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Review

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THE ROLE OF SECURITY AGENCY SPOKESPERSONS IN CREATING AN INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT

Summary: *One of the main foundations of economic development is investment. When making investment decisions, several factors are considered, but one of the most important is security. The level of security of an investment depends on the security situation in that country. There is a lot of information that can be provided by statistical data to assess how safe a particular country is for investment. Although statistics can sometimes be misleading, the power of the media has a significant influence on creating a security environment. The basic indicators of such narratives are certainly security agencies and their activities, or their indicators of the security situation in a particular country, with their main representatives and creators being spokespersons or information officers of such agencies. Their role is unique and very distinct because they aim to brand and sell their product, which is security in this specific situation. In developing and post-conflict countries, public presentation of security is of great importance to local populations as well as potential investors. The role of security agency spokespersons is of great importance due to the specificity of the work they perform, which is not about formal promotion of a product but has a crucial role in creating a positive image of the country and a secure environment for investment.*

Key words: *spokesperson, security, investment, information, media*

JEL classification: *E2, E29, F5, F52*

INTRODUCTION

Investments represent the basis for developing markets and creating new jobs. They are among the main principles on which the economy of individual countries base, as well as the political campaigns of developing countries, in whose ideas investors are the most desirable partners. Each market has a different type of risk, to which investors are willing, especially when it comes to investing in a foreign market, whose characteristics are risky for any form of business. Countries that are prone to terrorism and in which activities related to it occur, those with higher crime rates, as well as those in which corrupt and criminal activities are common, certainly deter investors, but investors can choose a specific region or micro-location for their business investment. Statistical data is often a set of numbers that reveal little, but daily public information about security aspects in a particular country can provide a framework on which investment will be based, among other things. If the media constantly publish information about the number of criminal activities, it is certain that this will short-term deter investors from investing, however, if we talk about activities taken to prevent them, which is the foundation for an extremely stable security situation, then as such, they favor investors. Security agencies and their spokespersons are the main proactive factor

that has the opportunity to create public opinion every day, talking about positive aspects and the security situation, while taking into account the accuracy of information and their wider context. The attitude of security agencies towards the public creates an image and global security picture of a country, and the role of its basic presentation is precisely the spokesperson - public relations officer.

1. SECURITY AGENCIES AND MEDIA - MUTUAL INTERACTION

The term communication is of Latin origin (Latin *communicare*) which refers to something that is created as general. The exchange of information, ideas, and feelings between people through verbal and nonverbal means in accordance with social circumstances can be simply described as communication (Hymes 1972). The main source of information is the media, and their reports influence the shaping of public opinion. The constant interaction of security agencies with the media and the establishment of quality cooperation aims to create a safe environment and ultimately establish a quality relationship between security agencies, media, and citizens.

Security agencies represent an inexhaustible source of information for modern media, and the main principle on which their public publication is based is regular and accurate information. Although security institutions are often viewed with prejudice, that they are closed or that they give partial or ambiguous information, or that they do not give it at all, two-way communication and transparent access open up the possibility of building trust and improving the image and reputation of security agencies.

The ways of communication of security agencies usually represent classical forms of PR activities in the form of press releases, press conferences, whether it is regular (periodic conferences) or extraordinary (conducting actions, campaigns, emergency situations, etc.) conferences, answering journalists' inquiries, giving statements for radio and television, and appearing in their programs. The leaders of security agencies and their spokespersons are authorized persons for public appearances, with the exception of others for whom the manager gives consent. Each public appearance must be prepared with a wealth of information on the topic being discussed, speaking about the factual situation, and with a clear answer to each question without expressing a personal opinion. The success of public relations largely depends on striking a balance between what is binding and the ability to achieve a certain flexibility when it comes to addressing different groups or recipients of such information (Dozier and Lauzen, 2000).

Questions that are of interest to the public, but whose public disclosure could cause harm or distress to the public, the representative of the security agency authorized to speak publicly is not obliged to explain or offer any answer to it. The line between disclosing information of public interest and the potential negative consequences of such disclosure is often thin. Security agencies are obliged to implement laws regarding public information, primarily laws regarding freedom of access to information, and act in accordance with European legislative frameworks when it comes to cooperation with the media, as well as basic media freedoms.

What was the definition in journalistic discourse that it is not news when a dog bites a man, but the opposite, has become a pattern of behavior in modern journalism. Accidents, scandals, negative news attract the most media attention because, according to all research, they are the most read, watched, and listened to, based on a basic concept that focuses only on such content. Keeping such facts in mind, the focus of majority should not be on journalists, who are often said to be inclined to such news, but it is necessary to know who the recipients of such information are.

The media plays a significant role in public relations, as their positioning is unquestionable, as they serve as a channel to reach the target audience and possess immeasurable power in the speed of transmitting information. Parallel to the changes in the media and communication environment that have occurred as a result of digitization, scholars' focus is shifting towards the role of technology in political processes (Grbeša and Skoko and Bebić 2022, 246).

A practical-critical approach should enable progressiveness in overall social existence due to the exceptional importance of public relations in the social paradigm (Spicer 2000; Woodward 2006). Media relations, like journalism, is an activity that people usually perform professionally for a company, institution, organization, movement, individual, or even an idea. Their job involves a wide range of activities, including monitoring and analysing media content and assessing its impact on relevant groups. They also write texts that promote the organization or topic to the media, create, plan, implement, and evaluate various activities that inform and persuade the public (Verčič and Zavrl and Rijavec and Verčič Tkalac and Laco 2004).

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF SPOKESPERSONS IN SECURITY AGENCIES

Security agencies have their spokesperson whose goal is to articulate the official stance of each individual institution. In addition to professional skills, they must possess specific abilities to effectively perform their tasks. The spokesperson is a person with strong communication skills, speaks concisely, clearly and precisely, and avoids using legal terms, using understandable language that is close to every citizen. In addition to these characteristics, the spokesperson must be calm, with clearly visible empathy and understanding for media workers and their individual requests.

In everyday situations, the spokesperson must be patient with absolute attention to every new situation, even those that could be a precursor to a crisis situation, in order to install security and trust in the citizens through such communication, and to prevent possible escalation of panic or fear. When communicating with the media on a daily basis, it is very important that the spokesperson does not give answers like "no comment", "we have nothing to say about that question", "it is a matter of national security", or similar. Always stick to the facts and tell the truth. In situations where someone still doesn't have an official answer to a question, but it is of public interest, the spokesperson and the security institution are obliged to find it and present it to the public as soon as possible. Being an expert in public relations means having knowledge of both the theory and practice of the institution they represent, as well as understanding the elements of the population being informed (Flynn 2006).

With the development of the public relations profession, spokespersons of security agencies are civilian individuals, mostly graduate journalists, proficient experts and connoisseurs of the circumstances in the security sector or media professionals who have spent most of their work on specific tasks related to the aforementioned field. Therefore, knowledge of the topics and their preparation is of great importance for every spokesperson. When discussing the development of public relations, it is crucial to emphasize the element of persuasiveness when presenting certain arguments. This persuasiveness is undoubtedly achieved through effective public speaking skills (Skerlep 2002).

Through their nonverbal language, way of interpretation, but also messages, the spokesperson conveys information to each of its recipients. The media will interpret such information in their own way, and try to obtain other information, if it concerns specific situations, but the content of what the spokesperson presents will be shown as an official position. If it is a crisis situation or events that could endanger a larger part of the population, the spokesperson, with their appearance, security and manner of articulating views on the current situation, psychologically seeks to calm the population. For this way of expressing views on certain phenomena and their public articulation, the spokesperson must have a multidisciplinary approach to the problem, as well as to have prepared answers about the possible development of the situation, without causing general panic.

3. IMAGE PRESERVATION AND PREVENTION OF PUBLIC UPSET

Creating an image and building security agencies based on modern principles involves building quality communication with the public and developing their image. The work of authorized officials in security agencies is ongoing. Through modern communication channels (social networks, video services, etc.), authorized officials are under constant scrutiny by citizens. Given the specific nature of their job, and the fact that they work in law enforcement, public perception is that they are the ones who must live by the law in both their public and private lives. Considering this, officials are visibly exposed to public photography, filming, and scrutiny of their work.

The modern era and digitization of public space have increased the pressure on authorized officials, especially in situations requiring competent action. Officials, according to their job description, carry out measures and actions within their jurisdiction, based on operational action, but also in accordance with the demands of judicial institutions. The extensive network of video surveillance is ubiquitous in public places, and their tasks are both preventive and security-oriented. The police often use them in the commission of criminal offenses and misdemeanors to identify perpetrators. Through video surveillance, it is possible to determine inappropriate behavior of police officers towards citizens.

The interest of security agencies is to prevent any unforeseen and potentially dangerous situation through quality PR work, within a clearly defined framework resulting from the assessment of social attitudes and interests of the public in such situations. Such PR engagement would prevent public unrest and preserve the agency's identity, image, and reputation.

The framework that implies preventing possible damage and public unrest in a given situation, resulting from the assessment of social attitudes, cannot be a reflection of inaccurate information, in order to further calm the public. Such an illusion can only be temporary, without the possibility of controlling its effects, and if its impact on the public were to last or if its manifestation differed from the attitudes presented by the security agency, it would suffer multiple damages, which are contrary to the basic postulates of PR marketing, thus irreparably damaging its identity, image, and reputation. It is important to make a distinction between the role of PR in crisis communication and the everyday goal of preventing public unrest.

4. INVESTING IN SECURITY UNSTABLE AREAS

The definition of investment is interpreted differently, and the investment often mentioned in everyday situations for political benefits is not considered the same concept used by economists or those directly related to it. In everyday discourse, investing refers to investing money in certain business activities, which does not define any projection, whereas economists consider investing as the creation of capital goods and determine it as such.

The communicators of a nation's brand identity are: branded exports, sports achievements, diaspora, marketing communications, brand ambassadors, cultural artefacts, foreign policy, tourism experience, and prominent personalities (Skoko and Jakopović, and Gluvačević 2018, 414). Using national and global macro financial indicators in combination significantly improves the predictive ability for detecting systemic financial crises. (Tudorescu and Zaharia and Zaharia 2010). In most cases, it is necessary to research and understand various editorial viewpoints on political and economic issues (Hynds 1990).

The security system of a country depends on its economy, which is dependent on many factors that are not only related to the political framework but also to society, education, culture, and even sports and international relations. Countries that can be considered economically stable do not have a greater need for investment, yet they are still dependent on other countries with which they have a quality economic cooperation.

Global financial flows open up opportunities for institutional investors seeking profit and long-term competitive market positions, thereby expanding financial activities that also relate to risky investments, while ignoring indicators of their safety.

The disadvantages of investments in certain countries also undermine the security system, so it can be considered that investment investments in a country are to some extent proportional to its security, and their direct connection is evident. With the development of modern security capacities, protection, prevention, infrastructure protection, and others, countries that cannot financially follow information technology security systems and modernize them, and do not have the ability to obtain them, cannot be considered security-stable areas in the modern world. The three categories of non-state actors in international relations are intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and multinational corporations, and their role on the international stage complements the role of states in establishing peace, stability, and respect for just principles (Jolić 2019, 715).

Multinational corporations operate with the aim of profit acquisition, and their approach involves direct engagement with political leadership in specific countries. Through investments, they pursue their ultimate goals by directly influencing their socio-political conditions, often through financial means. Corporations that demonstrate social responsibility are considered positive, and their economic power arises as a result of their business policies (David, Kline, & Dai 2005).

Due to the constant increase in the importance of destination branding, numerous institutions around the world are trying to "measure" the strength - or popularity - of individual countries as brands (Skoko 2017, 13).

CONCLUSION

Taking into account the investment foundations, ways of earning multinational companies, and at the same time observing the security situation of a country, we can conclude that insufficient media openness of certain countries greatly reduces the space for investment. Post-conflict societies, despite having very unfavourable conditions and always present security risks, attract foreign investors through media openness. The agenda of countries, whose financial flows are reflected in tourism, is certainly creating a brand for such a country, through advertisements, natural resources, opportunities, but also presenting the security situation.

A television commercial in which smiling citizens, usually families, walk through a city or tourist destination visualizes the security of such a place. Tourist destinations have different rules when it comes to local communities, which apply during the tourist season, but outside of it. Begging, thefts, and scams become priority problems for local police in the pre-season period, and completely removing or creating the illusion of police work is the top priority.

Since investments almost always have a correlation with risk, it is statistically unreliable to look at figures related to the total number of crimes in a particular country. The approximate nature of such information is a set of unencumbered numbers that do not contain clear indicators of the number of crimes, perpetrators, and judicial processes. Most investors, through their representatives, in most cases the embassies of their countries, obtain information about security through the media.

Media analysts in such institutions are precisely responsible for informing about the security situation of a state, based on which official information (rarely available to the public) about the security situation of a state is created. Large corporations use such data to make decisions about possible investments.

Security agencies create various activities to prevent and prevent crime, involving a large number of citizens, institutions, international representatives, and through this pattern determine their duties and obligations in establishing a stable security policy. In this process, the main protagonists are spokespersons who, with their skills, quality cooperation with the media and other organizations, publish such activities, give them importance, and use every opportunity to speak about them officially. A quality spokesperson uses all types of communication channels to inform the public, successfully creates public opinion, affirms events through international institutions, and thus successfully sells his "product". A successful spokesperson for a security agency at a high level gives citizens security and potential investors a secure environment.

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