

# the PEACE JOURNALIST

## IN THIS ISSUE

- PJ and elections in Zimbabwe
- Dispatches from Lebanon, South Africa, Cameroon, India
- Can social media build peace?



Design by Lexus Brown, Park University



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**GLOBAL PEACE**  
JOURNALISM  
• park university •

Special Report: Journalists worldwide combat

# Threats, Violence

# the PEACE JOURNALIST

The Peace Journalist is a semi-annual publication of the Center for Global Peace Journalism at Park University in Parkville, Missouri. The Peace Journalist is dedicated to disseminating news and information for teachers, students, and practitioners of PJ.

**Submissions** are welcome from all. We are seeking shorter submissions (300-500 words) detailing peace journalism projects, classes, proposals, etc. We also welcome longer submissions (800-1200 words) about peace or conflict sensitive journalism projects or programs, as well as academic works from the field. We do NOT seek general submissions about peace projects, but are instead focused only on articles with a strong media angle.

**Deadlines:** March 3 (April edition); September 3 (October edition).

**Editor:** Steven Youngblood, Director, Center for Global Peace Journalism, Park University  
Proofreading: Prof. John Lofflin

**Contact/Social Media:**  
steve.youngblood@park.edu  
Twitter:@Peace Journ  
Facebook-Peace Journalism group  
Center for Global Peace Journalism, Park University  
8700 NW River Park Dr  
Parkville, Missouri 64152 USA



A Park University Publication

## Contents

### 3 Nigeria, Kashmir

Can journalists remain safe?



### 7 New York

Q&A w/Cmte to Protect Journalists

### 8 Cameroon

Does PJ make journalists safer?

### 10 Zimbabwe

Polarized media challenges PJ

### 12 South Sudan

Inflammatory media

### 13 Washington, DC

Seminar: Social media and peace

### 14 Italy

Spaces of War, War of Spaces

### 16 U.S.

Trip for Peace traverses country

### 18 South Africa

Leaders gather, analyze PJ

### 20 Cameroon

Seminars held amid unrest

### 22 Lebanon

MAP celebrates 5th birthday



### 24 India

Chennai workshop teaches PJ

## What is Peace Journalism?

Peace Journalism is when editors and reporters make choices that improve the prospects for peace. These choices, including how to frame stories and carefully choosing which words are used, create an atmosphere conducive to peace and supportive of peace initiatives and peacemakers, without compromising the basic principles of good journalism. (Adapted from Lynch/McGoldrick, *Peace Journalism*). Peace Journalism gives peacemakers a voice while making peace initiatives and non-violent solutions more visible and viable.

A number of valuable peace journalism resources, including resource packets and online links, can be found at [www.park.edu/peacecenter](http://www.park.edu/peacecenter).

## Center for Global Peace Journalism

The Center for Global Peace Journalism works with journalists, academics, and students worldwide to improve reporting about conflicts, societal unrest, reconciliation, solutions, and peace. Through its courses, workshops, lectures, this magazine, blog, and other resources, the Center encourages media to reject sensational and inflammatory reporting, and produce counter-narratives that offer a more nuanced view of those who are marginalized—ethnic/racial/religious minorities, women, youth, and migrants.

# Can journalists safely practice their craft?

## Boko Haram, Nigerian officials hunt journalists

By Ibanga Isine and Jacob Udo-Udo Jacob

“My love for Nigeria has been a compelling impetus in charting the course of my life, courageous in the face of adversities, hopeful when confronted with despair and delighted when the society makes appreciable progress,” were the words of Enenche Akogwu, 31, a reporter and video camera operator with independent broadcaster, Channels TV.



Journalists Under Threat

Akogwu was posted to Kano State in Nigeria’s North-west region as a correspondent at a time Boko Haram insurgents seized swaths of territories, killed thousands, maimed more, and were spreading terror from community to community.

An ingenious and courageous reporter, Akogwu covered the troubled northern region deftly until January 20, 2012 when Boko Haram arrived and unleashed terror on Kano, Northern Nigeria’s centre of commerce, and sought to take it over.

Mr. Akogwu had just returned from a news conference organised by the police after multiple suicide bombings targeted government buildings in Kano City, when he heard a barrage of gunshots near the office of the state governor.

Instead of waiting for a tainted statement from security agents, as most journalists are wont to do, he cautiously dashed to see what had happened after the sporadic

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Ibanga Isine is an award-winning Journalist and Instructor of Journalism at the American University of Nigeria.

Dr. Jacob Udo-Udo Jacob is currently a Visiting International Scholar at Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Until his visit to Dickinson, Jacob was Chair of the Communications & Multimedia Design Program and Interim Dean in the School of Arts and Science at the American University of Nigeria.



## After editor’s murder, is PJ possible in Kashmir?

By Steven Youngblood

After a reknowned journalist’s murder, is peace journalism dead in Kashmir?

In peace starved Indian-controlled Kashmir, it’s disheartening beyond words when the region’s leading voice for peace, dialogue, and responsible journalism is silenced.

On June 14, the editor-in-chief of the *Rising Kashmir* newspaper, Shujaat Bukhari, was shot and killed along with his two bodyguards outside the newspaper’s offices in Srinagar in Indian-controlled Kashmir. One young man was arrested in the killing, and police are seeking three other gunmen. (*Rising Kashmir*, June 15).

I had the honor of meeting Bukhari a few years ago during a peace journalism project in Kashmir. We chatted in his office and then discussed peace journalism with the staff of *Rising Kashmir*. It took seconds to see that Bukhari had a keen mind—quick to ferret out the key issues and to probe for insights. Though I’ve had dozens of such meetings with journalists through the years, the discussion with Bukhari and his staff still stands out as one of the most candid and valuable.

“Working as a journalist in Kashmir is like walking on a razor’s edge.”  
--Sameer Yasir, in the *NY Times*.

Though Bukhari was dubious about the label peace journalism, there’s no doubt that he and his staff practiced the concept. In 2016, I wrote, “*Rising Kashmir* is a fine newspaper that if anything is the opposite of inflammatory or sensationalizing. I was so impressed with their work that I used *Rising Kashmir* as an example of peace journalism in action in my textbook *Peace Journalism Principles and Practices*.”

During our chat in his office, Bukhari and I discussed *Rising Kashmir*’s necessary balancing act. In volatile Kashmir, favoring either the Indian authorities or Kashmiri protesters or militants could result in the paper being raided

Steven Youngblood is editor of the *Peace Journalist Magazine*, author of *Peace Journalism Principles and Practices*, and director of the Center for Global Peace Journalism at Park University in Parkville, Missouri.

Continued on next page



gunfire stopped. On getting there, he requested information from persons he thought were mere bystanders but unfortunately, he was standing face-to-face with insurgents and demanding to know what they had done.

The insurgents did not waste time in pulling the trigger. At a very close range, Akogwu was shot six times - three times in the chest and three in the stomach. He died immediately but his body was recovered several hours after the military deployed heavy equipment and stopped the insurgents from taking over the state's seat of power.

Those who murdered Akogwu, whom Channels TV described as "a resourceful and fearless reporter" who "covered the northern region uncovering breaking stories and events across the troubled northern region," knew he

Kashmir from Pg 3

by authorities (as it was in 2016) or the paper's staff being the target of violence. Sadly, even Bukhari's cautious professionalism couldn't shield him from an assassin's bullet.

Bukhari was noted for favoring a peaceful resolution to the Kashmir conflict—a position that was the opposite of easy, convenient, or safe. He even helped to organize several peace conferences in the region.

Kashmiri journalist colleague, Sameer Yasir, wrote about Bukhari in the *New York Times*. He said, "Our community of journalists has suffered decades of threats and intimidation from militants and Indian forces alike. But Mr. Bukhari's unflinching optimism was always something we aspired to, and it kept us going. If he could remain hopeful after decades covering one of the world's most grueling conflicts, we all could." (June 15, 2018)

After his murder, the tributes poured in. The Jammu and Kashmir lecturer's forum issued a statement which said in

Shujaat Bukhari (in white, right) and Steven Youngblood discuss PJ with his newspaper's staff in 2016.



October 2018  
was a journalist because he wore his identity card and had a branded TV camera on him.

Akogwu was one of the proponents of Peace Journalism in Nigeria but the insurgents did not spare him, and neither does the government and security operatives appreciate journalists who live on the fringes of danger to tell the stories of the triumph and pains of people caught in violence across the country.

A reporter, Ahmed Salkida, who has worked tirelessly to bring the plight of communities and people affected by insurgency to both local and international audience, has been dubbed spokesperson of Boko Haram. Salkida was declared wanted by the Nigerian military in August 2016 in connection with a video showing the Chibok girls earlier kidnapped from a Government Secondary School on April 14, 2014.

Continued on next page

part, "The services which this great son of the soil rendered especially for those unvoiced sections of the society through his incredible writings are immortal." (*Rising Kashmir*, June 18) Twitter comments included, "Well he was a sane voice of Kashmiri people, we condemn the killing," and "So finally we have the answer to 'who could have gained by killing a balanced voice like him!!'" Two days after the murder, three Kashmiri newspapers ran blank columns on their editorial pages to protest the killing.



Even an optimist can't help but be demoralized by Bukhari's murder. If a peacemaking moderate can't speak up in Kashmir, who can? Who can adopt Bukhari's cause, and further, who would want to? Under circumstances like these, how much can we reasonably ask journalists to do to foster peaceful dialogues or promote reconciliation? Is peace journalism possible in conflict areas, and more specifically, is peace journalism dead in Kashmir? I am struggling with these questions more than ever.

In speaking with journalists in conflict areas, I almost always make it a point to remind journalists that they should ensure their safety first before thinking about their professional responsibilities.

Because of *Rising Kashmir's* balanced approach and rejection of sensationalism, I didn't think I needed to reiterate this point to Bukhari and his staff. Sadly, and tragically, I was wrong.

He had allegedly published the video on YouTube, showing some of the abducted girls begging the Nigerian Government to secure their freedom. In a statement on his personal website, Salkida said he has worked as a journalist, within the confines of professional ethics and has not violated any known law.

"My status as a Nigerian journalist who has reported extensively, painstakingly and consistently on the Boko Haram menace in the country since 2006 is an open book known to Nigerians and the international community," Salkida indicated in the statement.

"Equally, my total allegiance and sacrifice to the Federal Republic of Nigeria is self-evident. I have stayed within the creed of professional journalism in my work."

"As a testimony to the credible and professional values of my access, since May 2015, I have been to Nigeria three times on the invitation of Federal Government agencies. I made personal sacrifices for the release of our Chibok daughters."

Despite his contributions to resolving the conflict that has seen tens of thousands of persons killed and millions displaced, Salkida is being declared wanted, threatened, and molested by the authorities.

Similarly, the Nigerian police on January 19, 2017, invaded the office of Nigeria's most respected investigative newspaper, *Premium Times*, and arrested its publisher, Dapo Olorunyomi, alongside the paper's judiciary correspondent, Evelyn Okakwu.

Plain-clothed officers, who claimed to be acting on a complaint by the Chief of Army Staff Tukur Buratai, conducted a search at the office and disrupted operations for hours.

The action came days after the Pulitzer award-winning newspaper turned down the Army's demand to retract news stories highlighting the missteps of the Nigerian Army in dealing with IDPs.

In a statement, the paper's Editor-in-Chief, Musikilu Mojeed, condemned the raid and restated *Premium Times* commitment to the Nigerian people. "They should stop deluding themselves that they can muzzle the press and intimidate the *Premium Times*," said Mr. Mojeed. "They should know that our loyalty lies with our readers and the Nigerian people who have a right to know."

He said the paper will continue "to discharge its responsibilities in line with global best practices, social responsibility and patriotism, even at great risk to our personal



Journalists Under Threat



liberties."

Many journalists have come under scrutiny and threats by both security agents and Boko Haram elements for daring to tell stories of the burgeoning conflict and calling for urgent intervention by relevant authorities.

But it can also be said that a majority of Nigerian journalists are yet to understand and apply peace journalism constructs especially in reporting from conflict theatres in the country.

That explains why reports about the war on insurgency focus largely on killings, destruction of properties, and displacement of communities without the concomitant supply of detailed information on the contradictions that gave rise to the crises.

The majority of journalists still report crisis as a clash between the military and Boko Haram terrorists.

The number of fatalities incurred by the antagonists becomes headline. Anomalous and disturbing quotations are commonplace in stories and acts of violence are subtly and indirectly justified especially on the side of the Nigerian military. The following headlines were found in some of the country's newspapers.

"Army neutralises 16 Boko Haram members, recover weapons cache in Borno," *The Punch*, July 29, 2018.

Continued on next page



"Army kills 23 Boko Haram fighters," *Vanguard*, June 13, 2018

"Boko Haram: Nigerian troops overpower insurgents in Borno, kill 16," *Daily Post*, July 29, 2018.

"Army Kills 23 Boko Haram Members, Recover Weapons in Lake Chad," *Eagle Online*, June 12, 2018.

The above headlines seek to show the military's superiority against the insurgents and could only exacerbate the crisis as Boko Haram may strike harder to inflict maximum damage on troops and the civilian population. Moreover, it creates a Manichean tug-of-war scenario between Boko Haram and the Nigerian military. Stories of victims of the conflict and the complex nature and dynamics of the conflict are rarely told.

However, the adoption of peace journalism approaches in the reportage of the crisis holds significant promise of de-escalating tensions by showing the invisible impacts of the conflicts, the different sides of the story while also emphasizing peace initiatives.

While the country has been grappling with conflicts right from Independence, it was in January 2015 that select media practitioners were offered training in peace journalism for the first time. The training, which was organised by the American University of Nigeria (AUN) at its ultra-modern E-Library and Resource Centre, in Yola, Adamawa State, brought together news reporters, editors and producers covering insurgency in the Northeast region.

A total of 57 of journalists were drawn from the print, broadcast and online media from Borno, Yobe, Taraba, Bauchi and Adamawa states.

Under the theme "Redefining the Role of Journalists in Peacebuilding," the workshop offered participants in-depth intellectual and professional perspective to the task of reporting news in a time of insurgency and to a nation in search of order, stability and development.

In Abuja, Nigerian journalists protest the arrest of a colleague earlier in 2018.



The workshop was a part of a larger peace conference by activists from five north-eastern states, sponsored by the AUN-Adamawa Peace Initiative.

A more specialized training on Peace Journalism was held in May 2016 in collaboration with the US Embassy in Abuja to train journalists not only on the principles and practice of peace journalism, but also on how to identify and deal with the trauma inevitably experienced by journalists covering extreme violence. One of the most enduring impacts of the workshop was the establishment of a Peace Journalists Network – a loosely coupled coalition of journalists committed to following the tenets of peace journalism.

Journalism in Nigeria is beset with a range of problems, beside the physical threats Journalists face daily. Journalists are among the worst paid professionals in Nigeria. Several media organizations owe their journalists several months' salaries.

The consequence has been an increasingly worrying 'brown envelope' culture where journalists are given financial rewards in exchange for covering media events. This culture obviously exposes the press to manipulation by powerful politicians, businessmen and corrupt government officials. Also, due to poor regulation, the field has seen a rather unfair share of quacks resulting in yellow journalism practice.

Historically however, the Nigerian press has been one of the most independent and vibrant in Africa. *The West African Pilot* newspaper challenged colonialism and mobilized agitations for independence from the British. The press played a crucial role in challenging military rule and restoring democratic rule in Nigeria despite horrifying attacks. In 2015, the media played a very important role in creating an atmosphere for a transparent democratic process that resulted in the election of Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari. The media is today at the forefront of holding the Buhari government to account, demanding fulfilment of the promises it made to the Nigerian people.

The Nigerian press has risen up to some of the most fundamental challenges that face the country and at defining political intersections, despite impossible odds and threats. Dozens of Peace Journalists remain committed to fulfilling their responsibilities as a trusted partner with the people in covering the insurgency, exposing falsehoods, and highlighting opportunities for peace.



Kerry Paterson, CPJ

Editor's note: *The Peace Journalist* spoke with Kerry Paterson, the Committee to Protect Journalists advocacy and communications manager, about some of the dangers faced by journalists worldwide.

This *Peace Journalist* magazine features articles about journalists caught between combatants--governments/military on one side, separatists/rebels on the other. Is this situation commonplace? What special dangers does this pose for journalists?

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for journalists to find themselves in this type of situation - and we've seen journalists caught between combatants in this type of scenario in places like Ukraine, or Syria. Among the biggest challenges posed by this type of situation is that a journalist in that situation has few options in terms of either reporting an attack on them and pursuing some sort of justice, or seeking support or assistance aside

from seeking out international support.

**In these 'caught in the middle' situations, what do you recommend journalists do to enhance their safety?**

Every story and every journalist is different, but CPJ strongly encourages every journalist to carry out a thorough risk assessment before heading out on any assignment, including an exit strategy and emergency planning. Any risk assessment, but particularly in a situation like this, should encompass not just physical security, but also digital, and psychosocial.

**A Kashmiri newspaper editor was recently murdered on the street in front of his newspaper in Awantipora. The editor, Seyed Bukhari, was known for his moderation, and for his commitment to peace journalism. What message does his murder send to journalists in Kashmir, and elsewhere? Should journalists be discouraged?**

CPJ has been tracking the number of journalists killed for their work annu-

ally since 1992, and has been a leading voice in the fight to end impunity in the murders of journalists around the globe. When a journalist is murdered in retaliation for their work - as Bukhari was- not only is it a devastating loss, for the journalist's family, their community and for the public as a whole, but it also can have a chilling effect on other journalists.



Journalists Under Threat

If journalists are sent the message that the price for a piece of critical reporting could be death, in addition to concerns about safety, there are real concerns about self-censorship, and the stories that go unpublished and unreported as a result.

Feeling discouraged would be understandable - the stakes are high and there has arguably never been a more dangerous time to be a journalist. But journalists provide a public service, and they do the important work of safeguarding democracy, and among the most inspiring things about them, is their dedication to getting the story out. In face of attacks on the press, it is all the more important that journalists continue to speak truth to power.

## Profile: Committee to Protect Journalists

### What they do

The Committee to Protect Journalists is an independent, nonprofit organization that promotes press freedom worldwide. We defend the right of journalists to report the news without fear of reprisal.

### Who they are

CPJ is made up of about 40 experts around the world, with headquarters in New York City. When press freedom violations occur, CPJ mobilizes a network of correspondents who report and take action on behalf of those targeted.

CPJ reports on violations in repressive countries, conflict zones, and established democracies alike. A board of prominent journalists from around the world helps guide CPJ's activities.

### How they protect journalists

CPJ's work is based on its research, which provides a global snapshot of obstructions to a free press worldwide. CPJ's research staff documents hundreds of attack on the press each year.





# Does practicing PJ enhance safety of reporters?

By Steven Youngblood

As part of three peace journalism workshops in Cameroon in July (see page 20 for details), participating journalists filled out a survey that asked them to rank the threats they face from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest threat level. 66 journalists completed the survey--31 from the northwest region, 15 from the southwest region, and 20 combined from seven other regions.

For background, there is currently anti-government violence in the Anglophone northwest and southwest regions, where separatists have declared a new country called Ambazonia. Cameroon’s Francophone regions remain peaceful.

One intriguing finding was that reporters from every region said they were safer, or felt safer, if they were practicing peace journalism. This feeling of safety applied whether they

considered threats from government or threats from separatists. The safety advantage of peace journalists was especially pronounced in the conflict regions of the northwest and southwest. See chart.

Why do they feel safer practicing peace journalism? Journalists said peace journalism’s characteristics (balance, objectivity, neutrality, non-inflammatory, giving voice to the voiceless) will help insulate them from threatening officials and rebels.

Not surprisingly, journalists in the conflict regions (northwest, southwest) believed they were under more severe threats from both government and separatists fighting the government. In six other regions combined, the average threat level perceived by journalists was much lower from both government and separatists. Journalists from all regions rated the threat level from opposition politicians as very low.

The surveys were administered at three July seminars in Bonaberi, Ba-foussam, and Douala.

## Safety-Traditional journalists vs. peace journalists

Based on survey of journalists in violent regions (northwest, southwest Cameroon ). Survey used 1-5 scale, with 5 being the most severe threat.

### Risks from Officials/Police

	Threats/intimidation	Arrest	Violence
Journalists	4.19	4.03	3.1
Peace Journalists	2.62	2.37	2.45

### Risks from Separatists/Rebels

	Threats/intimidation	Kidnapping	Violence
Journalists	3.82	2.89	2.95
Peace Journalists	2.89	2.55	2.54

## Journalists share stories of brutality, victimization

*Editor’s Note: During three recent seminars in Cameroon, journalists were asked to share their stories about threats, violence, and intimidation they have suffered. For their own safety, names and media outlets have been redacted. These are their stories.*

“I have been called up for questioning on information that I might have been an accomplice to spreading propaganda on social media that threatens some journalists and elites in our city, simply because I have very close relations to a person they accused...of publishing the photos.”

“There is a colleague of mine named (redacted) who is presently at the

Bamenda Central Prison awaiting trial because he was caught taking images at the scene of an uprising. He risks being jailed because he was doing his job. In this light, we see violence.”

“Several journalists have been arrested, detained, and some later released, while others are tried and jailed for reporting the crisis racking the NW and SW regions. Similarly, some media houses and journalists have received social media threats from separatists. (The journalists) attempted to be balanced in debunking the position of separatists in the crisis.”

“I know of a journalist (redacted) working in a community radio..in an Anglo-phone area where men have been fight-

ing since February. He was shot in his house by separatist fighter in a village called (redacted). They accused him of biased communication intended to run down their activities. He was shot in the leg but survived because he was rushed to the hospital.”

“I know of a colleague who was severely beaten up by police because he was taking images of the dead streets (city streets emptied out during a general strike) in Bamenda, northwest region. His camera was completely destroyed and he incurred some bruises from the beatings he received. At the end of the day nothing was done to sanction the police

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*In August, Sky-FM, a community radio station in northwest Cameroon, was destroyed by an arson attack. The station manager believes they were targeted by rebels for supporting a supposedly pro-government back to school program.*

## Stories from Pg 8

officers who carried out that act.”

“I have been a victim of police brutality. It was on (date redacted) when some government officials wanted to do a unity march in Bamenda against the wishes of a majority of the population who felt marginalized and not a part of the unity. As a press person taking images for the news, I was seen as a threat given that security forces were beating those who were arrested. I was also beaten alongside them but was not arrested.”

“Most often when I post peace write ups on Facebook I get a lot of comments that are not comfortable... Separatist messages like, “you have been bought out (bribed).”

“I have experienced threats and intimidation from local leaders whom I questioned their accountability to the public.”



Journalists Under Threat

“A colleague of mine with whom I had worked for 16 years was picked up and charged with terrorism because he wanted his voice to be heard...The colleague raised a concern about the poor state of roads and electricity, and ended up being called a terrorist...Journalists, and most specifically those in the private sector, are at risk as they do their work.”

“...When you report the facts, you are not free from the government. For instance, one of our colleagues in Bamenda and many others elsewhere are in detention for what they saw and reported even with evi-

dence. I recently witnessed a military man molesting (beating) some citizens, and when I reported what I saw on our radio, I was seriously threatened and the radio station almost shut down.”

A colleague with (redacted) radio is currently behind bars for practicing his profession. He risks heavy jail term if found guilty. Another has already

been slammed 15 years in prison for decrying the backward and nasty nature of the way that the city of (redacted) is being managed.”

“I broadcast the interview of an opposition activist on the radio and received severe threats from the government officials who threatened to close the radio and even arrest me.”

“(After broadcasting a story originally sent to our radio station about parents sending their children back to school), a mixed team of uniformed officers and local and state officials stormed the radio station and sealed its doors.

My colleague who played the program and me that anchored it went on the run out of (city). For over three months I was in hiding. The radio was only reopened the month after. In addition to hosting the program, I was wanted for propagation of false information.”

Stories collected July, 2018.



# Polarized media challenge PJ in Zimbabwe

By Allen Munoriyarwa

Zimbabwe, a southern African country, has had seven national elections and one constitutional referendum in a space of 18 years since the turn of the century. This translates to a major election about every three years. What stands out with these elections is that they have been judged by many observers as violent, unfree, and unfair. Even the most recent elections of July 2018 were visited by post-election violence that claimed about seven people.

There is not much literature about peace journalism in Zimbabwe, at a time when the practise should assume legendary importance considering the prevalence of election violence. Budding research (Chari 2014 and Munoriyarwa in progress) has found that the mainstream is too ideologically polarised to be conduits of peace.

Firstly, it should be noted that the country has about 6 radio stations, of which 4 are public-owned, and 8 major newspapers which are tightly controlled by the ruling party ZANU PF, a party that is generally recognised as the main instigator and perpetrator of electoral violence. The country has one television station, which is public-owned and equally reflects ruling ZANU PF ideology.

Chari noted that the mainstream media in Zimbabwe do not operate in public sphere platforms, but instead are conduits of propaganda and act like campaign posters during elections.

**Allen Munoriyarwa** is a Doctoral candidate in the Department of Journalism, Film and Television at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa. His research interests are in political violence and peace journalism.



If the mainstream media is hopelessly polarised and fractured along political party line, how best can peace journalism be practised in the country?

The three past elections in the country (the 2018, 2013, and 2018) were particularly dominated by both physical violence and violent news rhetoric. I note that over the years, Zimbabwe's elections have been haunted by a progressive decline in civility.

This decline in civility has been a consequence of two major factors, in my opinion. The first and most important one being the nature of political competition in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's main political parties, the ruling ZANU PF and the opposition MDC, see each other as mortal enemies instead of legitimate competitors. The second one feeds from the first: as a consequence of this enmity, the political environment has polarised the media climate, with mainstream media aligning themselves to either of these warring political parties.

The media, especially the newspaper press, which is more pluralistic than

broadcasting, have failed to play a constructive role in quelling election violence. There is an overt obsession with demonising headlines that represent supporters of each of the parties as worthy of the violence they receive. Opponents are also demonized by calling them non-Zimbabweans. For example, the public-owned newspaper, *The Sunday Mail*, refers to opposition MDC supporters as "running dogs of imperialism." In some instances, they propose getting rid of "the sycophants of the white men."

In one notorious headline in 2008, the paper had a headline, "Strike fear in the heart of the white men, our real enemy." Surprisingly, media and journalism scholarship in Zimbabwe is largely silent about the need for a solution, like peace journalism, to quell hate speech and inflammatory rhetoric in the Zimbabwean media.

Most scholars of the media in Zimbabwe seem to share an agreement that violent rhetoric is a consequence of politicians' not-less-subtle grip, especially of the public media. As long as ZANU PF government controls and uses the state media for its political gains, Zimbabwe will have to get used to hate speech, demonising labels, and "us and them news binaries."

Instead of the status quo, I propose a model of election violence reporting that the press in Zimbabwe can adopt. This model takes into cognisance the three peculiarities of the media context in Zimbabwe – one of which is that there are more public – owned media in the country than private owned. The other being that there are many community newspapers in the country, too. The third one is that most of the journalists in the country are trained in local institutions.

I propose that the potentially robust power of the community press be

Continued on next page

[www.park.edu/peacecenter](http://www.park.edu/peacecenter)

## Zimbabwe *from Pg 10*

harnessed for peace journalism. Each of Zimbabwe's 10 provinces has a public-owned community newspaper under the entity NewZiana. These community newspapers are relevant as first-hand accounts of the violence within their immediate communities. But they do not end there.

Because they serve a particular community, they can exert their influence on the course of events by practising peace journalism. Excluded communities who most of the times are the victims of election violence can be empowered by this bottom-up approach to reporting election violence, which allows them to provide the news on what is transpiring within their communities. This would empower victims to act as senders of news and, possibly, resist the propaganda of the elite

**I propose that the robust power of the community press be harnessed for peace journalism.**

politicians and urban-based mainstream newspapers about their experiences.

A good example is *The Hindustan Times* in New Delhi. In 1974,

it adopted a village and wrote weekly stories about issues and concerns raised by this community. The result was a heightened awareness of that community's problems by residents who read the newspaper, and a willingness to engage with the problems at communal levels.

By harnessing the power of the community press, the intention is to focus on election violence within specific communities. More focused community reporting can refocus the subject of election violence back on the community's agenda, possibly forcing local policy makers to act, encouraging change and reforms.

Blanks (1996:1) notes that news

Vol 7, No 2



Journalists attend an election reporting workshop in the city of Kadoma, west of Zimbabwe's capital city, Harare.

reports on conflicts and violence in community newspapers can contribute immensely "to the creation and maintenance of the community's stability and its adjustment to change in the large social environment." Community newspapers can be influential in intervening against issues that the particular community view negatively. In their study of a rural Kentucky community newspaper, Hahn et al find out that the newspaper was able to advocate against high levels of adult smoking, which was the highest in the USA, standing at 31,8%. They note that a community newspaper can increase the frequency of coverage of the issue, heighten the prominence of the issue in the news, seek the opinions of influential community leaders adopt advocacy strategies tailor-made to curtail the undesired behaviour. After all, community newspapers should reflect the content related to the community's conditions.

In this model, Zimbabwe's community press will be utilised for the purpose of peace journalism so that it reflects the unique experiences of particular communities vis-a-vis election violence. In the process, the community press will point out the unique needs of that community as well as its peculiar past failures and accomplishments in relation to combating election violence.

However, the Zimbabwean community press, like its mainstream public-owned cousins, still reflect ZANU PF ideology. They are still vulnerable content-wise, to covering events happening outside their communities. This compromises what I call their

"community-ness."

Secondly, local communities in Zimbabwe have no control over these newspapers like in other countries, the USA, for example (Hahn et al 2104). Consequently, these communities have not even resisted the dominance of "non-community" content in their newspapers. Perhaps they are accustomed to seeing "their" community newspaper reflecting dominant national politics instead of local issues. Yet election violence in Zimbabwe usually is a reflection of local power dynamics which a community press should focus on more.

Thus, integrating Zimbabwe's community newspapers into the service of peace journalism as proposed here would mean altering their long-entrenched habits of covering broader national politics at the expense of community issues, and redefine their focus to a community orientation. This should be their role anyway!

Other attendant dangers or roadblocks include the limited financial muscle of the community press, small and less trained staff, and also the fact that few highly qualified journalists would want to work for a community newspaper in Zimbabwe in their present state.

These factors may stand in the way of harnessing the power of the community press for peace journalism. But if well-resourced and tilted away from dominant ruling party politics, the dormant potential of the community press can be useful in implementing peace journalism.

Zimbabweans line up to vote in 2018 in Harare, the capital.







**Peace News Network Mission:**

International news today is driven by sensationalism. From conflict zones, we hear stories about killings, bombings, and the views of violent extremists. This type of coverage tends to inflame passions and perpetuate negative stereotypes, fueling distrust

and violence.

Peace News Network aims to present the other side – stories from conflict zones we often don’t hear. Our stories are about people taking risks for peace. We highlight the opinions of ordinary people who want non-violent solutions to their political differences.

Our stories aren’t always about shootings and explosions, but they do tell you stories from war zones that hopefully go some way towards building trust and reconciliation.

For more, see:  
<https://www.peacenews.com/>

South Sudanese journalists attend a workshop about objective reporting in Kampala, Uganda.



# Inflammatory media fuels South Sudan violence

By Ochan Hannington, Peace News Network

Inflammatory media online have been blamed for contributing to South Sudan’s civil war, which has been ongoing for five years now and has claimed up to 300,000 lives. Now several organizations have banded together to host workshops on the ground to teach local journalists about the importance of reporting objectively.

The Network of South Sudanese Civil Society Organizations recently completed a training session in Kampala, Uganda, where many South Sudanese journalists have fled.

“The conflict in South Sudan began as a political conflict,” said Tito Anthony from the Network of South Sudanese Civil Society Organizations.

“It went beyond a political crisis, it went beyond a crisis of

personality, which is Riek Machar and Salva Kiir, it has gone to a bigger...tribal issue between the Nuer and the Dinka.”

“If journalists remain, in South Sudanese especially, if they remain in that ideology it will influence whatever they do, even their writing. We feel like because they are the messengers, they are the people who spread the message, we should also remind them to keep focus, focus on their work, the accuracy, the non-partisanship and not allow other factors to influence their work.”

Sharlotte Ainebyoona Kigezo from Platform Africa was one of the facilitators at the training and said online media has played a big part in the conflict. “From my view, and the trainings I do as a facilitator, social media that has been juiced up by prejudice and hate has elevated the current crisis that’s going on in South Sudan,” she said.

“And that’s why as an organization we picked that direction, to see healing in South Sudan.”

Twenty-five participants attended the training in May, where they learned about prejudice and hate speech mitigation. Ms Kigezo said part of training involved clearly defining hate speech as communication that “denigrates

Continued on next page



# Can social media, online tech build peace?

By Mahnoz Jonmahmadova, Peace News Network

Can online technology and social media help build peace? Experts gathered in Washington DC earlier this year for a summit by PeaceTech Lab (created by the United States Institute for Peace) to investigate how tech is being used, and can be developed, to advance peace.

“This conference, powering peace tech, is really meant to first celebrate the power of technology for helping to prevent conflict and save lives,” said PeaceTech Lab CEO Sheldon Himelfarb.

Leaders from tech giants such as Facebook and Google attended, as well as founders of online technology, to share their insights on the impact of technology in conflict regions and in the peacebuilding field.

Google’s chief Internet evangelist Vinton G. Cerf, known as the ‘father of the internet’ said that while the internet has turned out to be an “extraordinary and global phenomenon”, not everyone online has everyone else’s “best interests at heart.”

“So we’re seeing this essentially neutral platform being abused in the form of fake news, and other kinds of abuse that takes place, whether it’s fraud or bullying or all the

## S. Sudan from Pg 12

people on the basis of their membership of a particular group. This may include a form of expression such as image, play, or songs as well as speech,” she said.

“When you notice hate speech on social media we have three ways to [approach] it. Number one you can either ignore, or number two you can engage in conversation, and then number three, which is the final [approach]: You report. All social media platforms give us the ability to be able to report anything we consider hate speech, anything we consider offensive, anything we consider insulting.”

Freelance journalist Daniel Paul participated in the training and said he will be putting his new skills to good use. “The knowledge I’ve gained here, I’ll be using it in mitigating hate speech on social media by digging deep - whenever



**Mahnoz Jonmahmadova** is freelance journalist and video editor for Peace News Network, based in Washinton DC.

other kinds of things that happen, distribution of malware, hacking - I mean, there’s long list here,” Cerf said.

Social media platforms, gaming, and online technology have also been blamed for causing or fueling violence but IBM veteran and chairman of PeaceTech Lab Nicholas Donofrio advised participants not to despair. “We can do it right, as we go forward,” Donofrio said. “I absolutely believe in us, collectively, and I believe it will be a much better future.”

According to their research, Facebook’s VP of Global Public Policy Joel Kaplan said people’s well-being depends more on what people do online, rather than how much time they spend at a computer. “So, how you spend your time on Facebook is more important that exactly how much time you spend, so we’ve committed to trying to make the time spent on Facebook as positive for people and their

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In Kampala, South Sudanese journalists hear about the role of social media in fueling their country’s conflict.

I get information I have to dig deep to know the source of that information. And also I have to see that this information, will it really bring change in my community, in my community, in my society? Or it will bring division in the community.”



# Spaces of War, War of Spaces teaches valuable lessons

By Giuliana Tiripelli

Last May I attended the conference Spaces of War, War of Spaces, organised in occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the journal's Media War & Conflict (<http://www.warandmedia.org/spacesofwar/>). This conference was a rare opportunity for experts and practitioners working with media and conflict to meet and discuss how media spaces affect the context of conflicts, and how actors involved in conflicts try shaping media spaces to

**Giuliana Tiripelli** is the Associate Editor for Political Communications at the University of Sheffield (UK). She carried out her doctoral research at the Glasgow University Media Group of social change, and is the author of "Media and Peace in the Middle East."



affect conflict contexts.

The conference took place in wonderful Florence and roughly 25 years from the Oslo agreement. Being Florence is also my home town, I decided to talk about the origins on my research interest in peace in the Middle East (see Media and Peace in the Middle East, 2016 <https://www.palgrave.com/in/book/9781137504005>). I also took it as an opportunity to reflect on new directions that could be useful to make research about journalism and conflict transformation more cogent and mainstream.

As in any good conference, the best ideas about progressing research were inspired by engagement and exchange with other disciplines. Of particular importance for advancing journalism as a tool for social change is the concept of "strategic narratives", which was widely mentioned at the conference and is abundantly used in the field of international relations

and Political Studies. Strategic narratives are the tools for political actors to make an impact and "extend their influence, manage expectations, and change the discursive environment in which they operate (Miskimmon et al 2013: 2)."

Although Peace Journalism is not interest linked and does not advocate for influencing citizens' beliefs for specific political interests, it is principle linked and as such it still aims to change the discursive environment by offering deeper and wider representations of the societies involved in political, social, or economic conflicts. In the digital age, it has become very important for Peace Journalism scholarship to explore the strategic dimensions of communication. This is because Peace Journalism should be equipped to counter the current strategic approaches to communication that many of the papers presented in

Continued on next page

## From the Peace News Network



### Online peace from Pg 13

health as possible."

What tech is being used for peace, and how individuals can contribute? Emerging initiatives were demonstrated at the conference, from gold-colored portals that connect citizens across the world, IT campaigns that battle hate speech online, to data being used as an early warning system.



At a summit in Washington, participants discuss how technology is, and can be, utilized to advance peace. (Photos by Peace Tech Lab)

"Individuals can really contribute by learning as much as possible," said Creative Development Lab's Giselle Lopez.

"About the kind of work that is being done both in the peacebuilding space, and not just on a positive level but what are some of the challenges that peacebuilding organizations have that potentially technology can play a role in helping to address," she added.



[www.park.edu/peacecenter](http://www.park.edu/peacecenter)



Participants discuss how media affects conflict at "Spaces of War, War of Spaces" in May in Italy.

### Spaces from Pg 14

Florence focused on (i.e. fake news, Cambridge Analytica).

However, the term "strategic narratives" is still used in unclear ways in research. Among the many interesting contributions of the conference, the talk by Andrea Catanzaro (<http://www.dispo.unige.it/rubrica/andrea-catanzaro>) & Fabrizio Coticchia (<http://www.fabriziocoticchia.com/>) examined the variety of meanings that research had assigned to the concept of "strategic narratives."

The two researchers also talked about the need to distinguish "strategic narratives" from "frames," a concept used in Media Studies to point to ways of organising content that can affect meanings and interpretations. Their paper aimed at making order in concepts used to investigate commu-

nication dynamics and power issues, to offer stable analytical tools for the fruitful collaboration among disciplines.

A clearer and interdisciplinary approach to the strategic elements of communication may help to investigate the outcomes of interest linked interventions by political forces involved in conflicts, but it may also prove useful for measuring and improving the effectiveness of principle linked interventions in the current multimedia and digital context. What Peace Journalism could bring to this debate is help in understanding how strategic narratives could become tools to shape peaceful societies.

Finally, there is a strong need for a debate about the nature of the impact that researchers in media and communication want to make. In the British context, pressure is now on

producing and measuring impact, while there is much less debate about defining the kind of change that should be promoted by research. This calls for open discussions on normativity, which is at the roots of Peace Journalism practices and research.

The involvement of Peace Journalism experts in interdisciplinary knowledge exchange can help seeing research as part of a wider strategy for principle linked social change. This approach may help at such a crucial time, when researchers need to be smarter than their politicians in producing impact that enhances opportunities to peace and fairness in society.

References:  
Miskimmon A., O'Loughlin B., Roselle L. (2013) *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order*, Routledge Studies in Global Information, Politics and Society, Taylor and Francis.



# Trip for peace changes dialogue from war to peace

By Susan Beaver Thompson

Since 2013, I've called myself a mobile peace journalist. Back then, I had reached the point of no return. I was tired of sitting around thinking about how to help bring peace building to the forefront of public discussion. I knew I needed to get up and make it happen through my ideas, writing and actions.

I'd like to share a bit about what I've learned about peace and peace journalism over the last five years on this amazing, super-challenging inner and outer journey.

## Peace Is An Inside Job

In my 2014 piece "Confessions of a Peace Journalist," I admitted that in 2013 after taking to the road to host Peace Conferences of the People across America, I was not yet embodying what I was espousing. I learned that peace is an inside job. As A.J. Muste writes, "There is no way to peace. Peace is the way."

If I wasn't being real, wasn't being respectful in the words I chose – in person, in my writing, and on social media – I was a hypocrite. Only by modeling true collaboration and employing nonviolent communication principles in my daily interactions and my writing can I say that the deep reservoir from which I wrote then – and write now – brings forth all the best that lies within me.

I discovered that to be a peace journalist means to be peace, to live it and



The National Civil Rights Museum in Washington was one of Thompson's stops.

write from that perspective. No more "us" vs. "them". No more name calling or labels. No more judgments, inwardly or out loud. No more thinking that those who believe that waging war is the best way to prevent war are my enemies. Rather than succumbing to the words and ideas of some polarized back and forth partisan debate (with many of the words already chosen for us), I learned we can simply listen and remain open. In this way, we begin to change the dialogue.

## Modeling True Civil Dialogue

What I feel we're missing in the U.S. is true civil discourse. We can recover it on the way to peace. You know, by having those conversations with people with whom we disagree, yet respect enough to find even one common area on which we can move forward together. Famed psychologist Carl Rogers taught this, instructing us

to always view the "other" as an ally.

As a teacher, I encouraged my students along the same lines. In writing, it's unrealistic to expect that those who oppose ideas within my articles will do a 180 degree turn once they've read them. In the end, if even a few readers are moved in their thinking because I've been real with them, I've succeeded. The goal is not winning, it's opening minds, it's collaborating on paper, online and in person. It's acknowledging that we're all seeds and that incremental change is okay. Maintaining that perspective is also how I remain hopeful as a peace journalist in a world that sometimes seems hellbent on war.

I believe we need to get back to the basics, refraining from writing the easy piece with the pat answers. Using a solutions journalism approach, we can present the facts from as many valid, divergent perspectives as possible, showing the ugliness and beauty of a situation without making anyone a hero or a villain. I seek to be a 360 degree thinker and journalist, who with head and heart communicates both the complexities and the hope in any situation. Patterned after Hunter

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The artwork that Susan Beaver Thompson uses to publicize her peace trip.

## Peace trip from Pg 16

S. Thompson, I like to think we are the Gonzo peace journalists of our time.

## A Peace Journalism Trek Across America

So, in March 2018, I set out again on a new peace journalism experiment across America. I established a website at [www.TripForPeace.com](http://www.TripForPeace.com) and took to social media, traveling 16 states interviewing U.S. peacebuilders.

My aim was to help turn the dialogue from war to peace and showcase the many peace projects going in the U.S. that most Americans haven't heard about in the mainstream media. In April, I wrote from the MLK50 Conference in Memphis, getting the awesome opportunity to interview and share insights from some of America's leading peacemakers about how they see Martin Luther King Jr.'s ideas of nonviolence at work in our nation today. Each interview is indeed a life lesson.

In May, I attended a weekend seminar at the Peace Pentagon in Independence, Virginia entitled "The History and Future of the Peace Movement in America." The speakers were David Swanson, president of WorldBeyondWar.org and Glen T. Martin, president of the World Constitution and Parliament Association (WCPA). It was enlightening to hear their messages and their different approaches to peace, one from a political perspective and the other from a social good/philosophical perspective.

I also got the opportunity to witness the myriad of opinions represented by the peacemakers there, realizing that peacemakers don't always agree. We sometimes end up placing a higher priority on insisting on our own viewpoint rather than dialoging with those who hold different views. As journalists, we're called to balance our own convictions with the convictions of those contained within our work.

## Peace Journalism Here and Abroad

In my travels and attempts to fund my efforts, I saw firsthand that while so many important peace journalism projects are happening in developing, war-torn counties around the world, it's short sided to forget the war of words going on in the U.S., the violence in our own cities, and the enormous U.S. arsenal that sits ready, outnumbering the fire power of many other countries combined.

Whether it be national Peace Journalism fellowships by prestigious U.S.

journalism organizations or opportunities to practice peace journalism in the field, it's just as important to support and fund peace journalism within the United States as it is to venture abroad. Likewise, there's also a real need for peacemakers and peace journalists to collaborate more. We are working toward the same goals.

By practicing non judgment and peace principles in life and in our writing we can initiate changes in our shared consciousness. As peace journalists, you and I have the grand pleasure and responsibility to make a real difference, transforming ourselves in the process. Onward!

USA Today published an article about Susan's 2018 peace journalism journey earlier this year. See:

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/sponsor-story/moonlighting/2018/05/14/rocking-and-rolling-peace/34887627/>



Thompson's travels also took her to the Lorraine Hotel in Memphis, site of MLK's assassination.



After a 20-year career in marketing and community journalism, **Susan Beaver Thompson** is in Las Vegas working on launching GoMOJOBaby!, a mobile journalism business which will provide video, text and live streamed eyewitness news from the field. She is the host of the #PeaceSalon, a weekly global peace discussion on Zoom which will resume this Fall. She continues to publish on [www.TripForPeace.com](http://www.TripForPeace.com) and other platforms. Susan is planning her 2019 peace journalism trip now.



# African leaders analyze PJ in Joburg, Cape Town

By Gloria Laker

Decades after the end of white rule, South Africans are still desirously holding onto peace.

This follows series of colorful peace events in its major cities, Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Cape Town, focused on achieving peace in a lifetime. This year, South Africans celebrated in memories of the centenaries of two icons who dedicated their lives to peace and freedom, Tata Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela and Mama Albertina Nontikelelo Sisulu. One recent initiative built upon their legacies in hopes of ensuring that their efforts will remain etched in citizen's collective memory.

Commemorative events in August kicked off with a peace journalism fellowship for African journalists titled, "African Leaders of Peace Summit." It focused on promoting peace through balanced reporting. This fellowship, co-sponsored by the International Peace Youth Group, was held in both Johannesburg and Cape Town in August.

My presentation on peace reporting with reference to the evolution

of peace journalism in Uganda focused on media strategies in ending the Lord's Resistance Army conflict LRA and peace journalism tools and styles which can be used in reporting violence and conflicts in Africa and to looking beyond news by engaging communities to dialogue.

In a statement, International Peace Youth Group (IPYG) said, "As the media, we have the potential to play a significant role in the establishment of peace in our societies. Therefore, we must take up the responsibility as messengers of peace above conflict."



Other co-sponsors included sHeavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL), and an international NGO under the United Nations Department of Public Information (UN DPI).

I had an exciting experience witnessing hundreds of young and old brave the early morning cold in a very colorful event at Oliver Tambo International Airport to receive Man Hee Lee, celebrated Korean peace messenger and chairman of Heavenly Culture, World Peace, and Restoration of Light (HWPL).

Gloria Laker is the founding director of the Peace Journalism Foundation of East Africa in Kampala, a BBC award recipient, and experienced peace journalism advocate and trainer.



journalism advocate and trainer.

Hours before landing, the ceremonial guards stood still as youth danced with joy while watching his arrival from giant screens at the airport. When he emerged from the plane, an enthusiastic girl began drumming loudly, much to the excitement of people singing and ululating 'we are one.' For a second, I thought the building would come down. Lee passed through the ceremonial guards dressed in white attire and briefly addressed the crowd before making his way out as the crowd followed him. Chairman Lee is an icon in South Africa.



Man Hee Lee

Addressing the high level African Leaders of Peace Summit, Chairman Lee strongly underscored the important roles of women and youth in achieving peace. "When women and women's priorities are placed at the center of peace processes and decision making, the results are more likely to be equitable and sustainable, so let us support and work closely with women and youth to realize peace in Africa," Lee said.

He recognized former Mozambican president Joaquim Chissano Alberto for championing peace in Africa. The summit brought together Southern Africans, government ministries, civil society, youth and media including

Continued on next page

# S. Africa from Pg 18

African heroes of peace and Nobel laureates. The focus was on finding practical solutions to achieving peace in our lifetime.

IPYG media representative Dr. Quinta Joubert, said in a statement, "We have seen that seemingly small efforts lead to great results. Let us continue to work together so that all wars and conflicts will finally cease as the culture of peace spreads across the world."

Attendees then signed a declaration for peace and cessation of war in Africa. Valuing the roles of the media, Chairman Lee handed certificates of appointment to 20 African journalists to work as peace publicity ambassadors for HWPL in their countries-- a good gesture in peace efforts.

Peace journalists from eleven coun-



At the African peace leaders summit, Cindy Taylor (left), director of Established Africa, confers with Gloria Laker of the Peace Journalism Foundation of East Africa.

tries attended the program. I believe that this effort was timely and a breakthrough in my efforts to create a more peaceful continent through my reporting.

From a peace journalism angle, South Africans holding on to peace can be a lesson for Ugandans to find ways to continue peacebuilding 10 years after the LRA war's conclusion.

## Refugee Online News launches new platform

On September 1, the Peace Journalism Foundation of East Africa launched the Refugee Online News (RON) platform. RON is a collaborative multimedia online news platform highlighting the situation of 1.2 million refugees from seven African countries living in Uganda.

Through this online news platform, founder Gloria Laker encourages writing and publishing articles about the situation of refugees in the various settlement locations including urban refugees in Uganda.

RON's main goal is to 'prevent social and traditional media induced violence' by applying peace journalism styles in reporting about refugees. RON's focus is to cover all issues regarding refugees within and from South Sudan, DR Congo, Burundi, Somalia, Rwanda and Kenya.

RON seeks to:

- Bring out efforts of the different stakeholders in bettering the lives of the refugees, the positive lifestyle of refugees.
- Engage host communities, refugees and those in the diaspora to dialogue on peace and stability in their coun-

tries of origin.

--Report the work of peace makers, humanitarian and Aid agencies.

--Assist refugees to trace and reconnect with lost relatives.

--Provide a forum through which voices of refugees in Uganda and Kenya will be brought out by exiled and resident peace journalists in East Africa and Great Lakes region.



According to its organizers, RON pledges to work closely with stakeholders such as the civil society, non-governmental organizations, and humanitarian and aid agencies who are supporting and working with refugees.

RON also includes a training component that will organize peace journalism trainings about reporting refugees, strengthening collaboration and better reporting of refugees' situations by host journalists without compromising the principles of good journalism.

RON can be found at:  
<https://refugeeonlinenews.wordpress.com/>



Discussing community media (with Alexander Vojvoda, right) and peace journalism (with Steven Youngblood, below) during three July workshops in Cameroon.



## PJ seminars held amid unrest in Cameroon

by Alexander Vojvoda

On 7 October 2018, Presidential Elections will be held in Cameroon. The election is prepared under challenging conditions as violent conflicts between anglophone separatists and security forces in the North-West and South-West regions continue to escalate.

Media houses and journalists see themselves trapped between separatists, military and government. The Cameroon Community Media Network (CCMN) has collaborated with the Center for Global Peace Journal-

**Alexander Vojvoda** is community media activist and holds a MSc in Sociology and a MA in Political Communications. He currently collaborates with a community media network in Cameroon on community-based journalism, community development and conflict-sensitive journalism within the framework of the Civil Peace Service (CPS) Programme.



ism and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Yaoundé on a month-long training-of-trainer workshop series on peace journalism and election reporting for the over 70 members of the peace journalism network.

The initial protests of the anglophone minority in the Cameroonian NW and SW regions against the political, economic, linguistic and social marginalisation by the francophone-dominated Cameroonian central government in Yaoundé have escalated to a violent conflict between armed anglophone secessionist groups and Cameroonian security forces in the last weeks and months.

Cameroonian journalists, especially in the anglophone regions, face difficulties in covering the upcoming Presidential elections in October 2018 as fears of harassment, threats and violence against media houses rise. Especially civilians are fleeing the two English-speaking regions (around 160,000 IDPs according to Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre -IDMC), but also civil society activists and journalists find themselves caught between the lines of the military and the anglophone separatists because of

the way they cover and report on the conflict and the elections. Since 2015 the Cameroon Community Media Network (CCMN) has built capacities in peace journalism and reconciliation journalism within the Cameroonian media. Since June 2018, we've been working on how community media can address the situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of the anglophone conflict.

After last year's cooperation with the Center for Global Peace Journalism and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Yaoundé, during which over 120 journalists were sensitised on issues of election reporting and conflict-sensitive journalism in 4 workshops and 7 in-house trainings, the CCMN has initiated further joint activities on peace journalism and election reporting.

The CCMN decided to hold three training-of-trainer workshops for the members of the peace journalism network in Douala, Bafoussam and Yaoundé from 4 July to 4 August 2018.

"This workshop was a necessity given that the concept of peace journalism

Continued on next page

## Seminars from Pg 20

is still new in Cameroon with limited or no resource persons on site. Prof Steven Youngblood's visit was a great relief as we had first-hand knowledge on peace journalism and election reporting. (The trainings were) heightened with his bank of experience, sharing of success stories around Africa and the world like Ethiopia and South Sudan."

Rosaline Akah Obah, CCMN president of the NW and West chapter, comments on the importance of the 3-day training-of-trainer workshop on peace journalism and election reporting for CCMN NW and West members with Prof Steven Youngblood, Director of the Centre for Global Peace Journalism/US, held in Bafoussam/West region. "Journalists of the network have come to see the difference between conventional journalism and peace journalism, that in any case does not take away any tenets of journalism. Rather it emphasises that good journalism is peaceful journalism," she said.

The results of a risk analysis which



In Bonaberi, seminar participants test stories for PJ content.

has been conducted during the workshop series with members from the NW, SW, West, Littoral and other Cameroonian regions produced interesting findings. The self-assessment from Cameroonian journalists shows that those practicing peace journalism believe that they are at lower risk of becoming victims of violence, harassment or threats from government or separatists in the current conflict. (See page 8 for details).

Rev. Geraldine Fobang, CCMN president SW/Littoral chapter explained at the second workshop held in Douala, "At a time when Cameroon faces multifaceted crisis, further compounded by the uncertain outcome of the Presidential elections on 7 October 2018, Prof. Youngblood's visit was very

apt to strengthen the fragile media landscape. Journalists of the SW, Littoral and other regions gained peace journalism skills to be proactive in reporting in order not to "exacerbate an already dire situation" and minimise media induced violence before, during and after the up-coming elections."

The final 4-day workshop was held at the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Yaoundé and concluded the month-long project with a training-of-trainer workshop with participants from all ten Cameroonian regions.

The main discussion evolved around how to build trainings for colleagues at home media house, reporting on IDPs, peace and reconciliation journalism and the use of social media as a tool for peace journalists.

In addition, the CCMN was welcomed to expand its work to other Cameroonian regions. Especially colleagues from the Grand North region (Extreme-North, North and Adamawa) expressed their interest to build capacities in peace journalism in their sub-region and to form a peace journalism network in the face of the violent conflict with Boko Haram.



At a PJ seminar in Bafoussam, participants chart how they might implement what they've learned.



# MAP marks five years of boosting PJ in Lebanon

By Vanessa Bassil

The Media Association for Peace (MAP) is the first NGO in Lebanon, the Middle East, and North Africa region working on training, advocating, and applying Peace Journalism, while advancing the role of media development field in peacebuilding.

In June 2018 MAP celebrated its 5th anniversary. It is hard to believe that already five years have passed. We are incredibly proud of the work that has been done and the achievements made so far. We are most grateful for our team, volunteers, friends and partners, without whom none of this would have happened.

For us, Peace Journalism is not only about how to deal with and report about conflict, even if that is one of our core tasks, but we also believe that knowing and acting in accordance to human rights, to respect the environment, to not only aim for negative peace (the absence of violence), but positive peace, and to offer training to young Lebanese and international audience are crucial pillars in promoting the spread the concept of peace journalism in the MENA region. This is why we operate with five programs:

First, the Media, Peace and Conflict Program: In 2018 for the seventh



Vanessa Bassil is the Media Association for Peace founder and president. MAP is based in Beirut, Lebanon.



In June, MAP members celebrate the organization's fifth birthday in Beirut.

time, we organize an annual Peace Journalism Workshop which explores, expands and teaches the links between journalism and peace and gives young journalists from Lebanon the knowledge, skills and tools to understand and practice peace journalism. This is year, we offered a 10-day training of trainers on Conflict Sensitive Reporting and created a training manual in Arabic for the ones interested in offering training on this topic.

Second, the Media, Peace and Human Rights Program explores the relationship between peace journalism and human rights. As peace journalists, it is our duty to know and defend those rights for an equal, stable and harmonious society. At MAP, we have a special focus on women's rights and gender equality, as well as we give considerable attention to the role of media in raising awareness and defending the rights of minorities, refugees, LGBTQ and persons with disabilities.

This is why we have cooperated with other regional women's rights NGOs and published a Women's Right Media Toolkit. It provides tools for media actors who want to contribute to and support the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325: Women, Peace and Security.

We have furthermore initiated a

3-phase project revolving around the media's ability to reduce violence and to build bridges of peace and understanding between Syrian refugees and the Lebanese host community. The project included a training workshop, an online magazine, and video stories about Syrian refugees.

Lebanon as country with just over 4 million inhabitants. Per capita, it's taken in more refugees than any other country during the 2015 refugee crisis. As there are already a considerable number of Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, there has been some resentment against refugees.

The project aspires to reduce prejudice, stereotypes, and stigma when it comes to the way one views another through the media—in this case how some Lebanese citizen view Syrian refugees and vice-versa.

Also, this year for the third consecutive time, we are organizing a regional Media, Peace and Human Rights Conference (MPHR) bringing together speakers from the MENA region discussing pressing topics, like the freedom of expression, women's rights, access to information, and digital media.

The third program, Media, Peace and

Continued on next page

## MAP

from Pg 22

Environment, is of utter importance for peace journalism. Unfortunately, here in Lebanon, the protection of the environment is only on very few people's mind. Lebanon's ongoing garbage crisis highlights the problems of environmental mismanagement and the need for sustainable solutions.

This is why we are aiming at increasing the awareness for environmental issues focusing on the emerging concept of "environmental peacebuilding."

After all, how are we supposed to build peace, if we are not even at peace with our environment?



This is why we started a project called Environmental Media, Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation, which included among other activities a National Conference on Media, Peace & the Environment in cooperation with UNDP and the European Union, a four day long Environmental Peace Journalism Training Retreat and a public discussion.

The fourth program, Media, Peace and Development, works on implementing positive peace and explores how media can play a role in improving development locally and globally. True and sustainable peace requires the presence of human rights, a healthy environment, and development. This is why MAP organized a Peace Journalism and Development workshop, training 30 journalists, media students and activists and urging them to consider how their reporting affects development realities.



The last program is called the volunteer and internship program (VIP). Here we offer a chance to young Lebanese and internationals to experience how MAP works on peace journalism.

We offer internship and volunteer programs to interested university students who want to get an insight on NGO work.

We hope that we will keep growing as an institution and advance peace journalism in a region that suffers from continuous conflicts and instability, as well as keep bringing opportunities to young people and young media professionals, all with one aim: "Rewriting Journalism."

For further information about MAP projects and activities, visit our website [maplebanon.org](http://maplebanon.org) or visit our social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter: [map\\_lb](https://www.instagram.com/map_lb). You can also contact us at: [info@maplebanon.org](mailto:info@maplebanon.org).

At the 7th annual MAP peace journalism workshop in Beirut, Lebanon, young journalists learned about the links between media and peace.



## Workshop examines Indian media narratives

*By Chintan Girish Modi*

India is going through a time of tremendous political churning, and the media industry itself has become a battleground for conflicting ideologies. What is worrisome at this moment is the trust deficit I hear in the voices of readers and viewers because a lot of journalism is beginning to sound incendiary, propagandist and utterly crass.

Imagine journalists broadcasting fake news about activists, instigating violence against minority groups, and covering up acts of murder. We have all of it happening in 2018. This scenario is discouraging for journalism students who have gravitated toward this field because they see it as a place for exposing malpractice, highlighting social justice efforts, and speaking truth to power. It is important for advocates of peace journalism like myself to go out there and interact with these students so that they do not lose hope.

On June 25, 2018, the MOP Vaishnav College for Women and the Prajnaya

Trust in Chennai, India, invited me to deliver a talk on peace journalism with a large auditorium full of media students in attendance. They had been briefed about my work focusing on India-Pakistan dialogue, and were keen that I share some anecdotes from the field. I tend to prefer the workshop mode over the lecture method, so I found ways to make the experience more participatory.

We began with a theatre activity that got the students to examine their perceptions about Pakistanis, and the influence of media narratives in shaping these views. It was followed by an exercise wherein students had to imagine that they were part of a delegation of Indian journalists invited to Pakistan who had the freedom to travel anywhere in the country, and pursue any story ideas they wanted. They had to work in pairs, and come up with pitches for newspaper, television and digital media editors.

They came up with a variety of interesting pitches for beats such as politics, sports, travel, arts and culture,

**Chintan Girish Modi** is a peace educator and freelance journalist from India. He has worked with UNESCO,



*Seeds of Peace and Global Zero. His Twitter handle is @chintan\_connect.*

gender, fashion, entertainment, crime, education, and more. Their teachers seemed really proud of them. After this, I shared with them the war journalism versus peace journalism framework created by Johan Galtung, discussed some of the articles I have worked on as a freelance journalist, and also answered their questions about challenges faced by journalists who prefer to highlight non-violent responses to conflict in a media-saturated world that thrives on sensationalism.

I loved their energy, and their openness to what I offered: the premise that journalists can play a constructive role in their societies by amplifying the voices of the marginalized instead of serving as mouthpieces of the powerful, showcasing efforts at conflict resolution and reconciliation, and exposing lies and cover-ups from all regardless of political affiliation.

They wanted to know about the challenges faced by journalists who prioritize peace journalism over war journalism. I gladly shared my experience of not being taken seriously by colleagues at times, and being turned down by editors who think of me as a peacenik floating in la-la land. If you want to work for peace, a sense of humour is incredibly useful to have.

*In June, Chintan Girish Modi discusses PJ at MOP Vaishnav College for Women in Chennai, India.*

