

**Mostar – One City?**  
**An attempt to unite a divided city**  
(running title: Mostar)

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## INTRODUCTION

In this paper the author examines a case of nation-building in post-war Bosnia. In Early 2004 the international government (Office of the High Representative, OHR) of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia) started the “Mostar – One City” Campaign. This campaign was aimed to assist the unification of the between Croats and Bosniaks divided city administration. The campaign's primary public was the cities' inhabitants. Different stages of campaign lasted until March. In July 2004 a symbolic unification was done with the finishing of the ‘Stari Most’, the old bridge. Because of its special construction Stari Most is part of the UNESCO world heritage. Public relations of the OHR in this case dealt not only with an multiethnic and therefore multicultural public in the city itself, but also with a international audience scrutinizing the results of the government's attempts to reunite the city.

Mostar signifies the problems of the region condensed into a small city. Rebuilding the ancient bridge ‘Stari Most’ across the river Neretva has therefore been a symbol of great concern for the nation-building efforts in Bosnia. Therefore the event has found thick media coverage in many countries all over the world. This paper uses this media coverage, OHR campaign material and material on the reopening event of the bridge to conduct a case study. The goal is to find out, whether public relations were used appropriate for the situation and the requirements of nation-building.

The paper starts out with background information about Bosnia and Mostar. Following that I will focus on nation-building in general to get more specific on that topic in the next two sections. After literature on nation-building in Bosnia and Mostar has been reviewed, the primary sources are explained and in the findings and discussion is done in specific section for each type of used sources, newspaper articles, campaign material and the opening event speech. In a last step the results are combined and a comprehensive overview is given so that conclusions can be drawn.

## BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Starting in 1992 and ending in 1995, Bosnia has been shattered by a cruel and inhuman war with the highest number of ethnic cleansing in Europe since World War II. The three

main ethnic groups – Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks<sup>1</sup> – in Yugoslavia fought each other when various differences broke up during the post communistic transformation of former Yugoslavia.

In November 1995, the Dayton Peace Agreement ended the fighting and brought a very complicated institutional structure to work in Bosnia. This framework gives incentives for separatism within Bosnia's borders (McMahon, 2004). The four million inhabitants state consists of two entities, the *Republika Srpska* and the *Bosniak-Croat Federation*. Their powers go as far as to establish independent foreign policies. There are also three national parties in the state. The international community implemented a complicated system of minority representation and vetoes to guarantee checks and balances between the ethnics (CIA, 2008). This results in an incapability of the state to react and the different ethnics are blocking each other's efforts. Identity is shifted towards the two smaller entities, because they represent the ethnics better and are more powerful (McMahon, 2004). This results in something one could call a 'sub-state nationalism'. The *Bosniak-Croat Federation* is further divided in the two ethnics of Bosniaks and Croats.

Until today, the international community remains present with military forces on the one hand and an administrative body – the Office of the High Representative or OHR in short – on the other hand. The latter has the supreme regulatory power in the nation. The High Representative is able to pass laws or refuse them and to withdraw elected politicians from their positions if they act nationalistic in favour of a single ethnic's causes.

#### THE CITY OF MOSTAR

The city of Mostar has been a major theatre of war for the fights between Croats and Bosniaks. Even after the war, Mostar stayed a challenged place with riots going on as late as 2001. The works of the international NATO troops occupying the country and the international administration in the city have therefore been one of the most difficult. One of the main reasons is that the ethnic separation in the *Bosniak-Croat Federation* is exemplified in the city of Mostar. Until 2004 the cities administration was divided along these ethnic lines. The cities government structure creates threats to a consistent national identity. In 2004, the OHR forced the administration to merge and run a public relations

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<sup>1</sup> 'Bosniaks' refers to the ethnic Muslims in Bosnia, whereas 'Bosnians' refers to all citizens regardless of ethnicity. Often, this group is instead named Muslim Bosnians. I will avoid this term for political correctness.

campaign complementing these changes to get commitment by all citizens regardless of ethnicity.

During the war, a major national Bosnian symbol had been destroyed: the centuries old bridge 'Stari Most'. This event grew to a symbol of the war and the separation of the different ethnicities in the state. On July 23, 2004, only shortly after the reunification of the Mostar administration, the bridge was finally completely rebuilt by the international community and opened again.

## NATION BUILDING

Nation building can be defined as "the process by which 'diverse societies, regions, and groups within a country are linked in to a national-state system'" (Morrison, 1989, cited with Taylor, 2000b, p. 185). According to Taylor (2000b), nation-building consists mostly of institution-building, but there are also support functions of the civil society. Communication can be effective on both levels, because mediated communication can build interpersonal and national relationships. Talentino's (2004, p. 559) definition adds the identity-building aspect: "'Nation-building' is the process of creating a stable, centralised, and cohesive state that represents a definable community". The nation-state combines administrative function and shared identity into one unit and is often connected to democracy (Talentino, 2004).

Talentino also argues that nation-building, if aimed to rebuild a collapsed nation-state, consists of two aspects that need to be applied together: state-building and identity-building. The former is implemented by external actors and concentrates on institution-building and the latter is an internal process, promoted by grassroots within the state. Identity-building gives the nation a shared civic identity and sense of community.

When considering the role of public relations in nation-building, according to Talentino, the efforts for state-building are done top-down and with few personal communications, the bottom-up building of identity involves considerably more direct interaction and more participative two-way communication. Still, the background of functioning state institutions needs to be communicated transparently and accountably. Furthermore, it is important to stress benefits of inter-group relations.

From a public relations perspective, nation-building is frequently understood as a three-step process, consisting of nation-building, market development, and regional

interdependence (Freitag, 2004; Freitag & Stokes, in press, Chapter 3). Starting with the building of a democratic nation, a free market is developed and fostered through public relations and this and increased communication again proves beneficial for regional interdependence. This interdependence then prevents further conflicts in the region. However, as the Bosnia case shows (Talentino, 2004), this might prove to be more of a Western ideological fantasy than a real world model. Freitag and Stokes (in press, Chapter 3) argue that international public relations can't just follow the U.S. excellence model but regional social, political, and economic circumstances as well as culture determine the actual public relations practice in a country.

Building on Grunig's et al. (2002) Excellence Study, Petersone (2007, p. 4) defines development communication as "a social activity with a goal to improve the living conditions of society". He distinguishes two approaches: diffusion of innovation and participatory communication. The former is a more one-way, asymmetrical approach and the latter is more participative, two-way symmetrical and more sensitive towards context and culture. Taking Hofstede's cultural measures into account (see Freitag & Stokes, in press), Petersone (2007) favours an integrated approach towards development communication that is sensitive to the settings and combines the strengths and eliminates the weaknesses of the diffusion and the participative approaches. Public relations practitioners should consider infrastructure (i.e. the political system, the level of economic development, and the extend of activism), culture, and the media system as the most important environment factors. There is no superior way to approach every situation, the amount of diffusion and participation need to be determined dependent on the specific settings.

For Talentino (2004, p. 557), the cause-effect chain starts with the absence of violence and then a functioning administration on which a commonly shared identity can build on: "When a unifying and legitimate state structure is absent, group identifications will remain strong and counteract internal efforts at nation-building". Therefore, a secure environment is a necessary condition for grassroots to grow on.

Theorists agree on nation-building as a twofold process of external-driven state-building and internal-driven identity-building. However, they argue about the emphasis and the aspect that needs to be implemented first. It seems reasonable to argue, that the

ideal cause chain indeed varies from case to case according to the country's culture. Therefore, public relations practitioners that plan nation-building campaigns have to consider the local circumstances for adjusting amounts of either diffusion of innovation or participatory communication.

#### NATION-BUILDING IN BOSNIA

Bosnia is no ideal case of nation-building and no easy one as well. As can be seen in this case, conflicts and tensions are still ongoing and the state is a long way from building a coherent identity that includes all citizens. Institution-building also leads to ongoing problems and stagnancy. As McMahon (2004) points out, the nation-building efforts in Bosnia neither failed nor were completely successful. The broad picture is peaceful, but there remains a sleeping dragon under the surface. "Nation-building efforts in Bosnia, as currently conceived, cannot reintegrate the country or transform its society because such strategies are, in fact, at odds with the country's governing structure, which continues at the highest levels to support the division of Bosnia" (McMahon, 2004, p. 583).

Manning (2006) describes the efforts of the international community as follows: In a first approach international authorities thought voters would expel nationalists but the opposite became true. After failing to get the institutions and laws right, elites became the focus of the international interventions. The OHR later removed (elected) politicians from their offices or banned them from political life. The intent was to establish the right elites in power and then leave institution-building to them. The outcomes were a monarchic image of the international mission in Bosnia and a growing three-party nationalism. Designing an institutional framework was not enough. Moreover, it gave incentives in the wrong direction. The third approach, after the elites failed, was and is towards establishing the right economic, social and secure environment to get the Bosnian people to vote for more moderate parties.

As Paddy Ashdown, then the High Representative in Bosnia, said after the 2003 elections: 'if you want to beat the nationalists, you have to provide decent public services' (Manning, 2006, p. 732).

Manning (2006) showed how institution-building and elite-focus proved to be insufficient in Bosnia to promote democracy. Cultural, economic and social constraints limited these efforts. Missing public services is only one of these constraints.

As indicated earlier, the classical three-step process of nation-building, market development, and regional interdependence (Freitag, 2004) is opposed by this finding. Talentino (2004) instead argues that the case of Bosnia showed that the emphasis of political structures first and the economy as a second step allowed the old elites to stay in place and corruption and ethnical control were maintained. Indeed, the international community might have placed the right institutions and elites in the wrong environment, which finally inverted the efforts into the opposite.

In Bosnia, institution-building and elites remain crucial to a successful nation-building, but social, cultural and economic circumstances have also be considered if the international community wishes to be successful. It is not so much that the Bosnian citizens miss a focus to link an identity to but their loyalty belongs more to their individual ethnic group. Talentino (2004) argues that state-building provides a focus for identity-building. However, national unity suffers when people identify only with their ethnic group rather than with the national identity (Taylor, 2000b) and this can indeed increase tensions between ethnics, as it is the case in Mostar. Whereas McMohan (2004) highlights a modern type of plural national identity that is in an ongoing process of creation, he also recognizes the lack of bottom-up commitment and grassroots that are able to link loyalty to the nation instead of the ethnical entities. In the case of Bosnia, identity is therefore not linked towards the nation, as identity-building as the second pillar of nation-building would suggest, it remains focused on the ethnics.

For this article, Petersone's (2007) distinction between diffusion of innovation and participatory communication means to consider if a more symmetrical or asymmetrical, a more one- or two-way, or a more persuasive or participative communication are appropriate. The settings should also determine if more mass media or interpersonal channels are suitable and how ethical the communication needs to be (Petersone, 2007). Especially in Bosnia, communication has historically been a two-sided sword and was often used to facilitate nationalism (Zakosek, 2007). As Taylor (2004) argues, communication in the former Yugoslavia is traditionally also influenced by high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, personal communication channels instead of mass media, and asymmetrical one-way communication. This results in a general mistrust towards lean communication channels, a lack of voluntary participation and reliance on

personal acquaintances and relationships. Kent and Taylor (2007) as well as Kent, Taylor and Turcilo (2006) confirm that and add that also the understanding of the public relations profession by practitioners is sophisticated, it is highly limited by the transitional economy and nation-building only a “lofty goal” (Kent, Taylor and Turcilo, 2006, p. 11).

Other authors (Taylor, 2000b; Pickering, 2006) stress the importance of personal relationships in nation-building related public relations in Bosnia as well. Taylor (2000b) shows that a relational approach to nation-building can foster important ties between different national ethnics and that public relations can have an important part in building such relationships. While Taylor builds her approach around neighbourhood relations, Pickering (2006) applies social capital theory and argues that neighbourhood relations do not work in Bosnia, rather functioning work relations are needed. The war in Bosnia created ethnic homogeneous areas and extensive weak ties from neighbourhood’s relations among ethnics are traditionally rare. More common are bondage or strong ties within the family and therefore the same ethnic group. Normally civil society builds such weak ties among cleavages, but the communistic history limits this strongly in Bosnia. Instead, Bosnians are sceptical towards NGOs and organizations are commonly mono-ethnic.<sup>2</sup> Because of this background, Pickering (2006) identifies workplace encounters as important for building weak ties among different ethnics. “High unemployment rates and nationalist control of many Bosnian workplaces significantly limit the current ability of workplaces to reintegrate minorities on a large scale” (Pickering, 2006, p. 96). To bring different ethnics together at work might prove beneficial for nation-building in Bosnia in the long term.

Overall, both parts of nation-building experience difficulties. Institution-building is limited by the social, political, cultural and economic circumstances. Identity-building remains focused on the smaller entities within the state that are loyal to the ethnics. Scholars of public relations and nation-building in Bosnia stress the importance of personal relationships when conducting a campaign and that mass media campaigns are viewed sceptical by the general public.

#### NATION-BUILDING IN MOSTAR

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<sup>2</sup> The problems related to develop a civil society in Bosnia has been addressed in detail by Taylor (2000a) and Fagan (2005).

With its 2004 administration change campaign for the city of Mostar the OHR addressed institutional issues that lead to tensions between Croats and Bosniaks within the city. Acting from outside the democratic structure, the OHR poses problems of unchecked power and undermines sovereignty. Even though the Mostar nation-building is externally forced, it focuses on designing proper public services by merging both ethnical administrations within the city. This case is still far away from an integrated national identity. In fact, nation-building here is an ongoing process with plural components and still remains on a local level. The effort of the OHR to combine both of Mostar's administrations can be considered as an important step towards integration and more appropriate identity-building. This strategy gets rid of a barrier in the government structure, which opposes proper identity-building from bottom-up approaches. It also weakens the nationalistic structures of the established ethnical parties in the city and is a step towards a self-sustaining and democratic society. When the merger of both administrations works and creates strong work relationships that cross ethnic borders, there is hope for a strong social innovation that can be advertised and communicated. It would in fact result in lower chances for elites to create mono-ethnic organizations. The background of the campaign is a real change that impacts everyday interpersonal relationships. The question remains how well the communication campaign accompanies these changes.

The measurement focuses on benefits for all parties, in this case efficiency of the administration and an equal treatment of all ethnics. These two aspects are positive if one evaluates state-building, according to Talentino (2004). Nevertheless, it shows how weak the survivability of the state without an international presence still is. It is also questionable if the legitimacy of the state in the eyes of citizens will be raised by this measurement, because they are still focused on a representation by their own national party. The legitimacy is also limited because the merger of the administrations is forced by the OHR and not due to a democratic process. With this, the OHR poses problems of unchecked power and undermines sovereignty. In fact, the act is a substitution of national governance that does not sustain self-governing capabilities and committed bottom-up identity. To some degree, it therefore opposes its own goals. It is questionable, if it leads to a supported united identity, even if the institution is forced together.

Decreased administration costs focus on the perception of the common purpose and a merged representation can lift the identification to a higher level of state administration. It also fosters the ratio of central to local authority and connects the citizens with a higher entity of the state. Furthermore, it decreases the erosion of societal divisions. Taken together these are Talentino's (2004) evaluation criteria for nation-building (see table 1). The criteria for institution-building and identity-building can be applied to evaluate the campaign that the OHR run to foster the commitment for the measurement within Mostar's citizens.

Nation-building scholars have several aspects to aid to the Mostar case. First of all, the distinction of nation-building in state-building and identity-building proves helpful. It also makes possible to establish evaluation criteria (table 1). Also, in Bosnia it proved wrong to start with institutional changes, because the economic security is missing to create a functioning economy. Moreover, economic problems are embedded in the fundamental institutions. The measurement of the OHR to combine the two administrations targets this problem. However, it might lack the necessary commitment, because it is not rooted in society but imposed on it. In spite of this threat, first, the beneficial work relationships can create such a commitment because they link institutional change to identity. Second, the change can prove beneficial for the whole city, because it is combined to lower governmental spending. As the integrated approach to development communication suggests, it is in the next step necessary to investigate the background of the public relations campaign to determine of the communication efforts were appropriate. Media coverage in international media will be used to evaluate the ultimate campaign outcomes.

#### THE 'MOSTAR – ONE CITY' CAMPAIGN

In Early 2004 the international government (Office of the High Representative, OHR) of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia) started the "Mostar – One City" Campaign. This campaign was aimed to assist the unification of the city administration and its primary public was the cities' inhabitants. Different stages of campaign lasted until March, later in 2004 a symbolic unification was done with the finishing of the 'Stari Most', the old bridge. Because of its special construction Stari Most was before, and is again since the reconstruction, part of the UNESCO world heritage. The committee justified this decision

with the bridge being an “exceptional and universal symbol of coexistence of communities from diverse cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds” (UNESCO 2008).

Public relations of the OHR in this case dealt not only with an multiethnic and therefore multicultural public in the city itself, but also with a international audience scrutinizing the results of the government’s attempts to reunite the city.

## METHOD

Assuming that the campaign prepared the reunification and unable to use local media as sources due to language barriers, I will focus on international press coverage of the main event – the reopening of the bridge. An international press conference was held during the event. This paper uses the resulting press coverage in two foreign countries, the U.S. and Germany, to evaluate the changes in the administration, the campaign and the symbolic reopening of the Stari Most. The method is a limited case study (Freitag and Stokes, in press, chapter 3) approach. It is limited in so far as it only uses documentary analysis and no interviews or direct observation. In general, it is advisable to use a broad range of sources for a case study to increase validity and reliability. To broaden the view and to get comprehensive insights, different document sources are used as primary data. These are information from the homepage of the OHR, and two major newspapers from Germany and the U.S. as well as a speech presented at the reopening of the bridge.

The chosen German newspapers are *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. For the States I chose *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. Articles from these sources will be retrieved from the LexisNexis Database. I limited the time period to the past five years. This covers the period of main interest, March to August 2004. The research term has been ‘Mostar’, assuming that all relevant articles would name the city locating the rebuilt bridge at least once. Non-relevant articles were not included, e.g. coverage of sport events in Mostar. However, some articles will be considered, even though they are not within the defined time period, because they provide valuable background information. This category especially includes 10-years after articles about the Dayton Peace Agreement. They are valuable because they help to evaluate progress between Croatians and Bosniacs from a four years after point of view. Overall, the articles are relevant to evaluate the situation and the outcomes of the OHR’s efforts.

Data that was obtained from the OHR website is the campaign plan and campaign material, the main speech of the High Representative during the opening ceremony of the Stari Most and press releases. The Office of the High Representative (OHR) conducted the campaign during the relevant time period in 2004 before the inauguration of the bridge. These efforts are not directly addressed by the newspapers. Therefore, information is nearly solely taken from the OHR's website. The campaign is the background of the ongoing changes in the city and is mainly evaluated by theory because no research about the effects is available. Another reviewed document is the speech the EU Commissioner for External Relations Christopher Patten performed on July 23, 2004 in Mostar – the day the bridge was inaugurated. This has been a major international event.

Together, the sources draw an in-depth picture about the international community's efforts for nation-building in the city Mostar.

#### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section will be divided in three parts according to the material, i.e. newspaper articles, campaign material and Chris Patten's official speech at the reopening of the bridge. The articles are most helpful to understand the background and deepen the understanding of the situation and the effects of the measurements conducted by the international community to foster nation-building in Mostar. The campaign material and the speech then are necessary to understand the actual tactics used and their implications.

#### NEWSPAPERS

Table 2 gives an overview on all articles related to the efforts of nation-building in Mostar that have been published in the considered timeframe. The coverage of events in the German newspapers is considerably higher and more frequent, than in the U.S. newspapers. However, the amount of coverage in the German newspapers is due to a higher number of short news reports of only a few sentences. The higher amount might also be a cause of the news factor distance, assuming that events that take place nearer to the public of the publishing outlet are covered more intense. Although, whereas American soldiers had already left, German troops remain present until today. Altogether, there are no striking differences in the reviewed articles of the newspapers from Germany and the States. Major themes in the articles are the reconstruction of the bridge as a

symbol of reunification, the change of the High Representative from Paddy Ashdown to Christian Schwarz-Schilling, a 10-years review of the country's development since the end of the war, future perspectives or hope for the integration of the ethnics, and the still deep divides in Mostar.<sup>3</sup>

The picture the newspaper articles draw of the situation in Mostar is neither solely optimistic nor pessimistic. As also seen from the section on nation-building, the leadership style of the High Representative Paddy Ashdown is regarded as authoritative by journalists (Martens, 2006; Küppers, 2005). His decrees on the unification is perceived as imposed and the achievements as fragile. The authors back that up by quotes from locals. Küppers (2005) also sees forward to the change in leadership with the new High Representative Schwarz-Schilling in 2005, with a more participative leadership style. Schwarz-Schilling is known to make local appointments with politicians and focus on compromises. This might be a leadership style that can build on the institutional changes brought by Ashdown. In general, the articles in 2005 and 2006 show clearly that the problems are by far not solved (Hoch, 2006; Boustany, 2004). Boustany (2004) cites a member of a Mostar NGO: "The bridge has been rebuilt, but the city is still dead". Obviously problems remain deeper than the communication campaign could reach.

The many small details that the articles provide make the deeply rooted divide between the ethnics visual. One of them is that both religions try to outrun each other by building the higher house of worship. So far the Christian Croats are one step ahead, they build a gigantic cross on a nearby hill (Jeismann, 2004; Bosco, 2005). The two different administrations with different schools, universities, waste disposal etc. is usually referred to, when journalist write about the still ongoing divide in the cities and how the two ethnics belong to two parallel societies in the city (Münch, 2004b). In fact, both ethnics still have little to do with each other (Bernstein, 2004). However, relations among people are slowly improving (Bernstein, 2004). Bernstein (2004) also describes how the economy remains down, facing organized crime, and the as yet unremoved rubble from the war. Regarding the economy, Hablesreiter and Stummerer (2004) name the unemployment rate of 50 percent and the high tax rates due to the two administrations. Other articles state that the rebuilding of the bridge and the press coverage make hope for

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<sup>3</sup> One event that merely builds up the background but does not strongly relate to the here-investigated topic is the vandalization of a Bruce-Lee statue in Mostar (o.A. 2005a, 2005c; Sisario 2005).

increases in tourism (Bosco, 2005; Martens, 2004c; Münch, 2004b; Münch, 2004a). In addition to the weak economy, Mostaris also remain suspicious towards local politicians, fearing they would take “all of the money for themselves” (Bernstein, 2004). Other authors also refer to the resistance of the local politicians towards change (Bosco, 2005).

There remains hope for the better, when one considers that hundreds of Muslims and Croats were cheering on both sides of the bridge when the last stone was hoisted into the central arch of the bridge (AP, 2003). The case of identity-building with the rebuilding of the bridge is not as simple as it might seem, because “[...] many Bosnians, particularly Serbs and Croats, are far from identifying with the state that the international officials are trying to build for them. Rather, they identify with neighbors—Serbia and Croatia—that hold their ethnic kin” (Wood, 2004). Also, there is nearly no apolitical symbol in post-war Bosnia and Stari Most is no exception. Hablesreiter and Stummerer (2004) suggest that one should consider the bridge as Turkish and Muslim heritage rather than Bosnian. The ethnic lines do not exactly with the river, and therefore the bridge connects Bosniaks from both banks of the river, not the two ethnics as is often wrote (Münch, 2004a). This makes the bridge more to a symbol for the Bosniaks and the international community and the nation-state they want to build rather than to a neutral symbol of unification. It also highlights why expectation sometimes are exaggerating, e.g. when Münch (2004b) writes about the reopening of the bridge as a therapy, when Martens (2004a) and Belo (2004) see it as reconciliation or when the head of the collective presidency of Bosnia says during the bridge restoration ceremony that it were “a victory for Bosnia as a multiethnic and multicultural society” (Bernstein, 2004). Maybe a more down to earth view is more appropriate: It gives the Mostaris a chance to celebrate something in common (Williams, 2004).

The decree by the High Representative brings vantages to the inhabitants by lowering the taxes. Prior to the decree, Ashdown twice tried to establish committees but both were unsuccessful (Martens, 2004a). Obviously attempts to use two-way symmetrical communication failed and the local politicians opposed the unification of the city administrations (Wood, 2004). For the citizens, a survey from 1,200 Mostar residents conducted by the OHR indicated a 72 percent favour of a unified city (Wood, 2004). The decision that came into force on May 15, 2004 now prevents majorities in the city

assembly that consist of only one ethnic, even if this ethnic makes up the majority of the citizens (Williams, 2004). The decree obviously rather prefers stagnancy for overt conflict.

The reopening of the bridge than took place on July 23, 2004 and was broadcasted nationwide, with people in the Bosnian capital Sarajevo watching the event in coffee shops (Martens, 2004b). The speech of Paddy Ashdown drove tears in the eyes of locals (tens, 2003). Attendances were among others Luciano Pavarotti, Kofi Annan, Bill Klinton, Prince Williams, and two dozen other chancellors and ministers (Münch, 2004a). A Croation singer who was supposed to perform during the event withdraw from the festivities because he was asked to sink a song called “I am sorry” which the Croatian found to be offensive (Williams, 2004). Croatian military forces destroyed the bridge and even though the commanding general is now charged in Den Haag, he is still considered a war hero and many Croations do not want to admit guilt.

According to Münch (2004b), there were 3,000 policemen and soldiers of the international mission present at the event. These heavy securities lead to the awkward situation that no ordinary people were allowed on the bridge on that day (Bernstein, 2004). The 12,000 Mostaris did not benefit from the reopening but were excluded. The event proved to be only an official ceremony.

The newspaper sources portray the administration change in Mostar as an authoritative decision of the High Representative, which remains imposed and fragile. Citizens favour the decision but the affected politicians oppose it. Similar to the country, Mostar suffers from economic problems and the divide between Croats and Bosniaks is deep. Even though the bridge gives hopes for raising tourism, its identity-building is stronger related towards the international community and the Bosniaks than to the Croats. In general, tensions between the two groups are very slowly decreasing but contacts remain occasionally and the event gave little chance for ordinary Mostaris to meet at this symbolic place. To say it in a nutshell, problems are still ongoing and “Nation-building in Bosnia [...] is really just beginning” (Bosco, 2005).

CAMPAIGN MATERIAL

Mostar was divided into two parts after the war, a Croatian and Bosniak. To reunite the city administration, the OHR not only enacted a statute but also ran a campaign to foster citizens' commitment (OHR, 2004a). The statute is aimed to

establish a single city administration, abolish parallelisms and prevent domination by one people. This Decision will ensure that all of the constituent peoples are adequately represented in the administration of Mostar. It will also create the administrative conditions for the efficient delivery of services to citizens, after years of fragmented and dysfunctional administration. (OHR, 2004a)

The campaign was aimed to explain the key elements of the statute and how it will resolve political problems and ensure citizens' interests. Ethical issues were only peripherally addressed. The campaign highlighted Mostar's new administration as being ethically neutral. The message concentrated on benefits for the citizens: lean power structures in the government and reduced costs. Some messages also contained a moderate fear message to the politicians and their responsibility to make Mostar functioning, and it ensured the seriousness of the approach.

The campaign consisted of several measures (OHR 2004a):

- TV address from the High Representative aired on January 28, 2004
- Two phases of billboard advertisements. Each billboard communicated only one message at a time. The different ads read as follows:

#### Phase 1

- a) za sve – Mostar for all
- b) vrijeme je – It's time
- b) sest mostarski... - 6 mostaric communities cost you 32 Million KM every year. That are € 320 for every Mostarian citizen.
- d) funkcionalan grad - Functional city

#### Phase 2

- a) novi pocetak – New beginning
- b) sada otvoren... – Now open for investment<sup>4</sup>
- A letter of the High Representative to the citizens of Mostar, delivered to 31,000 households

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<sup>4</sup> This message was related to an international investment conference in February 2004 (OHR, 2004c).

- A press advertisement published in all newspapers with a significant readership in Mostar.
- Decisions came into force on March 15, 2004.
- Press Advertisements, on March 15, 2004, answering the question: What does the decision mean for us as citizens of Mostar?

The start went off with TV advertisement, a letter to all households, billboard advertisements, and a first print advertising. The billboards stayed and a new reinforcement of the campaign was done when the decision came into force on March 15 with a second press ad. Compared to the billboard ads, richer communication channels contained more than one message. While the billboards aimed at awareness and presence, the other channels tried to get deeper and create knowledge.

In a society that is used to a high power distance (Taylor, 2004) it seems to be appropriate to use the High Representative Paddy Ashdown, who was at that time the leader of the EU mission in Bosnia, as a spokesperson. But with its use of advertising and one-way communication between press agency and public information the campaign might apply media channels that are common for the country, but as research indicates personal media relationships and richer communication channels are preferred (Taylor, 2004). To be research-based is often stated as one criterion for good public relations – in fact the OHR did some research, but unfortunately I have not been able to translate the result and the OHR does not say if it has been the base for strategic campaign planning (OHR, 2004b). Another shortcoming of the campaign is the focus on local media, because Croats use mostly Croatian media for information and rely on Bosnian media only as a second source (Cicic and Brkic, 2003).

The six weeks after the statute came into force were a transition period from the old to the new administration. The next stages in the nation building and city reunification were the inauguration of Stari Most in July and the oncoming elections in October. Elections in October already took place with the new administration structure.

Overall, the campaign used asymmetrical public relations tactics. The campaign to introduce the new administration structure sells on personal benefits for the citizens, but its goal is actually to foster mutual understanding between the ethnics to establish closer relations. Even though the strategy for tactics and their implementation seem to be crafted

very professionally, research, evaluation, and two-way communication as well as the use of personal relationships are missing. It remains difficult to be sure if the messages and their presentation were sufficient to convince the citizens because of the lack of campaign evaluation, but given the situation and the cultural preference for personal communication, this seems at least unlikely.

#### CHRIS PATTEN'S SPEECH

High ranked international attendances, such as Prince Charles, a number of Prime Ministers and several national politicians were present on the 23 of July 2004 in Mostar. The EU played a key role in the rebuilding of the Bosnian nation-state. On behalf of this institution the Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten gave a speech (Patten, 2004). Patten's speech is the only published press material about the event I have been able to obtain. In his speech he compared the bridge and its status to the country and its inhabitants. He also emphasised the need for all ethnic groups to mutually live together, and highlighted the bridge as a symbol for the shared future of all ethnics. "Here in Mostar the opening of Stari Most is a clear strong statement about the town's future. A future living and working together as one in one country" (Patten, 2004). Giving a glimpse on the things to come, he spoke about Bosnian's integration into Europe and the EU as a promise. His core message is about integration of the ethnics and the development of the country. This is closely related to nation-building as defined earlier. Although the speech does not give many new insights, it stresses the importance of the event and the bridge as a symbol for nation-building in Bosnia.

#### CONCLUSION

The three different sources complement each other and the argumentations are supported by the nation-building theory. Nation-building theory distinguishes between state-building or institution-building and identity-building (Talentino, 2004). The OHR campaign uses one-way communication but it is accountable, transparent and highlights benefits. As pointed out by Talentino (2004), the institution-building change and the campaign have been conducted by externals. However, this is also the case for the identity-building, which should be done in a participative, two-way communication style. Such an effort could not be found. The only two-way approach were the committees prior to the decree by the High Representative. Yet, they were unsuccessful. Not only the

campaign had been one-way, the same is true for the reopening of the bridge. Locals were not allowed. To rely on diffusion of innovation or information seems not appropriate. Personal relations with citizens and politicians should have been used to foster personal ties among the ethnics. Surely, this is difficult with a public that is not used to participative communication. On the other side, Bosnians also mistrust mass media messages. Regarding the general mistrust towards politicians, a higher integration seems valuable and more effective for a relation-building, which is central to identity-building. The good part is that the public relations here build upon real change that is beneficial for the general public and can build work relationships among politicians to get them to collaborate.

The institution-building suffers on a lack of legitimacy, reveals the low survivability of the Bosnian state, but it enhances the degree of law and order and the effectiveness of the administration. The bridge as a symbol for identity-building misses the perception of a common purpose among the Croats and therefore brings only partial benefits to the decrease of societal division. However, it centralizes the authority and therefore scores positive for identity-building. Summarized, the results are mixed.

Overall, the public relations used too much one-way communication and missed elements such as town hall meetings or integration of NGOs, at least for the main event. To rely on the public information model was more a communication bomb that worked better for the international community than for the locals.

APPENDIX

Table 1  
Criteria for nation-building, based on Talentino 2004, p. 571

<b>Institution-building</b>	<b>Identity-building</b>
Perceived legitimacy	Citizen connection
Effectiveness	Perception of common purpose
Survivability	Ratio of local to central authority
Extend of law and order	Erosion of societal divisions

Table 2  
Newspaper Articles on Mostar’s reunion

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Article length</b>	<b>Date</b>
New York Times		4170/1390 (total/average)	
	Williams 2004	1595	July 22, 2004
	Boustany 2004	820	May 22, 2004
	Bosco 2005	1754	December 25, 2005

Washington Post		5859/651	
	Wood 2004	948	March 15, 2004
	Bernstein 2004	1141	July 24, 2004
	Silber 2005	1142	November 21, 2005
	Inside 2004	41	July 24, 2004
	Cohen 2005	1049	November 20, 2005
	Sisario 2005	148	November 28, 2005
	AP 2003	93	August 23, 2003
FAZ		8526/775	
	Martens 2004b	632	July 26, 2004
	o.A. 2004a	80	July 24, 2004
	Martens 2004a	1084	July 24, 2004
	Jeismann 2004	985	February 4, 2004
	tens 2003	194	August 23, 2003
	Hablesreiter & Stummerer 2004	1677	July 5, 2004
	o.A. 2005a	78	November 29, 2005
	o.A. 2005b	200	March 30, 2005
	Martens 2006	989	January 31, 2006
	Martens 2004c	1406	July 24, 2004
	Georg 2003	1201	April 23, 2003
SZ		8070/576	
	Hoch 2006	488	October 31, 2006
	Küppers 2005	560	December 14, 2005
	o.A. 2005c	121	November 29, 2005
	o.A. 2004b	15	December 31, 2004
	belo 2004	128	August 2, 2004
	o.A. 2004c	57	July 24, 2004
	Münch 2004a	2503	July 21, 2004
	o.A. 2004d	51	March 21, 2004
	k 2004	273	March 16, 2004
	o.A. 2003	192	August 23, 2003
	Encke 2004	1636	November 13, 2004
	Münch 2004b	620	July 21, 2004
	Münch 2005	1060	December 8, 2005
	Küppers 2004	366	March 16, 2004

## ABBREVIATIONS

OHR	Office of the High representative
Bosnia or BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
FAZ	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
SZ	Süddeutsche Zeitung
o.A.	ohne Angabe (German): unknown
NGO	Non-governmental organization

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