Lesson 3.9 Media Relations
Content

• Peacekeeping and the news
• Impacts of media reporting
• Public Information Office (PIO)
• UNMO responsibilities
• Relating to the media
• Do’s and Don’ts
• Managing an interview
• Sample media questions
Learning Outcome

• Explain the importance of media relations

• Describe the role of the Public Information Officer (PIO) in the force media strategy

• Explain how to conduct yourself in a simple media interview

• What information can be released to the media
Learning Activity Media Interactions

- What did you learn?
- Interviewees speak about tasks?
- Were there difficulties?
- How did they get positive comments?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hm3vpGep0lw&feature=related
Emotive topics

Attitude of journalists

Changed “Media”
Dealing with Media

- Reliable / Impartial source of Information
- Public Information
- Public Information Officer (PIO)
- Understand impacts of peacekeepers’ conduct, actions
Impacts of Media

• News media work 24/7

• Photos and video

• Positive behaviour

• Negative behaviour and images
Public Information Office (PIO)

- Develops an overall communications strategy
- Advises mission personnel
- Produces information
- Employs local journalists and other local staff
- Works with military force PIO
UNMO Responsibilities

- Seek PIO guidance
- Keep reports timely and accurate
- Inform PIO of media inquiries
- Get the name and organisation of reporter
- Be prepared to deal with media unexpectedly
Relating to News Media

- Support mandate
- UN Guidelines
- Talk to media, if cleared
- If preferred, do not talk
Dos

• Factual, impartial, precise
• Respectful
• Refer to men and women
• Polite and professional
• Short sentences
• Refer to superiors / PIO
Don’ts

- Critical incidents
- Personal opinions
- Speculations
- Operational security
- Favouritism
- Promises
Managing an Interview

• Look at reporter
• Listen carefully
• If not authorized to answer - decline questions
• Background to video / camera image
• Nothing is off the record
Questions about yourself-
Generic Answers:

What is your name?
— My name is ..... 

Where are you from?
— I come from ..... 

How old are you?
— I am ..... years old. 

How long have you been here?
— I have been here ..... months..
Questions about work - Generic Answers:

What do you do?
I am here to work with the United Nations. My country is helping the United Nations to bring peace.

What do you do here?
Explain your duties.

Do you think your presence is useful?
We are working to help to bring peace and stability to this country. I think that is useful.
Questions Seeking Opinion

Do you like being here? — I miss my friends and family but I am glad if I can help make things better here. It is a good experience for me, even if the conditions are difficult.

How soon will we have peace? — I don’t know the answer to that. It depends on many things. Please ask the mission’s public information office.

Fighting is still going on. What do you think will happen? — I can’t answer that question. The mission’s public information office can help you.

Aren’t you afraid things will get worse? — I’m an UN Military Observer and a peacekeeper. I’ve been trained to do this job and I’m confident that the mission is doing everything possible to advance the peace process.
Why are you favouring the xx faction by giving them arms?---The UN is impartial. We do not favour any side nor do we give out arms.

Your colleagues were seen with teenage prostitutes last night and we have photos: why are you taking advantage of our girls?--Our rules are very strict: we can’t go out with prostitutes. If you have evidence, please take it to the Conduct and Discipline Office....

What if you leave and the criminals return? ---It is not up to us when we leave, but our purpose here is to give your local authorities the capacity to take responsibility for your security.
Lesson Take Away

• A positive or negative image of the UN can emerge via media
• PIO supports the peace process by working with the media
• UN guidelines for media relations allow peacekeepers to speak to reporters about their work and responsibilities
• Peacekeepers always speak - “on record”
• Use care when postings to blogs, social media, YouTube
Questions