some weight with those you want to influence, either through their personal reputation or their status in an organisation

ORGANISING A SPEAKING TOUR

The Invitation

Your letter of invitation should include the following:

- The purpose of the visit;
- An outline of the proposed program – how long you want the speaker to stay, who they will meet, whether any media interviews are planned, etc.;
- What you are proposing to pay for – for example, travel, daily expenses, accommodation.

Confirming the Tour

Once a potential speaker has accepted your invitation, you should send a follow-up letter thanking them and giving more information.

This should include:

- Details of the proposed programme including profiles of the people they will meet; how long they will be expected to speak on different occasions; what you hope the tour will achieve; details of any media coverage or interviews that have been arranged; and useful background information on the country, political system, etc.;
- Practical information – local weather conditions; arranging pick up of the speaker at the airport or station; contingency telephone numbers; possible special needs;
- A request for a brief autobiography of the speaker and a photograph. These details will be important when seeking appointments, for attracting the media, preparing publicity materials and arranging the programme.

Briefing the Speaker

If the schedule allows, it is a good idea to keep the first day of the visit free for the speaker to rest, settle in and become familiar with the issues you want them to address. You can also use this time to get a sense of how to provide the speaker with the information they need. It can also be useful to have a debriefing session at the end of each day to go over any problems that have arisen, talk about how the day went

and to provide an opportunity to unwind.

Media training

At the beginning of the visit it is often useful to organise some media training for your speaker so that the major themes and key points can be conveyed in “media-friendly” terms. Time can also be spent discussing and preparing for difficult questions that may arise. You should check whether the speaker has any experience in dealing with the media so that you can take this into account in the training. Ideally this training would involve a sympathetic professional journalist, but it can also be done through a simple role-playing exercise.

The Programme

In devising a programme for any speaking tour, it should be remembered that public speaking can be exhausting. The speaker may also be worn down by their journey, the strange diet, adapting to being with strangers, or by language difficulties. Therefore, it is best to avoid combining late night interviews with early morning engagements. If the visit is scheduled to last for four days or longer, try and ensure that you build in one complete day for rest. Try to create gaps in the program to allow for a period of relaxation. If the programme includes a public meeting or address,

then make sure the speaker has enough clear time beforehand to think through what they want to say.

It is also important to think about what the speaker is getting out of the tour. Part of your purpose might be to demonstrate solidarity and/or give the individual an international profile, which can help to protect them. You should discuss with any speaker whether there are activities which might pose an additional security risk to them when they return home. If the speaker is giving their time to your group, it is also important to establish whether you can introduce other contacts who may be important to them, such as funding agencies.

GETTING THE MOST FROM A SPEAKING TOUR

Media coverage

Draft a brief outline of your media strategy to explain what you hope the visit will achieve in relation to the media. This strategy should include the main points or messages you wish to get across to the media, which media outlets you will be targeting and the materials you may need to carry out your plan.

Questions to Consider

- If you can only get one central message across, what is it in one sentence?

- What is the second most important message, again in one sentence?
- Who is your most important audience? Is it politicians, other decision-makers, women, people with a particular interest in foreign affairs, the general public?
- Why should the media be interested in your visitor?
- What materials should you produce?

A short media briefing pack can help set the agenda. Sections of a media pack that work well are likely to be reproduced in journalists' articles and questions. In addition to the media pack you may also need to prepare a series of news releases before and during the visit:

- To notify the media that a visitor is coming, why they should be interested and whom they can contact to arrange interviews;
- To notify the media of any particular events at which the visitor is speaking – media or other conferences, public meetings, etc.;
- To highlight newsworthy comments made by the visitor at a particular event;
- To summarise the results of the visit, highlighting particular issues, etc.

Lobbying

Arranging for a visiting speaker to meet your key supporters in the government or other political parties can be an important way of acknowledging and consolidating support for your organisation. It is important to work out the lobbying objectives of any speaking tour well in advance.

Questions to Consider

- Who would it be useful for the visitor to meet?
- What would you like the meetings to achieve?
- Can the visitor's status open doors for your organisation that would otherwise be closed and how can the doors be kept open after the visitor leaves?
- What roles should the visitor and your organisation take in the meeting?
- Who is responsible for following up any action agreed at meetings?

Fundraising

The costs of speaking tours can quickly mount up, so it is useful to exploit the income-generating possibilities they offer as well.

- **Fundraising dinners**

If your visitor is likely to be of great interest to a particular audience you could issue invitations for a dinner at which she or he will be the guest speaker and charge a price that will leave you with enough profits after costs to make organising the dinner worthwhile.

- **Public meetings**

Charge entry to public meetings which your visitor is addressing if you feel this will not deter too many people from attending. Hold a collection from the audience after an appeal from the chair of the meeting.

- **Direct mail appeal letters**

The visitor may be willing to put their name to an appeal to your supporters explaining how important it is that your organisation has the resources to continue its work. Or they may be willing to provide some quotes endorsing the importance of your work from their own personal experience.

- **Public appeals**

The visitor might have the opportunity to highlight forthcoming fundraising events, or to suggest giving money in media interviews, etc.

Linking Speaker Tour to Outreach Work

A visitor may have a particular appeal or relevance to specific sectors of the community that offer opportunities for building your outreach work. It may be useful, for example, to invite a military official active in your field in another country to come and talk on the relevance of the military to human rights as one step towards establishing or strengthening an outreach structure for this sector. Different outreach sectors are quite often served by their own media and publicity channels, which may be interested in covering the visit.

TIPS

There are various ways in which you can try to maintain the momentum the visit has given to your campaign.

- Take photographs, make videos, get quotes that can be used in subsequent communications.

- Keep a record of who helped with the visit and make sure they are thanked.
- Keep a record of who attended the different functions and events and invite them to join your organisation if they are not already members.
- Keep a record of useful contacts in the wider community who could be approached for support at another time — for example, representatives of other NGOs and journalists.
- Make sure that commitments made in meetings for follow-up action are fulfilled.
- Keep in regular contact with the speaker afterwards.

REFERENCES

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Speaking Tours

CASE STUDY

RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY AND THE ANNUAL JOHN HUMPHREY AWARD TOUR

CONTEXT The International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, now known as Rights & Democracy, was created by Canada's Parliament in 1988 to encourage and support cooperation between Canada and other countries in the development, promotion and strengthening of democratic institutions and practices around the world.

Each year since 1992, Rights & Democracy has presented the John Humphrey Freedom Award for outstanding contributions to the promotion and defence of human rights and democratic development. The award consists of a C\$25,000 grant (approx. US\$19,000) and a speaking tour of major Canadian cities to increase awareness of the recipient's human rights work. It is named in honour of John Peters Humphrey, the Canadian human rights law professor who helped prepare the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

For more information, see www.dd-rd.ca

In 2003, Rights & Democracy (R&D) organised a pan-Canadian speaking tour for the co-winners of the John Humphrey Freedom Award (JHFA), Kimy Pernia Domicó, a disappeared Colombian indigenous leader, and Angelica Mendoza de Ascarza, a Peruvian advocate for the disappeared. Martha Cecilia Domicó accepted the award and participated in the tour on her father's behalf.

The tour focused on the devastating effects of forced disappearances, which the two laureates had experienced in their own lives. The rights of indigenous peoples were another

theme of the tour, which took place towards the end of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. The tour was particularly successful in shedding light on the issue of forced disappearances, one that was prominent in the 1980s, but currently receives little media and public attention.

A speaking tour has been an integral part of the JHFA since its inception. R&D traditionally presents the award in a ceremony coinciding with International Human Rights Day on 10 December. The award's objectives are three-fold:

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- To honour the winner—either an individual or an organisation—and his or her work to strengthen human rights and democracy;
- To increase public awareness in Canada of human rights issues in the winner’s country;
- To increase R&D’s visibility across Canada and the institution’s outreach to the general public—via schools, churches and the local media—and to fulfill its public education mandate.

WE NEED TO TAILOR EACH CEREMONY AND TOUR TO THE PERSONALITY, MESSAGES AND WILLINGNESS OF THE LAUREATE.

Over the years, the award ceremony and speaking tour have also served to increase the visibility of R&D’s work on the international scene and the winners have gained access to new audiences, including local NGOs, academics, students, key foreign affairs and aid officials, members of the Canadian Parliament, government ministers and, in some cases, the Prime Minister of Canada. As R&D’s mandate is international, the JHFA has been its primary outreach activity in Canada.

PLANNING THE TOUR

Every year, R&D issues a call for nominations in March, with an end-of-April deadline. Over 3,000 partners receive the call for nominations leaflet or its electronic version, which is also posted online. R&D receives 80 to 100 nominations each year. An international jury composed of five members of its Board of Directors decides on a winner in early June, coinciding with the organisation’s Board of Directors meeting. “One objective is to support and help protect those who risk their lives defending and promoting human rights,” says Anyle Coté, R&D’s Special Events & Publications Officer in charge of the JHFA. “So the jury gives preference to those working on the front line under hostile conditions.”

Once the winner is chosen, planning can begin in earnest. R&D contacts the winner and issues a press release. Tour dates are usually set for the first half of December to coincide with International Human Rights Day and the official award ceremony. “In recent years, faced with major scheduling problems caused by bad weather, cancelled flights and too many competing events during the holiday season, we’ve done everything we can to begin the tour before the award ceremony on December 10,” says Coté.

The ceremony used to take place in Montreal, where R&D has its headquarters, but to increase the award’s visibility among Members of Parliament, key ministries and decision-makers, the organisation decided to hold the 2003 ceremony in the capital city, Ottawa.

“We need to tailor each ceremony and tour to the personality, messages and willingness of the laureate to engage in the speaking tour,” says Coté. Once the organisation decides on the key message and strategy, it informs its partner organisations throughout Canada—NGOs, universities and associations—about the upcoming tour and the laureate. It also asks key partners if they want to organise an event in collaboration with R&D or, in some cases, host an event featuring the laureate.

The selection of Canadian cities for the tour depends on the level of interest in the laureate’s cause in each city, the presence of communities of people from the winner’s country and the existence of partners interested in hosting an event or jointly organising one with R&D.

“We realised in recent years that the tour was exhausting for the laureates—too many cities in such a short period of time,” says Coté. “So we tried last year to limit the number of cities visited.” The plan is to visit

a maximum of five cities in the future.

R&D also tries to take the tour beyond Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto—central Canada’s major cities. If in one year the tour covers central Canada and the Maritimes (in the east), then the following year the laureate will visit British Columbia and the prairies in the west.

Once the organisation selects the cities, it starts planning events with its partners and, over the next few months, draws up a tentative tour schedule.

RESOURCES

From 1998 to 2003, the average budget for the award and tour has been C\$65,000 (approx. US\$49,000), which covers all associated costs including:

- Producing and disseminating more than 3000 “call for submissions” leaflets in three languages (English, French and Spanish);
- Organising the jury meeting (translation of nominations, room rentals, per diem of jury members, etc.);
- The \$C25,000 (approx. US\$19,000) grant to the award winner;

- All travel expenses for the tour in Canada (including those of the winner, the staff, the translation of documents and interpretation in some cities, etc.);
- The award ceremony (interpretation, room rental, artists, etc.);
- Communications (web site, background documents, press kits, etc.).

Since the award is part of R&D’s regular programme, there is no additional fundraising campaign per se. By working with partners in each city visited, R&D is able to reduce the costs associated with logistical support, promotion and planning of events.

R&D’s Special Events and Publications Officer coordinates the award and tour. A contract worker is hired, when needed, to help organise the logistics of the tour. R&D’s two External Relations Officers contribute to planning and implementing the communications strategy. Programme Agents responsible for the winner’s thematic area and geographical region also participate in planning and the actual tour itself. Regular meetings take place to discuss issues ranging from communications priorities to logistical and political concerns.

CHALLENGES

“The difficulties in organising the tour vary with each winner and can range from serious security concerns to more practical issues like linguistic differences,” says Coté. With two winners sharing the award in 2003, numerous difficulties were encountered.

SAFETY AND A SUDDEN INFLUX OF PRIZE MONEY

For Martha Cecilia Domicó to accept the award on her father’s behalf, R&D had to provide for her safety after returning home. “Our main concern was that the prize money might put Martha in danger upon her return to a volatile area of Colombia where paramilitaries are active,” says Coté. Through press releases, the Canadian Embassy in Colombia and its Colombian partners, R&D went to great lengths to publicise the fact that it would put the money in a fund for the Embera-Katio people, administered from Canada by R&D.

Beyond the specific safety concerns in the Domicó case, it is important to consider the consequences of the sudden arrival of a large amount of money—C\$25,000—in a community or a group. “Management of such an amount can be a challenge in certain circumstances,” notes Coté.

TRANSLATION

“The other great difficulty presented by the tour was the fact that neither Martha Cecilia Domicó nor Angelica Mendoza spoke French or English, Canada’s official languages,” says Coté. Translation services were necessary at every presentation, which R&D staff fluent in Spanish or professional translators provided. Another complication was that Mendoza spoke only Quechua and needed additional translation, provided by a person who accompanied her from Peru.

THE 2003 TOUR ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO WIDESPREAD PUBLIC EDUCATION ACROSS CANADA ABOUT THE ISSUE OF DISAPPEARANCES AND THE STRUGGLES SOUTH AMERICA'S INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES FACE

GENERATING MEDIA INTEREST

The language issue also presented a difficult and often insurmountable obstacle for media coverage. It effectively ruled out national radio and television coverage, leaving R&D dependent on print.

“The two winners did not evoke the same degree of media interest, for reasons that had nothing to do with the winners themselves,” says Coté. For example, many journalists believe Peru is of less interest to Canadians than Colombia. “This unequal treatment tended to dissipate the attention that should have been paid to each recipient’s specific struggle,” adds Coté.

Media interest also varies from year to year, which poses another set of challenges. A five-year external review of R&D’s activities from 1998 to 2003 found that media coverage varied from “reasonably good coverage” in most years to “exceptional coverage” in 2002, when the recipient, Dr. Sima Samar, was selected for a cabinet position in the new Afghan government during her visit. The review noted that the:

choice of awardees strongly influences the public awareness that R&D is able to generate in Canada through public meetings and media coverage. There is a desire to give the award to recognise a forgotten human rights situation, but also awareness that the topicality of the issue and the reputation of the laureate can influence public awareness.

“In cases where the laureate was not well known or his or her country was not often in the media, it was certainly more of a challenge to generate interest from the public and media, says Coté.”

IMPACT**The tour and award ceremony**

R&D’s internal evaluation of the 2003 tour found that, although the schedule was a very heavy one, the strategy—which called for a public event in each city visited, informal meetings with indigenous communities or local Colombian and/or Peruvian groups, and media interviews—seemed to be “successful in expanding partnerships and enhancing the profile of R&D.”

“As for the award ceremony in Ottawa, everyone agrees that it was a great success,” says Coté. More than 200 people attended the event, despite the fact that Parliament was not in session and that this was the first time the ceremony had taken place in Ottawa.

Letters were prepared to invite people attending the public events to support the laureates’ causes. R&D based the letters on the laureates’ recommendations of what they would like their government and the

Canadian government to do. “Even though the number of letters signed was modest, it contributed to our efforts to raise the importance of this file to government representatives, including the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs,” says Coté.

Media coverage

“Media coverage of the award tour was on the whole very gratifying,” notes Coté. This was despite the difficulties in generating media interest due to the winners’ inability to speak English or French. Although few newspapers covered the tour, articles did appear in prominent Canadian newspapers such as *The Globe & Mail*, the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Edmonton Journal*. International media interest took the form of an interview with EFE, the Spanish-speaking world’s primary newswire. Canadian broadcast coverage included Radio Canada International and the Aboriginal Peoples’ Television Network.

Benefits for the winners and their struggles

The Canadian tour also produced meaningful results for the award recipients:

- Their meetings with government representatives, including Canada’s foreign minister, highlighted the importance of keeping Peru and Colombia “on the front burner” for the ministries and agencies concerned.
- R&D’s letter to Colombian President Uribe to ensure the safety of Martha Cecilia Domicó resulted in additional protection for her.
- Some contacts between high-level Canadian and Colombian officials occurred, during which the investigation into Kimy Pernia Domicó’s disappearance was discussed.
- The Canadian Embassy in Bogotá decided to resume participation in the Joint Commission assessing the situation in the Embera-Katio people’s territory.

R&D plans to continue to monitor the situation in Peru and Colombia closely and to provide all necessary support to the award winners.

Public Education

The 2003 tour also contributed to widespread public education across Canada about the issue of disappearances and the struggles South America’s indigenous communities face. “Since the JHFA’s intended goal is to raise awareness of the winner’s human rights struggle, we can say this goal was met despite the obstacles presented by language differences,” says Coté. A special issue of R&D’s electronic newsletter *Libertas* on forced disappearances also contributed to public awareness.

R&D’s Five-Year Review found similar educational benefits in previous years. Interviews with organisers in different cities indicated that meeting the laureates “served to put a human face to what are sometimes abstract issues and to counter media bias by showing that there are courageous people in the South who are addressing their own problems.”

SPEAKING TOURS – RESOURCES

Amnesty International – *Campaigning Manual*
<http://web.amnesty.org/pages/campaigning-manual-eng>

Global Exchange
<http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/ftaa/chucho.html>

Madre - *an International Women's Human Rights Organisation*
http://www.madre.org/mem_bringspeaker.html

Nobel Peace Prize Winner Shirin Ebadi
Launches Speaking Tour
<http://www.inform.umd.edu/News/Diamondback/archives/2004/05/07/news3.html>

Rights and Democracy - *John Humphrey Freedom Award* <http://www.dd-rd.ca/>

Investigative Missions

TOOLBOX

HOW TO PLAN AN INVESTIGATIVE MISSION

CONTEXT Investigative missions – whether to regions within your own country or to other countries – can be an important component of many campaigns. They can present opportunities for your organisation to:

- Gain valuable information on local conditions that may be hard to come by through other channels
- Develop or strengthen contacts with local journalists and freedom of expression activists
- Express concerns and recommendations to local authorities
- Draw attention of the media and general public to situations of concern

The following section was prepared by Amanda Watson-Boles, senior editor at the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

PLANNING INVESTIGATIVE MISSIONS

Start organising early

Months of preparation can be required to organise an effective investigative mission. In some countries (Bangladesh, for example), it can take up to six months to secure a visa. Locating and organising the appropriate people to travel with the delegation and getting their official clearance can also take a lot of time.

The earlier you begin, the easier it will be to coordinate schedules, logistics (including interpreters, lodging and transportation), and meetings with local journalists, human rights organisations and high-ranking government officials.

Do not forget to take into account national and religious holidays when you are scheduling

your trips. This is one of the many reasons why it is important to be in constant touch with a local journalist or contact who can help you navigate these issues.

Invite high-profile or local guests to be part of the mission

Inviting board members and/or local journalists on a mission can increase its effectiveness by raising its profile. For example, CPJ invited several board members, including well-known US columnist Clarence Page, to participate in an investigative mission to Haiti in August 2003.

For its March 2004 mission to Bangladesh, CPJ invited a senior journalist from Sri Lanka and a well-respected journalist from Indonesia

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to attend. Having journalists from the region supporting CPJ lent an additional level of legitimacy to the mission.

Meet with a wide variety of journalists from all kinds of media (print, television, radio) at the beginning of the mission

Many countries are politically polarised and the journalism community often reflects these divisions. When on an investigative mission, it is important to be and be seen as a neutral party. For example, at the time of CPJ's mission to Haiti, the government saw the private media as part of the opposition, rather than independent. It was therefore important to meet with journalists from both the state media and private media so government officials could not accuse CPJ of supporting the opposition.

Likewise, in Bangladesh, some media are divided along party lines between the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Awami League (AL). CPJ met with both BNP- and AL-aligned journalists and officials, not only to secure its own neutrality, but also to get a well-rounded picture of the situation in the country.

It is also a good idea to meet with local press freedom advocacy groups, human rights organisations, and non-governmental organisations so you are armed with as much information as possible.

It is important to schedule these meetings for the beginning of the mission to get various perspectives on local press freedom conditions. That way, you can speak with authority on these issues when you meet with government officials toward the end of the trip.

Meet with government officials after meeting with journalists


It is always best to meet with government officials toward the end of a mission because, by that time, you will have more information and a better grasp of what issues need to be raised with the authorities.

Try to meet with officials at as high a level as possible. The best way to secure these meetings is to use every single connection you have—no matter how trivial it may seem.

Before its mission to Haiti, CPJ worked to schedule a meeting with then President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. To impress upon the presi-

dent the importance of CPJ's mission and its wish to meet with him, the Haitian Journalists' Association and the National Association of Haitian Media wrote letters to the president asking him to receive the delegation. CPJ was also prepared to announce during its press conference at the end of the mission that Aristide had refused to meet with the delegation—a move that would have hurt the image of the already embattled government. CPJ was able to convey this to Aristide's aides.

But what really opened the door was a small, tiny connection CPJ found to Aristide. A Haitian journalist told CPJ that the former national security adviser to President Bill Clinton, Anthony Lake, is the godfather of one of Aristide's children. CPJ contacted Lake's office to ask for assistance. At the same time, CPJ board member Clarence Page contacted Lake as well. With Lake's help, the visit with Aristide was quickly confirmed. What was supposed to be a 15-minute meeting turned into more than an hour with the president.

A man is shown from the chest up, looking down at a newspaper he is holding. The newspaper is titled 'CONCORD TIMES' and has a large headline that reads 'JLPP divide' followed by 'er runni' and 'te'. There are small images of people below the headline. The man is wearing a white shirt and a dark strap with 'AK' written on it. The background is a blurred outdoor setting. The entire image has a yellowish-green tint.

Many countries are politically polarised and the journalism community often reflects these divisions. When on an investigative mission, it is important to be and be seen as a neutral party.

Organise a press conference for the end of the mission

A press conference at the end of a mission is key. Such an event will usually receive wide coverage in the local media, which is where it will have the most impact.

A delegation can use the press conference to highlight important problems it discovered or confirmed during its meetings. Most important, the press conference is a great public venue to call on government officials to take specific actions or criticise them for their actions (or lack thereof, as the case may be).

Consult with local journalists or contacts regarding the day and time of the press conference. In Haiti, for example, CPJ organised its press conference early in the day to catch the news cycle starting with the morning radio and TV news shows. Afterwards, delegation members gave interviews to print outlets for publication in the next day's papers.

Other things to consider

Someone on your delegation should rent a cell phone for the duration of the mission. This will make it easier to contact people about meetings you have scheduled or still need to schedule.

If you take board members or other high-profile guests on a mission, they may not be very familiar with the country or the issues the press faces there. For that reason, it is a good idea to put together a small packet a few weeks before the trip for them with background information on the current political climate and situation for the media, weather, money/currency exchange, etc.

In some cases, it is useful to be aware of local sensitivities and perceptions around international intervention. In Africa, for example, where there is a long history of colonial resist-

ance, there is a growing tendency for repressive governments to justify their rule by accusing Western organisations of imposing “imperialist agendas” on their countries. An international delegation could be portrayed as meddling in the internal affairs of a country, which could harm the local partner organisation's efforts by leaving it open to accusations of collaborating with “foreign agents.” In these instances, a regional delegation composed of eminent African individuals and respected organisations may be more effective.

Investigative Missions

CASE STUDY

INTERNATIONAL JOINT MISSION TO BARRANCABERMEJA, COLUMBIA

CONTEXT Colombian journalists continue to pay a heavy price for practising their profession amid a 40-year-old civil war pitting two major leftist guerrilla groups against the Colombian army and right-wing paramilitary forces. In 2003, Colombia was featured on the Committee to Protect Journalists' (CPJ) list of the "World's Worst Places to Be a Journalist."

Reporters without Borders (Reporters sans frontières, RSF) notes that in 2003, five journalists in Colombia were killed, about 60 were kidnapped, threatened or physically attacked, and more than 20 were forced to leave their region or the country. These figures may not reflect the real situation, as many journalists prefer to remain silent about the threats they receive for fear of exposing themselves to further danger. Due to such conditions, certain regions of the country are virtually devoid of news reporting.

The difficulties journalists face while covering the civil war led the Foundation for Press Freedom (Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa, FLIP) to publish a security manual aimed at keeping journalists safe from attacks by the armed factions involved in the conflict.

With media professionals in Barrancabermeja facing a growing number of attacks, an investigative mission travelled to the northern Colombian city from 15 to 17 April 2004 to meet with local authorities and journalists.

The mission included representatives from the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the Foundation for Press Freedom (Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa, FLIP), the Institute for Press and Society (Instituto Prensa y Sociedad, IPYS) and Reporters without Borders (Reporters sans frontières, RSF).

Barrancabermeja was long controlled by the rebel National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN), but paramilitary groups had begun to take control of the city. "This fight between illegal armed groups left journalists in the middle of the conflict," says FLIP's Coordinator Juliana Cano Nieto. "They began to be labelled as members of one or the other group."

The number of attacks against journalists in the city had been on the rise for two years. In the six months prior to the mission, several

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cases involving paramilitary groups had taken place. Journalists also said that military forces were pressuring them to not report on certain subjects.

Press freedom organisations faced obstacles in getting reliable information about these violations. “Documenting these cases was very difficult since people feared speaking by telephone,” says Carlos Eduardo Huertas, IPYS’ Colombia correspondent. There were also different perspectives among the city’s journalists, making it difficult to get reliable testimonies about what was happening.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THIS KIND OF MISSION IS TO BE PREPARED BEFOREHAND.

SELECTING THE MISSION DESTINATION

FLIP, IPYS and other press freedom organisations—including CPJ, the Inter American Press Association (IAPA) and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)—meet on a monthly basis to discuss the situation in Colombia. At these meetings, the participants identify the regions experiencing the greatest

difficulties. They also discuss whether different organisations can travel and participate in a mission. “Due to the number of attacks in Barrancabermeja, we decided to visit the region,” says Cano.

PLANNING AHEAD

“The most important thing in this kind of mission is to be prepared beforehand,” says Cano. The point may seem obvious, but it is worth emphasising the need to have all appointments set up before travelling to the region and to cover all the possible contacts that are important to meet.

BUDGET

Each organisation involved in the Barrancabermeja mission covered its own expenses. The mission cost FLIP approximately US\$ 500 dollars, including travel expenses to the region. IPYS, FLIP, CPJ and RSF all contributed to writing up a report on the mission’s findings.

MISSION REPORT AND FOLLOW-UP

The mission report, which documented the main restrictions on freedom of expression in the city, was distributed internationally, as well as to local and national newspapers, in

the hope of increasing awareness of the situation in Barrancabermeja. Among the mission’s findings was that strong tensions existed between journalists and the local authorities, says Huertas.

Cano emphasises the importance of making constructive recommendations in the mission report after reaching conclusions about the press freedom situation: “You need to show that you’re not only criticising, but offering solutions.”

She adds that it is important to follow up after the report is released by meeting with government officials and encouraging them to comply with the recommendations.

CHALLENGES

Organising the Barrancabermeja mission did not pose any specific challenges, says Cano. But the general problem of trying to get the authorities to listen remains a major challenge. “The hardest thing is trying to influence the authorities, especially military authorities,” says Cano. “You can never be sure if you’ve really been effective.”

Despite such uncertainty, there are signs that the Barrancabermeja mission has had some positive impact.

IMPACT

The investigative mission to Barrancabermeja was motivated by the rising numbers of attacks on journalists. From the time of the mission in mid-April 2004 until the writing of this case study in early June, no new attacks against journalists in the city have taken place and the military forces have placed no further restrictions on journalists.

NOW THE AUTHORITIES KNOW THAT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS ARE LOOKING OUT FOR JOURNALISTS.

“It helps that we spoke to the local authorities and members of the armed forces,” says Cano. She also emphasises the value of working with international organisations to put the spotlight on the situation in the city: “Now [the authorities] have to think twice about taking action against the press. They know that both national and international organisations are looking out for the journalists.”

“Local journalists gain confidence when they feel that press freedom organisations are aware of their situation and backing them up,”

adds Cano. “It was important that they saw that we had an interest in what was going on in their city.”

The problems facing journalists in Colombia are often most severe in smaller cities and rural areas outside of the capital, which generally receive less attention and media coverage. As a result, the reports coming out of such investigative missions can play a valuable role in alerting the national government to the local situation. “They start to pay more attention to what’s happening in the regions,” says Cano.

INVESTIGATIVE MISSIONS - RESOURCES

Barrancabermeja - Report of International Delegation, 2004
http://www.cpj.org/regions_04/americas_04/barrancabermeja.html

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiatives - *Fact Finding Missions*
<http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/programs/aj/ffm/ffm.htm>

Committee to Protect Journalists - 2004 *Investigative Mission to Haiti*
http://www.cpj.org/Briefings/2004/haiti_7_04/haiti_7_04.html

Considerations for Human Rights Fact Finding by NGOs; Julie Mertus, American University
<http://academic3.american.edu/~mertus/HR%20fact-finding.htm>

Human Rights Missions : A Study of the Fact-Finding Practice of Non-Governmental Organizations; Hans Thoolen, Berth Verstappen; Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 1986.
http://www.brill.nl/m_catalogue_sub6_id19520.htm

General Information on Fact-Finding, International Online Training Program on Intractable Conflict, University of Colorado: Conflict Research Consortium

Reporters sans frontières - *The Importance of Fact Finding Missions*
http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=9593

Lobbying

TOOLBOX

HOW TO LOBBY EFFECTIVELY

CONTEXT Lobbying is often associated with quiet words behind closed doors, but this is just one technique. It is usually necessary to use many other campaigning methods to persuade a government to listen seriously to those quiet words and to take the desired action.

Lobbying can include:

- Visits or meetings with officials in the capital city, at the embassy or in local/district offices
- Discussions with officials at inter-governmental meetings (eg. United Nations conferences, African Union summits, Commonwealth gatherings)
- Trips or excursions organised for officials
- Letters, petitions and other forms of contact with decision makers

Why lobbying governments is important:

- Governments have power
- Politicians lead as well as follow public opinion
- Governments can influence other governments
- Governments compose and decide the actions of intergovernmental organisations (IGOs)
- Governments can strengthen international standards and mechanisms to protect human rights
- Governments can change legislation and practice

WHO TO LOBBY

Research and analysis

The starting point for developing strategies is research and analysis of the situation you are in, the problems you are trying to overcome, the opportunities you may be able to take advantage of, and the resources you have available.

Questions:

- Has the government you are lobbying signed and ratified any international human rights treaties?
- Has the government made explicit policy statements and commitments in relation to international human rights issues?

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- Is there parliamentary scrutiny or other official monitoring mechanisms on government policy?
- Are there any mechanisms for independent scrutiny of the links between human rights and foreign/trade/defence policy? Who is responsible for these mechanisms? Do they take submissions?
- Are there any formal mechanisms for human rights organisations to input into policy generally and in relation to specific countries or issues?
- Does the government have particular military, economic or cultural links with other countries that may give it influence? Which are these countries? What are the sources of influence within these countries?
- In which IGO bodies is your government represented? Is it represented on the UN Commission on Human Rights, UN Security Council, the World Bank, regional IGOs?
- Which ministers, departments and interest groups are involved in the formulation of foreign (or other relevant) policy generally and in relation to specific countries or issues? Do you have good access to these people?
- Who is responsible for foreign policy within political parties?
- Is the media influential on foreign or trade policy? Is the media more influential in relation to some countries or issues than others? Are some media or journalists more influential on policy than others?
- Are particular individuals, such as judges, academics, writers or television personalities, likely to have greater influence on policy than other people?
- How is the ministry of foreign affairs organised? Are there specialists on particular countries and themes? Are you in direct contact with them?
- Is there an institutional policymaking body on human rights in international relations, such as a human rights unit? Are you in direct contact with them?
- Is there specific legislation on the human rights considerations of military or economic links?
- Is there a wider constituency of support for integrating human rights into foreign policy, such as other NGOs?
- Do staff members of the foreign affairs ministry and other relevant government departments receive human rights training?
- Does the government have a commitment to developing human rights strategies on particular countries?

HOW TO LOBBY

Practicalities of lobbying

The process of informing and persuading those with power or influence to act to protect and promote human rights involves a number of techniques. You may decide you need to use membership action, the influence of third parties and media publicity, or you might simply have a chat with the foreign minister over a cup of coffee. In the long-term, success also depends on the following:

Specify objectives

The overall objective of a lobbying programme is to ensure that the protection and promotion of human rights becomes a key component of the government's international relations (and relevant domestic policy). Depending on how far this objective is from being achieved, other shorter term objectives need to be set based on your analysis of the current situation. These objectives could be:

- Developing public debate about foreign policy and human rights;
- Developing contact with elected representatives and political parties on international human rights issues;
- Establishment of an annual independent review of government action on human rights;
- Access to, and good working relationships with, key officials in the human rights unit of the foreign affairs ministry;
- Access to and influence with the minister of foreign affairs, president and/or prime minister;
- Agreement of the foreign affairs ministry to take up and act on each case that you bring to its attention;
- Taking the lead role on a particular country/human rights issue in international organisations.

Whatever your objectives, you should seek to make your progress towards achieving them measurable so that you can evaluate your strategy and work.

Membership action

Governments are generally responsive to pressure from the community. You must therefore develop a strategy to involve your members or supporters effectively and provide them with the resources to act.

- Organise letter-writing by members and other organisations to targeted members of the government or elected representatives on selected issues.
- Make sure your members seek meetings with their elected representatives to convey concern as constituents. Target particular influential representatives and members of the government.
- Hold campaigning events such as public meetings and protests in the constituency/home area of elected representatives.
- Ask members to write to the media.
- Involve the membership in public protests inside or outside important government meetings.

Lobbying Officials

A visit to the office of a decision-maker is often a good way to establish contact and put across your message. Contact the office by sending a formal letter requesting an appointment. The people who will make up the delegation should sign the letter. Be sure to confirm the appointment by phone, check the address, time and directions to the venue. If you do not receive a reply to the letter, telephone or visit the office to request an appointment once more, or use contacts who may help you gain access to the official.

Things to Consider:

- Plan your delegation carefully—the more constituencies your delegation represents, the better you will be able to put across all the facts and opinions necessary to influence the decision maker.
- Delegate different tasks to each member of the team and appoint one leader who will introduce everyone and guide the meeting.
- Plan the arguments you want to put across, practise saying them, think of questions or counter-arguments you will be given and plan how you will respond.

- Say specifically what you would like the decision-maker to do (e.g. adopt new legislation, ask a question in parliament, change a policy, speak to the Cabinet, etc.).
- Leave a statement and a pack of material behind which summarises your arguments and include your contact details.
- Use the time well—often half the meeting can be used for introductions and other issues, and the delegation gets distracted from making its point.

A Sample Strategy Objective:

Question: Who do you need to convince to take action?

Answer: Parliament (a majority of members).

Question: Who or what is likely to convince them?

Answer: Party policy, the issue being defined as one of individual conscience and personal responsibility, community attitudes, respected organisations, religious leaders, individual judges, lawyers' organisations, international concern/pressure.

Question: What is the timing?

Answer: Parliament is scheduled to vote on a bill concerning freedom of expression in six weeks' time.

Possible strategy:

Either seek commitment of political parties to freedom of expression or for a vote based on individual conscience. Identify those members of parliament for and against and those most likely to change their mind. Focus action on those most likely to change their position. Get individual groups to write to and meet with targeted individual members of parliament.

WHERE TO LOBBY

International conferences

Diplomats at conferences like Commonwealth and United Nations summits usually expect to be lobbied by campaigners from their own country and by other campaigners on any number of issues.

Work as a team

To begin with, meet with other campaigners from your country or region to establish what your main lobbying points are and to decide on strategies to convince a diplomat to accept your position. Divide amongst the group diplomats and delegations to lobby.

When you first meet with diplomats and delegations, it is important to let them tell

you what their positions are on the various issues of concern. Then, in the give and take of the discussion, if their position does not support your campaign, that is when you lobby. Campaigners should report the results of the meetings to the campaign group to ensure you are not duplicating efforts and can plan for further lobbying.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

When preparing strategies, include ways that you can monitor your progress and evaluate the outcome of the strategy. This means making sure that the objectives set are specific and measurable.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL LOBBYISTS

- Establish yourself as a resource for policy makers by supplying them with information - newsletters, research papers, publications and the outcome of research
- Express your willingness to help them find additional material or data
- Maintain your relationship with the policy maker by sending them information, thanking them when they voted appropriately on the issue you are concerned about and inviting them to events
- Encourage people to write personal letters to the policy maker and send copies of these letters to the press
- Organise a briefing for the policy makers at which an expert on the issue can talk about its importance

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ICBL Campaign Kit

<http://www.icbl.org/resources/campaignkit/>

Lobbying

CASE STUDY

LOBBYING AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Human Rights Watch and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

CONTEXT In 1991, Uzbekistan emerged as a sovereign country after more than a century as part of the Russian empire and, later, the Soviet Union. Under the rule of President Islam Karimov, the country has seen little or no movement toward democratic reform and the media is tightly controlled by the state. Human Rights Watch says Uzbekistan has one of the poorest human rights records of any former Soviet republic. A United Nations report described the use of torture in Uzbekistan as “systematic.”

The emergence of radical Islamist groups in Central Asia has led to increased security fears in Uzbekistan. Following the September 11 attacks, Uzbekistan won favour with the United States by allowing its forces a base near the Afghan border. Human rights observers have voiced concern that in the context of the “war on terror,” it has become harder to focus international attention on the many reported cases of abuse and torture.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) was established in 1991 to support former communist countries from central Europe to central Asia in building market economies. The EBRD is the largest single investor in the region and mobilises significant foreign direct investment beyond its own financing. The Bank’s founding document makes clear that it exists to promote development in countries that are committed to the “fundamental principles of multiparty democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and market economics.”

In May 2002, Human Rights Watch and over fifty partner organisations launched a campaign to push the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to use its 2003 annual meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan to promote human rights in the host country. Ultimately, this campaign resulted in the Bank’s April 2004 decision to limit investment in Uzbekistan.

“We expressed concern about the choice of the meeting venue given the Uzbek government’s atrocious human rights record,” says Veronika Leila Szente Goldston, Advocacy Director for Human Rights Watch’s Europe and Central Asia Division. “We warned the Bank that going ahead with the meeting without requiring any concessions in return would allow the Uzbek government to flag

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it as an endorsement of its repressive policies.”

Human Rights Watch specifically called for the EBRD:

- To set concrete human rights benchmarks for the Uzbek government to fulfill prior to the 2003 annual meeting;
- For the meeting programme to reflect human rights concerns;
- For the Bank to ensure that NGOs and local media could participate fully at the meeting and be protected from government reprisals afterwards.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH OPTED TO TURN WHAT IT FELT WAS AN UNFORTUNATE DECISION INTO A POSITIVE OPPORTUNITY BY CALLING FOR CONCRETE HUMAN RIGHTS BENCHMARKS TO BE LINKED TO THE RIGHT TO HOST THE MEETING.

The campaign’s broader goals were to encourage the Bank to become more serious about its political mandate, to more fully recognise the interconnectedness of political and economic

reforms, and to use conditionality effectively to promote human rights and democracy. One specific goal has been to push the Bank to develop political and human rights benchmarks that countries in its sphere of operation must meet in return for continued financing.

Making Use of the EBRD’s Unique Mandate

The EBRD is unique among international financial institutions in having a political mandate (see “Context”). “It seemed logical to ask the EBRD to put its mandate to use,” says Szente Goldston. “Instead of calling for the meeting’s cancellation, we opted to turn what we felt was an unfortunate decision into a positive opportunity for change, by calling for concrete human rights benchmarks to be linked to the right to host the meeting.”

Human Rights Watch was also careful to make clear that it was not advocating isolation over engagement. “We emphasised the difference between engagement, particularly with the private sector, and awarding a repressive government the financial and political prize of hosting an annual meeting,” says Szente Goldston.

Getting the Message Out

Human Rights Watch transmitted its message through a variety of means. It launched the campaign through an open letter to the EBRD president from an NGO coalition, comprised of over fifty groups from across the region, including about a dozen from Uzbekistan. The launch was timed to coincide with the EBRD’s 2002 annual meeting in Bucharest, where the organisation presented its concerns to Bank officials, including President Lemierre. The campaign was publicised through a press release and a press conference, held in Bucharest, and a great deal of media outreach work before, during, and after the Bucharest meeting.

Through a special page on its website, Human Rights Watch encouraged groups and individuals to join the campaign and take specific steps to support it. The organisation also kept in regular contact with its campaign partners, providing them with updates on developments in Uzbekistan and its communications with the Bank.

Human Rights Watch also devoted substantial resources to generating media interest – particularly among publications such as *The Economist* and *The Financial Times* that were likely to influence Bank officials – to create

embarrassment over the EBRD's decision to hold the meeting in Tashkent. "We thought receiving criticism from the financial press would have a bigger effect on the Bank than hearing those concerns only from human rights groups," says Szente Goldston. For example, in October 2002 *The Economist* published a piece entitled "European Bank for Repression and Dictatorship?" that created havoc within the Bank.

AN ALTERNATIVE TOURIST MAP OF TASHKENT HIGHLIGHTED SITES OF ABUSE ALONG WITH TRADITIONAL TOURIST SIGHTS.

Lobbying Bank Officials

"Overall, the Bank was surprisingly open and receptive to our concerns and we had excellent access to its highest levels throughout the campaign period," says Szente Goldston.

She believes that one probable reason for this receptiveness is that, unlike diplomats at the UN or the Council of Europe, the EBRD was not used to having human rights groups

approach them. The novelty of a dialogue of this kind may have made it interesting and attractive. "The usual 'fatigue' that we sense among diplomats in Geneva or EU bureaucrats over being lobbied on human rights issues was not there," says Szente Goldston. "It was new to both us and them!"

One creative tool to reach Bank officials was an "alternative" tourist map of Tashkent, distributed to those attending the 2003 meeting, in which Human Rights Watch highlighted sites of abuse along with traditional tourist sites. "This tool was chosen bearing in mind that our targets were bankers and investors, not diplomats familiar with international human rights treaties," says Szente Goldston. "We felt the need to find a more direct, 'in-your-face' method to express our concerns to them."

Indirect Pressure

Human Rights Watch exerted indirect pressure on the EBRD through advocacy, targeting institutions such as the European Union (EU), the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe. It also targeted key shareholder governments—particularly the United States, EU nations, and Japan—to highlight its

concerns and put pressure on the EBRD.

Two examples illustrate the results of this indirect pressure. Following the January 2003 EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council meeting—the single most important bilateral encounter of the year between the EU and the Uzbek government—the EU made clear that it expected the Uzbek authorities to "demonstrate to the international community further political and economic changes" in advance of the EBRD's forthcoming meeting. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe also adopted a resolution in June 2002 expressing hope that the Bank's decision to hold its annual meeting in Uzbekistan would provide an opportunity for democratic reforms and human rights improvements.

CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

Human Rights Watch devoted a great deal of energy and effort to the campaign, which required a significant amount of staff time from the Europe and Central Asia division, particularly its advocacy director, who was the lead person responsible for it. The division's deputy director and a Tashkent-based Uzbekistan researcher also devoted significant time to the campaign.

Many other parts of the organisation were also involved in different phases, from the

communications staff to the executive director, whom the EBRD invited to the annual meeting in Tashkent as a lead panelist.

CHALLENGES

Despite the easy access Human Rights Watch enjoyed to Bank officials, and the attention the campaign attracted in the international community and the press, the organisation did experience some setbacks and frustrations in the course of the campaign. This meant that, in addition to being persistent, it had to be flexible.

IN AN UNPRECEDENTED STEP, THE BANK DECIDED TO LIMIT INVESTMENT IN UZBEKISTAN AS A RESULT OF THE LACK OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRESS

Soon after the campaign launch, it became clear that the EBRD would not heed the call to make concrete human rights improvements a condition of the Uzbek government's hosting the meeting, arguing that the decision to hold the gathering in Tashkent was not an endorsement of the Uzbek government's policies, but an "incentive for progress." "We were disap-

pointed that this rhetorical statement was not followed up by any specific demands," says Szente Goldston. "We felt this was a major missed opportunity."

In response to this setback, Human Rights Watch refined its message somewhat. "Our main line became that whether the meeting would serve to promote human rights or endorse the government's policies depended on how the meeting itself was handled and what would happen afterwards," says Szente Goldston. The organisation continued to emphasise the need for the Bank to spell out specific reform steps, along with a clear timeline for the Uzbek government to meet them after the meeting.

In March 2003, less than two months before the meeting, the EBRD took an unexpected step that differed from Human Rights Watch's initial demands, but which did serve to highlight human rights concerns and articulate expectations of needed reforms in advance of the annual meeting. The Bank adopted a new country strategy for Uzbekistan in which, for the first time ever, it set specific human rights benchmarks for a government to fulfill: greater political openness and media freedom, free functioning and registration of independent civil society groups and implementation

of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture's recommendations. Uzbekistan was given one year to comply.

"We were still disappointed that the benchmarks were not linked to the annual meeting," says Szente Goldston. "But we welcomed the announcement and pushed the Bank to be serious about it." The Bank also responded positively to the other two demands Human Rights Watch had raised: that the content of the meeting reflect human rights concerns and that local NGOs and media be able to participate fully.

Post-Meeting Follow-Up

After the Tashkent meeting, Human Rights Watch kept up the campaign, shifting emphasis to the need for adequate monitoring of the benchmarks the EBRD had set for the Uzbek government. It also emphasised the Bank's responsibility to intervene and protect local NGOs and journalists who spoke out at the meeting against the government's abusive practices from reprisals.

During the year between the meeting and March 2004, when the Bank was to assess the Uzbek government's human rights progress, Human Rights Watch published regular updates on the country, focusing on the three

benchmark areas the EBRD had identified. It maintained pressure on the EBRD through regular meetings with key Bank officials, shareholder governments and institutions such as the OSCE on whom the EBRD relies in making its political assessments. “We also continued to engage the media and other target institutions on the issue to ensure that it remained high on the Bank’s agenda,” says Szente Goldston. The Economist ran at least four articles specifically devoted to the EBRD and Uzbekistan.

IMPACT

The campaign had a number of notable impacts:

- For the first time ever, the EBRD set human rights benchmarks for a country of operation and made further financial support conditional on fulfilling them. When the government failed to show it was making human rights progress, the EBRD took the unprecedented step in April 2004 of limiting investment in Uzbekistan.
- The Bank’s annual meeting, which usually centres on investment opportunities in the host country, focused instead on Uzbekistan’s poor human rights record and the extent to

which the Bank’s decision to hold its annual meeting there was compatible with its mandate. Local NGOs and journalists were able to participate and use the meeting as an opportunity to publicly challenge their government on its human rights record.

- The Bank has undergone a significant transformation. It has reaffirmed its commitment to democracy and human rights and now speaks up more readily on these issues.
- A broad coalition of NGOs from Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries has been mobilised and is eager to carry on the campaign. The coalition aims to draw on the momentum created by the Bank’s actions regarding Uzbekistan and to encourage it to adopt similar benchmarks for other countries, particularly in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Lobbying

CASE STUDY NATIONAL LOBBYING

International Press Institute's 2003 Mission to Israel

CONTEXT The ongoing conflict in Israel and the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip has made the area a particularly dangerous place for journalists to work. But even before confronting the dangers on the job, in recent years many journalists and media workers have faced serious difficulties in simply obtaining authorisation to work.

One problem is the frequent denial of work permits to employees of the foreign media. The problem stemmed from the Israeli Government Press Office's (GPO) decision to start sending foreign correspondents and foreign media personnel applying for work permits to the Employment Service, where they were subject to general labour market rules. As a result, at the request of an Israeli labour union, some foreign media personnel (in particular, television production crews) were having their applications denied. "This especially impaired foreign television networks' ability to cover events in the Palestinian territories," says Anthony Löwstedt, the International Press Institute's (IPI) Middle East/North Africa coordinator.

A second problem concerned the denial of press cards to Palestinian journalists. In January 2002, the GPO, citing security concerns, adopted a sweeping policy of refusing to give accreditation to Palestinian journalists employed by international news organisations. "This seriously undermined these journalists' ability to perform their professional duties and thus impaired the ability of these media outlets to function properly," says Löwstedt.

For two years, these issues had cast a pall over relations between the foreign press and government agencies and seriously limited press freedom in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

In late March 2003, a six-member mission from the International Press Institute (IPI) travelled to Israel to try to resolve a dispute between the Foreign Press Association (FPA) and the Government Press Office (GPO). The mission focused on two key problems: the denial of work permits to employees of the foreign media

and the denial of press cards—in circumstances that were not security-related—to Palestinians working for the foreign media in the Palestinian Territories. Only a week after the mission's completion, the first of these issues was successfully resolved.

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Choosing to Launch a Mission

Hanoch Marmari, an IPI board member and editor-in-chief of the Israeli daily Ha'aretz, suggested the mission at an IPI board meeting in 2002. The mission aimed to promote solutions to the dispute, rather than simply engage in fact-finding.

SPEAK UP FREELY AND CLEARLY. DON'T BE AFRAID. YOU HAVE TO COMMUNICATE YOUR MESSAGE AND DO IT IN A CONVINCING WAY.

“Whereas recent missions by press freedom organisations focusing on Israeli armed forces’ violent acts against journalists had seemingly led to a hardening of the Israeli government’s stance, we thought of solving two more limited problems,” says Löwstedt. IPI decided that a high-level delegation including its director should deal directly with the government on these two issues.

“On previous occasions, IPI had the opportunity to see that a press freedom mission is an effective tool where analysis of the situation shows that diplomacy, rather than exposure, is required,” notes Löwstedt.

Presenting the Case to Government Officials

The mission met representatives of the two parties directly involved in the dispute, as well as the Knesset Speaker, the Interior Minister, the Director of the Prime Minister’s Bureau, the Government Press Officer and the Press Council President.

During the meetings with government officials, members of the mission voiced concern over the infringement of press freedom arising from bureaucratic difficulties. The mission also expressed anxiety over the possibility that these difficulties were politically motivated to reduce foreign media coverage in the territories and to penalise foreign media outlets whose coverage was considered damaging to Israel.

“The members of the mission made it clear that they had not come to Israel as a protest mission, but rather as representatives of an international organisation concerned for press freedom,” says Löwstedt. “They sought to help ease the difficulties and resolve the dispute.”

The participants in the mission saw their role in Israel as one of alerting the senior government echelons and the Israeli public to the importance of press freedom, as well as freedom of movement and access for journalists and media workers, even at a time of intense and violent conflict between Israel and

the Palestinians. “They pointed out that never in Israel’s history—not even in the toughest of times—had obstacles of this extent been put in the way of the foreign media,” says Löwstedt.

Israeli officials responded with interest and expressed their desire to resolve the dispute. The mission members welcomed the Director of the Prime Minister’s Bureau’s firm assertion that there was no political design to restrict the press and that it was a matter of bureaucratic difficulties which needed to be resolved. They understood from this meeting that a solution might be forthcoming to the problem of press passes for Palestinian employees of the foreign media. The mission members were also encouraged by the Interior Minister’s apparent readiness to examine the matter of work and residency permits and the Knesset Speaker’s expressed interest in seeing an amicable solution.

The mission members thanked these officials for the openness that they demonstrated in their meetings and for their willingness to listen and respond.

CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

The six members of the mission paid for their own expenses. “Editors and leading journalists are generally interested in participating in such

missions as they offer an opportunity to meet with influential people in the government and media sectors in crisis areas, along with the human rights dimension,” notes Löwstedt.

Some additional expenses were covered by the IPI Press Freedom Fund. Logistics were organised by two staff people at IPI headquarters in Vienna in collaboration with the assistant to IPI’s Israeli board member in Tel Aviv.

THE IPI MISSION DID NOT SEEK CONFRONTATION, BUT DID STATE UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT ISRAEL’S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE WOULD BE DAMAGED IF IT CONTINUED TO RESTRICT THE MEDIA.

CHALLENGES

On the whole, IPI says it faced “negligible” difficulties in carrying out the mission. “We believe our Israeli board member, Hanoch Marmari, chose the most opportune moment for the mission,” says Löwstedt. “It is crucial to have someone on site to monitor developments and timing.” An important role was also played by the head of the Foreign Press Association, Dan Perry, who did much of the

groundwork. IPI was able to draw on Perry and Marmari’s personal connections, while their involvement also added to the mission’s legitimacy.

One challenge in such a mission is finding the right tone, one which is diplomatic yet firm, to lobby government officials over politically sensitive issues. The participants in the IPI mission did not seek confrontation, but did state unequivocally that Israel’s international image would be damaged if it continued to restrict the media. For those who find themselves in a similar situation, IPI Director Johann Fritz recommends, “Speak up freely and clearly. Don’t be afraid. You have to communicate your message and do it in a convincing way. Don’t be intimidated.” He adds, “Don’t try to soften them up. Get straight to the point.”

Getting government officials to take action is obviously no easy task. At a minimum, Löwstedt says it is important to go into such meetings knowing clearly what you want government officials to commit to.

An additional challenge was to ensure that the issues were not only of international concern, but became domestic issues as well. “We approached a whole range of domestic players on the issue—the state, government,

opposition, independent institutions, etc.—to promote debate within the country,” says Löwstedt. “Our strategy was to try to saturate the leading institutions in the country with the issue.”

IMPACT

One of the two main issues that led to the mission was soon resolved. IPI issued a press release on 1 April 2003, the last day of the mission, and within a week, the work permit rules for employees of the foreign media were scrapped.

“We believe that element of the mission was a total and almost immediate success,” says Löwstedt. “It’s impossible to know for sure that the change to the work permit rules was a direct result of the mission, but we feel confident that the mission had a strong impact.”

The denial of press cards to Palestinian journalists was not so quickly resolved, however.

The Israeli government refused to change its position. Then in April 2004, the Israeli Supreme Court ruled that the restrictions were illegal and that Palestinian journalists should be given press cards if they have been given security clearance to work in Israel. The government appealed the decision. (The govern-

ment may appeal to the Supreme Court in Israel, but only once.)

IPI continued to monitor the situation and, in May, wrote to the government to protest its appeal of the Supreme Court decision. Finally, on 5 August 2004, the Court upheld its decision, which the government must now implement. While the ruling came in response to lawsuits brought by Reuters and Al-Jazeera regarding the accreditation of their reporters, IPI believes its mission also helped move this process along.

“Press freedom in Israel and the occupied territories is a roller-coaster ride,” says Löwstedt. “There are still enormous problems. But we consider this mission a resounding success.”

LOBBYING - RESOURCES

Democracy Center – *Lobbying: The Basics*
<http://www.democracyctr.org/resources/lobbying.html>

How to Lobby at Intergovernmental Meetings.
Felix Dodds, Michael Strauss. Published by Stakeholder Forum, 2004.
<http://www.unedforum.org/publications/books/lobby.php>

Human Rights Watch
<http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/>

International Campaign to Ban Landmines –
Effective Lobbying
<http://www.icbl.org/resources/campaignkit/lobby.html>

International Federation of Journalists –
Gyorgy Gongadze Campaign
<http://www.ifjgongadze.org/>

International Press Institute –
Press Freedom Missions
<http://www.freemedia.at/missions.htm>

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals –
Lobbying Tips
<http://origin.www.animalactivist.com/actguide9.asp>

Press Conferences

TOOLBOX

HOW TO ORGANISE AN EFFECTIVE PRESS CONFERENCE

CONTEXT Press conferences are an established way of drawing attention to your campaign. Some organisations have been able to use them to generate significant national and international media coverage. They usually consist of a speaker or speakers, delivering a short address and then answering questions and doing follow-up interviews.

A press conference can be a good way to create an atmosphere of a news “event” and get your organisation’s basic story across to all the media at one time. It also gives your organisation an opportunity to meet and build connections with journalists and others who attend. A celebrity launching a report can also give life to a story and bring extra coverage.

PLANNING A PRESS CONFERENCE

Press conferences require the media to make an effort to allocate reporters or television crews to attend. They will want a good reason for making this effort. This means you should offer a good story that is enhanced by being presented at a conference, or a story journalists fear they may regret missing if they do not attend. Their first consideration is likely to be whether they will get anything from the press conference that they could not get from a media release and telephone interview.

Normally a press conference is only justified if one or both of the following criteria are satisfied:

- A genuine or major news story is to be announced.

- Your organisation has a celebrity involved - someone the media are interested in.

CHECKLIST

Provide sufficient notice

- Give a week’s notice if you can, but never less than two days, so the event can be entered into diaries.
- Send out a media advisory providing details of when and where it will take place, who will be speaking, what the subject or theme will be, and who they can contact for further information.
- Follow up with a telephone call: this makes sure journalists have received the advisory,

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provides an opportunity to persuade them to attend and gives you a rough indication of the expected attendance.

Timing

- Give some thought to the best time to attract media attention.
- In many countries, the best times for press conferences seem to be late morning (10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.) or early afternoon (2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.).
- Start press conferences on time.

Venue

- The venue must be easily accessible.
- Will journalists be driving? Will they need parking?
- Is it easy to find? Use banners or signs outside to make it easier to find.

Check the venue for:

- Capacity and lighting.
- Electricity plugs (for television crews).
- Sound (is it shut off from outside noise such as traffic or telephones, will a microphone be needed?).

- Layout (where do you want people to sit, where can you put a backdrop, is there space to have an exhibition, is there a separate room available to do individual media interviews after the press conference?).

Welcome people

- Someone with a badge from your organisation should welcome visitors, take their names, give directions and generally create a good impression.
- Have refreshments available.
- Keep a list of all those attending and ensure that they are provided with the available information (a copy of the report, a media or campaign pack with background information, the speech to be delivered).

Select a chairperson

The chairperson will:


- Introduce the speakers.
- Explain arrangements and proceedings (for example, whether there is a possibility for individual interviews afterwards and who to see about it).
- Manage the flow of questions.
- Perhaps answer some questions.
- Bring the conference to a close.

Keep the panel small and the speeches short

- Two speakers or a maximum of three, given no more than five minutes each if there is more than one, is a general rule.
- The more speakers, the more messages there are, and the less control you have over the message that journalists will take away from the conference.
- Long speeches can be distributed to the media as hard copy.
- Only read out the key parts that you want the media to use directly as quotes.
- Journalists are busy, easily bored, and can be keen to develop their own angle on the story through their own questions and individual interviews after the conference.

Distribute a copy of the keynote statement at the start of the conference

- This makes it easier for journalists to follow what is being said and makes it more likely that your group's statement will be reported accurately.
- Put "check against delivery" on the statement as they are never delivered exactly as prepared.

A photograph showing a man in a checkered shirt being interviewed by a woman. The woman is holding a microphone towards the man. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting. The image has a yellowish tint.

A press conference can be a good way to create an atmosphere of a news “event” and get your organization’s basic story across to all the media at one time.

Follow-up media release

- Have this ready in advance, featuring the best and most newsworthy quotes from the speech. This should be distributed to the media who did not attend the conference.

Cover your own conference

- Have a photographer and tape the proceedings.
- Offer photographs to the media and write up the story for your own publications.

Other Tips

- Different media have differing needs. Radio and television will want their own interviews and rarely use footage/sound from the main conference. Make sure to leave some time for this.
- A joint press conference can be held with other organisations if you are working on an action together. Other organisations may have broader concerns than your own, so you need to make clear to the journalists that each group at the press conference has a different focus.
- The press conference should be used sparingly and carefully. This will help to build up

the impression that your news conference is likely to be a newsworthy event.

Budget

When preparing your press conference, you may need to budget for the following items:

- Venue.
- Audio equipment and technician.
- Stationery.
- Distribution of the press release.
- Refreshments.
- Travel and hotel costs.

Instances Where Press Conferences May Not be Effective

In authoritarian countries where media are tightly controlled by the state, press conferences may not be very effective in drawing attention to your cause. Authorities may order journalists not to attend your press conference, leaving you with little or no coverage in the media. Worse yet, they may pressure media to distort your message in order to portray your organisation in a negative light.

In these instances, getting your message out to foreign journalists stationed in your country may be more effective.

THE MEDIA RELEASE

The media release is a standard way of distributing stories to the media. It can be used to publicise your press conference and to fulfill the following functions:

- Give advance notice of an event you are planning;
- Announce the launch of a campaign;
- Outline your organisation's response to events;
- Draw attention to a human rights situation;
- Provide background information;
- Draw attention to and give details on a new report;
- Make it easier for journalists to file the story and get the facts right.

Media Release Tips

- Keep it short, simple, and snappy. Ideally, media releases should fit onto one page and, at most, two.
- Put the main facts in the first paragraph or two, including the "5 Ws": Who? What? Where? When? Why?
- Make the heading interesting and put it in capitals or bold.
- Keep paragraphs and sentences short.

- Make the first sentence interesting. If you do not hook the journalist's attention immediately s/he will not read on.
- Try and include a good quote from your organisation's spokesperson, with strong words and clear points. Journalists may edit a release, but they won't change a quote. Always check this quote with the person concerned before issuing the release.
- Always put a media release on your organisation's letterhead. It makes it look official and professional, and immediately shows journalists who it is from.
- Always put at least one contact name with day and evening contact numbers on the release. Make sure the contact person will be available at these numbers at the specified times.
- Always type – never handwrite. Make sure to get the spelling right.
- Always put a date on your news release. Make it clear to whom it is addressed (for example, news editor) and when the embargo time is. If it is not embargoed, put "for immediate release."

It is important to follow up media releases. Whether you mail or fax the release, you do not know whether it has reached its destination unless you check. There is only one way to make sure, and to find out whether the journalist is interested, and that is to talk to the person.

Most of the time this means a phone call to follow up the release. Be prepared when you make the call. You may have to sum up your release in a couple of sentences and this is your chance to be persuasive. What is the angle, why is it news, why will audiences be interested? Note these down in a few short points. A busy assignment editor in a newsroom will have only a few minutes to talk to you and in those minutes she or he will make a snap decision, so be ready.

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©Amnesty International Publications. *Amnesty International Campaigning Manual*, 2001. 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom. <http://www.amnesty.org>

Press Conferences

CASE STUDY

PRESS CONFERENCES

Committee to Protect Journalists' Annual Report

CONTEXT Each year in March, the New-York based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) releases its annual survey of global press freedom, Attacks on the Press, at a press conference in Washington, D.C.

“Organising the press conference can be challenging,” says CPJ Senior Editor Amanda Watson-Boles. “But we always come to the conclusion that the event itself and its location present clear advantages for CPJ and our advocacy.”

“Location, Location”

CPJ holds the press conference in the U.S. capital, where many media outlets have national or U.S. bureaus. This gives the event, and the analysis contained in CPJ’s annual survey, a better chance of receiving coverage. Being in the capital also gives CPJ staff a chance to meet with Washington-based journalists, as well as government officials at U.S. agencies and foreign embassies.

At the beginning of the year, and sometimes earlier, CPJ’s communications coordinator will reserve a room at the National Press Club (NPC) for the press conference. This is essential because the NPC’s schedule fills up rapidly. About a month before the event, staff begin planning by making travel and hotel arrangements and scheduling meetings.

Among the items that CPJ considers in the press conference budget are:

- The venue (including room rental, audio equipment and technician, distribution of the press release, and a light breakfast for attendees);
- Travel and hotel costs;
- Incidentals.

Organising the press conference requires coordinating the schedules and activities of several different people. CPJ’s office manager works with each regional programme coordinator to make travel and hotel arrangements. The communications coordinator organises the logistics of the press conference itself in consultation with CPJ’s executive director and deputy director. Each regional programme coordinator

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schedules meetings or interviews before or after the press conference.

WITH OTHER STORIES DOMINATING NEWS COVERAGE, WE MUST WORK TO MAKE OUR PRESS CONFERENCE AND THE ISSUES WE PRESENT RELEVANT.

Role of Editorial Staff

In the week before the conference, editorial staff in New York complete the press release for the conference and help regional programme coordinators polish up their remarks. Quotes from the press conference itself are added to the press release in pre-determined spaces once the event has occurred.

Editorial staff are also responsible for making sure that copies of the book arrive in Washington, D.C. in time to be distributed at the conference. Finally, editors work with CPJ's communications coordinator and webmaster to edit and post the press release from the press conference as soon as it occurs.

CHALLENGES

CPJ has held this press conference for several years, so each time it becomes easier to organise. At the end of the event each year, the organisation finds it very useful to conduct an evaluation meeting to determine what could have been done differently to avoid problems the following year.

"The biggest challenge CPJ faces is getting people to the press conference itself," says Watson-Boles. "With other stories such as presidential elections in the United States and the war in Iraq dominating news coverage, CPJ must work to make our press conference and the issues we present relevant."

Connecting CPJ's Work With Top Stories in the News

Drawing connections between major stories and CPJ's work is a good way to do this. For example, in the past CPJ has focused on the dangers that journalists face covering the war in Iraq or the changing climate for press freedom worldwide as a result of the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Nurturing Contacts

"Another way to ensure high attendance and widespread coverage is to constantly nurture our contacts in the media and develop new ones," says Watson-Boles. CPJ staff do this by meeting with journalists in Washington, D.C., such as the influential editors of The Washington Post or The New York Times' local bureau.

At the press conference itself, it is always a challenge to ensure that speakers are concise and stay on message. The best way to deal with that is to have the remarks written, finalised and rehearsed well before the event.

IMPACT

CPJ measures the impact of its press conference in many ways, including the number of news reports on the press conference, any reaction it receives from governments (e.g. Eritrean authorities have responded every time CPJ has condemned press freedom conditions there) and the generally positive feedback it receives from journalists who attend the press conference.

Additional media coverage can be especially helpful for countries that usually do not receive a lot of attention in the international press. For example, at the 2002 press conference, CPJ's Africa programme was able to generate significant coverage of the press freedom

crisis in Eritrea, where the government shut down the private press in September 2001 and avoided international scrutiny as the rest of the world focused on the aftermath of the September 11 attacks.

In addition to the press conference, CPJ confirms that the meetings and interviews with journalists and U.S. and foreign officials are a useful way to get CPJ's message to a wider audience.

PRESS CONFERENCES - RESOURCES

Amnesty International: *Amnesty International Campaigning Manual*, 2001 (available as a PDF document from <http://web.amnesty.org/pages/campaigning-manual-eng>)

BBC iCan
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ican/A1935920>

Fenton Communications - *Now Hear This: Effective Advocacy Communication*
http://www.fenton.com/resources/nht_report.asp

Human Rights Connection -
<http://www.hrconnection.org/hrc/overview/>

Making the Most of the Media: Tools for Human Rights Groups Worldwide, Center for Sustainable Human Rights Action, 2001

Oxfam - *Make Trade Fair Campaign Toolkit*
<http://www.maketradefair.com/en/>

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals - *Working with the Media*
<http://origin.www.animalactivist.com/actguide11.asp>

SPIN Works: A Media Guidebook for Grassroots Organizers, the SPIN Project

Letter Writing

TOOLBOX

HOW LETTER WRITING CAN STRENGTHEN A CAMPAIGN

CONTEXT Letter writing has been a staple of human rights campaigning for decades, and with good reason. These campaigns are simple to organise and provide an easy way for people to take action and to feel involved. Campaign messages can be targeted at different audiences in the home country as well as internationally. They take advantage of the way government bureaucracies often work and in many societies, they are low cost. They are flexible and personal. They can boost morale, educate others and reinforce your image as a mass movement.

WHO SHOULD RECEIVE YOUR LETTERS?

The standard protest letter is addressed to a named government official in another country politely raising concerns and asking for specific action. However, letter writing is such a flexible technique that it can be used in many different ways. Letters can be directed to:

- Local officials, military commanders and others with direct responsibility for human rights violations as a way of directly applying pressure on them and exposing concern, and stimulating them to think and act on human rights;
- Newspapers and other media to encourage them to increase their reporting on a particular country, foreign affairs or human rights generally;
- Supporters as an effective way of raising money;

- Embassies as a good way of getting the message to target governments;
- Government officials as a way of providing them with evidence of your concerns that they can then use to press for change;
- Human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in target countries as a way of providing moral support and encouragement, which can help motivate them to continue their work;
- Prisoners and their relatives as a way of boosting morale and offering them an opportunity to communicate with the outside world.

Organising a letter writing action

A popular way to increase the volume and speed of a letter writing campaign is through writing groups and networks. Groups of volunteers get together on a weekly or monthly basis to write

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and sign letters and possibly set up public booths to gain wider support. Using the Internet, you can also set up large networks of letter writers spanning many cities. You can send information on a particular case over an email listserv and have volunteers write original letters or simply send out prewritten letters to be signed.

The following questions may help you plan a letter writing action:

- How many letters would you like to send and over what period of time?
- Are letters likely to be more or less effective if people mention that they are members of your organisation?
- Will letters from particular sectors of the community have more impact?
- How much do the letters to different officials need to vary?
- Is it more important to send lots of letters or fewer letters that are more individual? If the most important thing is that letters are individual in character, then it is best not to provide a draft text for the letter.

What materials are needed?

Groups need enough information to understand what is wanted from them and to carry this out. This will usually mean providing them with the following:

- Background material on the issue, country and the particular case and a summary of your strategy for addressing the issues;
- Points of concern that can be raised, possibly in the form of interchangeable paragraphs;
- Your recommendations;
- Addressees to write to, including titles and salutation;
- Advice on the number of letters which should be sent, which addresses are the most important, how long the letters should be, how many points to raise in each letter, etc.

The background, guidance and points to be raised for a single letter writing action should not be more than one or two pages long. The specific things you need to include are likely to depend on whether it is part of a campaign pack. If your group is provided with basic information on the target country and the strategy for addressing the issues, you will be in a good position to decide which issues to highlight and the best way to make sure your

letters have an impact.

Note: If you include a draft letter, members are likely to simply copy this and you will lose the advantages of generating individual letters.

TYPES OF LETTERS

High-impact letters

A letter from a former president, a sports star, a famous singer, a business leader, an academic, a judge or a general may have more influence on the addressee than a letter from your members or a member of the public. A joint letter from all or some of these can also be very effective. When deciding who is likely to have the most influence, you need to take into account the issue that is being tackled, the society in the target country and any special links between the target country and your own.

It can be tempting to approach the same people for high-impact letters, or to ask people who have already made a public stand on human rights issues. But a letter can have a high impact partly because it comes from someone not usually associated with raising concerns about human rights - illustrating in a symbolic way the extent of concern over a particular case or issue.

Open Letters

- If it is an open letter, it can be copied to newspapers for possible inclusion in letters to the editor pages.
- Making it public can help build your organisation's image in your society as a respected organisation and thereby increase its influence.
- It can help to attract support from others.
- It can be the focus of other publicity, particularly if the signatory is willing and able to speak to the media about the issues.
- It may be possible to organise a “public signing” as the beginning of a more public event to which the media can be invited.
- It can be copied to the embassy of the country in question and your own ministry of foreign affairs.

Letters from sectors of the community

Letters from different sectors of your community may have a greater potential to influence situations than general letters from individuals. Lawyers, for example, are respected in many societies and therefore letters from them may be more influential. If concerns are being directed towards military figures it may be that

they are more likely to listen to fellow military professionals.

Personal letters

An individually written letter, rather than a standard appeal, is often more likely to get the attention of government officials. It also makes it more difficult for governments to adopt a standard response. The more informed, individualised and targeted the letters are, the better. Personal information to highlight can include the writer's profession or trade, whether he or she has visited the country, or details about the writer's own community to demonstrate the personal nature of the concern.

Mass appeals

1 The prepared letter

One of the easiest ways of generating a large number of letters is to prepare them in advance. A simple standard text can be drafted, needing only the addition of a signature, return address, envelope and stamp. This sample can then be cheaply copied and distributed to your members.

It is likely that the first of these prepared letters to land on a government official's desk

will have the most impact as the official will quickly realise that the subsequent letters say the same thing and are part of a campaign.

Thereafter, the impact of the letters lies primarily in their quantity—the total number illustrating the level of concern. Distributing letters for signing and sending can also raise public awareness of the issues and offer a first step in getting people involved in defending human rights.

Some organisations set up public stalls—with prepared letters and envelopes addressed and stamped—and ask people to sign the letter, add a return address and make a donation to cover the postage. This has the advantage of guaranteeing that the letters will be sent. Other groups distribute the letters more widely and freely hand them out at public meetings and workplaces, etc. This allows for a wider distribution, but it is unclear how many letters will be posted.

2 Postcards

The pre-printed campaign postcard can be another way of delivering your human rights concerns and of making sure your message stands out as it makes its way through postal systems.

Postcards can be sent to government officials. They can also be sent to human rights organisations as a gesture of solidarity, to encourage them in their work and boost their morale.

On one side, postcards can have anything from a picture to a very direct campaign message. On the other, they can outline your concerns in relevant languages and be pre-addressed so that all they require is a signature and a stamp. This is also an easy way of giving individual members something practical to do in support of a campaign. Sets of postcards can be inserted in newsletters or included in other correspondence to members.

CASES IN WHICH LETTER WRITING MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE OR EFFECTIVE

- Some targets are largely immune to international concern. For example, one government leader, on hearing how many letters of concern had arrived from Germany reportedly said, “When was the last time people in Germany voted for me?”
- Mass mailings of letters may be counter-productive if there is a poor postal system in the target country.
- Letters are of very limited use in situations of chaos or crisis where government systems are breaking down.
- In some societies, low literacy levels or high postage costs make letter writing inappropriate.

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Letter Writing

CASE STUDY

INTERNATIONAL PEN AND THE GENERAL GALLARDO CAMPAIGN

CONTEXT Mexican Brigadier General Jose Francisco Gallardo Rodriguez was arrested in 1993, one week after the Mexican magazine Forum published excerpts from his master's thesis entitled "The Need for a Military Ombudsman in Mexico." Gallardo had called for an independent civilian ombudsman to investigate human rights abuses committed by the army. For decades, a climate of impunity in Mexico has led to hundreds of cases where perpetrators of human rights violations, including disappearances and killings, have escaped justice.

In response to his writings, military authorities laid charges against Gallardo, accusing him of embezzlement, fraud and damages to military property—charges from which he had been exonerated four years earlier. The general was offered his freedom if he agreed to admit to his "guilt," but he refused. Later, in March and April 1998, Gallardo was sentenced to nearly 29 years' imprisonment on charges of "theft" and "illegal profiteering."

In 1996, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) reviewed his case and concluded that he was imprisoned "without reason and legal justification," and later the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention declared that he was being arbitrarily detained.

Frustrated by the Mexican government's refusal to comply with its 1996 recommendations and increasingly concerned for Gallardo's safety in prison, the IACHR petitioned the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to take up his case. The Court accepted Gallardo's case and ordered the Mexican government to appear at a hearing in San Jose, Costa Rica on 18 February 2002. Eleven days before the court date, the Mexican government, under newly-elected President Vicente Fox, announced Gallardo's release.

Brigadier General Jose Francisco Gallardo Rodriguez was arrested in 1993 in retaliation for his writings, which advocated human rights reforms within the Mexican armed forces. The campaign to challenge the charges and secure Gallardo's release was taken up by International PEN, Amnesty International, and others, eventually leading to his release in 2002.

International PEN is a worldwide association of writers made up of 134 PEN Centres in 96 countries. Its Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC), established in 1961, has used letter writing as an essential tool in all its major campaigns. Over the years, International PEN has seen that letter writing can be effective as:

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- A means of pressuring governments towards change;
- The focus of campaign activities that may include other elements, such as embassy visits, missions, petitions, and direct contact with families;
- Publicity tools that can be sent to the press.

PROVIDING MORAL SUPPORT TO THE FAMILY IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO HELP GIVE THEM THE COURAGE TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT THE CASE.

As a writers' organisation, PEN has found that letter writing is the most effective way to make use of its members' skills in a campaign. Eminent writers are often among those who sign the letters, leading to greater media interest and impact. Among the writers who expressed their support for Gallardo were Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa and Fernando Savater.

Implementing the Letter Writing Campaign

Before deciding to initiate a campaign, International PEN gathers information on a case. If it decides to take it on as a campaign, the international secretariat then drafts a background paper summarising the case, along with recommended actions to guide letter writing and other activities. The secretariat also e-mails PEN Centres around the world, asking if they are interested in taking up the case by adopting the writer as an Honorary Member.


Those PEN Centres that elect a writer as an Honorary Member then form a network. In the Gallardo case, several Centres elected him as an Honorary Member. They set up direct contact with him and his family, providing a means to share updated news and show solidarity and support for the family. "Providing moral support to the family is extremely important to help give them the courage to continue to fight the case," says WiPC Programme Director Sara Whyatt. "Family members are often suffering as much as the person in prison."

Actions are undertaken at key points, such as before appeal hearings, when news emerges of problems in prison, or anniversaries. These actions involve a wider pool of PEN Centres

active in the Regional Network (some 20 Spanish-speaking Centres, mostly in the Americas) or the Rapid Action Network (RAN), which includes all 50 members, plus other individuals and organisations. Throughout his nine-year detention, many RAN and regional actions focused on Gallardo's case.

During this period, PEN sent letters to a wide range of recipients: the Mexican government (generating some responses); the Mexican Human Rights Commission (frequent responses); the Mexican media (which covered the story well); media outside Mexico; Mexican embassies abroad; government foreign offices; the Organization of American States (OAS); and various rapporteurs of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Gallardo was one of five people featured in PEN's 1996 International Day of the Imprisoned Writer, an annual event which aims to generate large-scale letter writing, publicise specific cases and gain new members. PEN's Americas Network also undertook a mission to Mexico to investigate and draw attention to the case.

A large, dimly lit room filled with people and stacks of letters. The room is packed with individuals, many of whom are looking towards the camera. The floor is covered with numerous stacks of letters, some of which are being handled by the people. The overall atmosphere is one of a busy, organized event. The image has a dark, monochromatic color scheme with a blue and yellow vertical bar on the right side.

It was evident how important these letters had been in providing Gallardo with solace and support, and enabling his family to stage their own campaign against enormous odds

CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

The campaign for Gallardo's release was part of PEN's core activities and entailed no additional costs to the organisation.

International PEN has one researcher covering the Americas and Africa, who was responsible for gathering the material on the Gallardo case, drafting campaign documents and overseeing PEN Centre activities. He works under the guidance of the Programme Director.

IN THE MAJORITY OF CASES WE TAKE ON, PEOPLE ARE RELEASED SOONER THAN THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN OTHERWISE.

CHALLENGES

"The lack of direct response from governments to our letters can be frustrating," says Whyatt. There is no magic answer to deal with the frustration, but Whyatt points out that "the fact that they don't respond doesn't mean they're not reading the letters." She has had the experience of meeting with authorities who

never responded to their letters, but had clearly read them and taken them into account.

Whyatt adds that the lack of direct response "doesn't seem to put off our members from writing." Although it can be hard to see the immediate impact of letter-writing, there is evidence that it does have an effect. "In the majority of cases we take on, people are released sooner than they would have been otherwise," says Whyatt. She notes that in 2003, 40% of the cases for which PEN issued RAN alerts ended in a "positive outcome." It is impossible to say with certainty that these outcomes are due to the letter writing, but, in her words, letter writing is "certainly not a useless exercise."

Whyatt notes that participation in letter-writing among PEN members tends to be greater in cases involving well-known writers, women, and certain countries rather than others. For example, Cuba tends to generate a great deal of interest in contrast to China.

One challenge in generating participation in the Gallardo case was his military status. "The fact that Gallardo was a military general and not a writer led to the need for clarity as to why we were taking up the case," says Whyatt. She notes that PEN has three categories of cases: writers and journalists detained for their

writing; writers and journalists detained for other reasons; and people who are not normally writers, but have written something that got them into trouble. Gallardo fell into the latter category. Whyatt notes that "there is a fair bit of antipathy out there toward military generals," which made it even more important for International PEN to carefully explain the case to its members.

An additional challenge was the case's complexity, as it involved a military court and charges that were not on first sight directly linked to his writings. "The complexity necessitated special attention to detail," says Whyatt.

IMPACT

"It was hard at first to get people interested in the Gallardo campaign," says Whyatt. "But as more and more people became involved, it snowballed." She says the campaign was "one of our most successful," especially in its latter stages as communications between PEN, the family, the OAS, and the IACHR became more frequent and detailed.

"Despite not being a straightforward 'writer in prison' case, Gallardo's plight eventually captured the imagination of a wide section of our members," says Whyatt. She notes that Spanish-speaking PEN Centres in Latin

America were the most active groups in the campaign, which coincided with a general increase in activism among PEN groups in the region. PEN targeted its campaign material to people in the region, who understood the context a little better than people elsewhere. Whyatt adds that PEN's Americas network was particularly effective in networking among themselves, planning joint actions and ensuring that the case was high on their own national Centre agendas as well as within International PEN.

IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE LED TO GALLARDO'S RELEASE

The efforts of PEN and others culminated in Gallardo's early release in February 2002. After leaving prison, the general commended the more than 50 NGOs that had supported him, including International PEN. "It is very clear that the international pressure, of which PEN was a leading component, led to his release," says Whyatt, who notes that in most

cases the impact of international pressure is not so evident.

At PEN's November 2003 Congress in Mexico City, Gallardo and his family arrived with several boxes containing the thousands of letters he had received—many from PEN members—which had stamps from all over the world. "It was evident how important these letters had been in providing Gallardo with solace and support, and enabling his family to stage their own campaign against enormous odds," says Whyatt.

In her address to the Congress, Gallardo's wife noted, among other things, the importance of the books International PEN sent to him in prison, which:

...were so helpful for my husband to endure his stay in prison. He never felt in jail, the windows were open, there were no walls for him ever. We, his family, would go visit him and instead of finding someone shy, inhibited, he was the opposite. He would drive us, he would encourage us to keep fighting and that's why our family was not destroyed. They could not destroy our family. With your support, we were able to get my husband's freedom... We had 35,000 letters... Thank you.

Meanwhile, General Gallardo told the Congress, "Without the work of the Writers in Prison Committee, it would have been so difficult for the Mexican government to open up the gates for my release. ... I would like to thank God and PEN International. I owe them my freedom."

LETTER WRITING - RESOURCES

Amnesty International - *Urgent Action Network*

<http://web.amnesty.org/pages/ua-index-eng>

Media Awareness Project - *Three Tips for Letter Writers*

<http://www.mapinc.org/3tips.htm>

National Resources Defense Council - *A Sample Online Letter*

<http://www.gettherealscoop.org/takeaction.asp?step=2&item=52109>

Policy.ca - *How to Write Successful Letters to the Editor and Letters to Politicians*

http://www.policy.ca/action/letter_writing.php3

Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN - *Rapid Action Network*

<http://www.internationalpen.org.uk/>

Other Campaigning Resources

CAMPAIGNING RESOURCES

Amnesty International - *Global Campaign to Stop Violence Against Women*

<http://web.amnesty.org/actforwomen/index-eng>

Citizen Works - *Tools for Organizing*

<http://www.citizenworks.org/tools/tools-main.php>

Community Toolbox - *Organizing for Effective Advocacy*

http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/part_I.htm

Consumers International - *Popular and Principled: A Handbook on Campaigning*, 1999

http://www.consumersinternational.org/document_store/Doc37.pdf

International Campaign to Ban Landmines - *Campaign Toolkit*

<http://www.icbl.org/resources/campaignkit/>

Jim Britell: *Organize to Win: A Grassroots Activist's Handbook*, 2001

<http://www.britell.com/text/tgrassroots.html>

New Tactics in Human Rights: A Resource for Practitioners, New Tactics Project, 2004.

<http://www.newtactics.org/main.php/ToolsforAction/TheNewTacticsWorkbook>

Oxfam

http://www.oxfam.org/eng/programs_camp.htm

Selene - *A Swedish consultancy offering campaign advice for NGOs*

<http://www.selene.se/>

World Wildlife Fund - *Detox Campaign*

<http://www.panda.org/campaign/detox/>

About IFEX

As profound violations of the right to free expression continue around the globe, the International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX) has emerged as a strong force of opposition. IFEX is a virtual network of 64 organisations that monitors the state of free expression and transmits the information it collects to individuals and organisations around the world. IFEX was born in 1992 when leading freedom of expression organisations came together in Montreal, Canada to discuss how best to further their collective goals.

At its core, IFEX is made up of organisations whose members refuse to turn away when those who have the courage to insist upon their fundamental human right to free expression are censored, attacked or killed. IFEX draws together a tremendously diverse and dedicated global community. In recent years, the IFEX community has been joined by many new members from the developing world – bringing new perspectives and energy.

ACTION ALERT NETWORK: HELPS DEFEND THREATENED JOURNALISTS

One of the central components of IFEX is the Action Alert Network (AAN). Member organisations report free expression abuses in their geographic region or area of expertise to the IFEX Clearing House which, in turn, circulates

this information to IFEX members, and more than 10,000 other organisations and individual subscribers around the world.

The AAN allows for a rapid, world-wide and co-ordinated response to press freedom and freedom of expression violations. In 2003 alone, 42 journalists were killed while doing their job, and hundreds more were attacked or imprisoned. Action Alerts help turn spotlights from around the world squarely on those responsible for human rights violations – and this can make a significant difference, as those who violate human rights often rely on the cover of darkness.

Action Alerts are the mainstay of our work for the simple reason that we have seen coordinated letter-writing campaigns help

unlock prison doors, lift publication bans and even save lives. The AAN also provides updates on recent developments in ongoing cases and circulates important freedom of expression press releases. Anyone can receive copies of alerts for any part of the world – for information email alerts@ifex.org.

IFEX COMMUNIQUÉ: PROVIDES UP-TO-DATE WORLD INFORMATION

The IFEX Communiqué is a weekly e-mail based publication that highlights developments and issues affecting the free expression community world-wide. A valuable resource tool, it provides regional news on free expression violations and victories, and up-to-date information on conferences, workshops and press-freedom awards. The Communiqué includes a wide range of material, including information from IFEX member organisations, and other human rights and international media groups. Published in English, French and Spanish, the Communiqué is available free of charge via e-mail. To subscribe, email: communiqued@ifex.org

DEVELOPMENT OUTREACH: HELPS BUILD NEW ORGANISATIONS, NETWORKS

A key area of the Clearing House's work is the Development Outreach Program. Based on

recognition of current North-South disparities, this program is designed to support and strengthen fledgling freedom of expression organisations and regional networks in the developing world and countries in transition. The risks and obstacles faced by people who attempt to start up free expression groups in countries plagued by human rights abuses or censorship can be overwhelming, and IFEX offers vital transfusions of information, financial and technical resources, expertise, and international support and recognition. Email: outreach@ifex.org

DEVELOPING STRATEGY AND SKILLS: IFEX GENERAL MEETING AND WORKSHOPS

The IFEX General Meeting (GM) is the main occasion in which all partners and members in the IFEX network come together to: discuss new strategies for responding to pressing free expression issues; network with one another; share expertise; and decide on new directions for the network in the coming years.

The Outreach workshops, generally held during the IFEX GM, are designed to build the capacity of groups based in the South and countries in transition. Thus far, these workshops have focused on action alert and internet

training, as well as fundraising and organisational support. The workshops provide groups with the opportunity to meet and share ideas for carrying out their free-expression work.

IFEX WEBSITE: A CENTRAL SOURCE OF FREE EXPRESSION INFORMATION – WWW.IFEX.ORG

IFEX's website plays an extremely important role in the operation and development of the network. All IFEX alerts and content from the IFEX Communiqué are posted in English, Spanish and French (where available) immediately to the website. In addition, links are created to sources of important free expression research that exists at many groups around the world. Tens of thousands of subscribers access this information by logging onto the IFEX website (www.ifex.org). Both the Communiqué and the alerts are searchable in English, Spanish and French, making the information much more accessible to all those using the site.

IFEX OPERATIONS

The IFEX Clearing House is managed by IFEX member Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE), and is based in Toronto, Canada. The Clearing House helps coordinate the work of IFEX members, reducing overlap in our activities and making

us more effective in our shared objectives. IFEX is governed by a Council made up of 13 IFEX members. General membership in IFEX is open to independent, non-governmental organisations working on freedom of expression.

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Page 20: A boy displays a protest sign during a November 2003 demonstration by journalists in New Delhi against the sentencing of five journalists from The Hindu to 15 days in jail for allegedly criticising the government.

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Page 117: Thousands of letters sent in support of Jose Francisco Gallardo help freed the Mexican brigadier general from prison in 2003.

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