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GEORGE KOUROUS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS / EDITORIAL LEADERSHIP

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01 PROFILE

Strategic communications leader with 25+ years' experience spanning international organizations, public policy and journalism, including over two decades with the United Nations. Currently serving as Officer-in-Charge of FAO's Global and Technical Coordination Branch, leading global communications planning, coordination and capacity development. Combines senior-level advisory and organizational leadership experience with deep editorial, media and crisis communications expertise, audience-led campaign strategy, and a track record of strengthening teams, systems and approaches to make institutional communications more strategic, coordinated and effective.

02 EXPERIENCE

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS • ROME, ITALY

2024–NOW **Officer-in-Charge, Global and Technical Coordination Branch**

// Lead FAO's Global and Technical Coordination Branch, managing a seven-person team and coordinating communications across technical divisions, regional and liaison offices, and country offices worldwide.

// Oversee FAO's corporate communications planning process, working across headquarters and decentralized offices to identify strategic opportunities, anticipate emerging issues, set communications priorities and translate institutional objectives into coordinated campaigns and initiatives.

// Expanded and operationalized FAO's communications planning and forecasting system, enhancing workflows to integrate annual priorities, rolling forecasts and headquarters–regional coordination.

// Championed a more strategic, audience-led approach to communications, introducing structured campaign-planning methodologies, clearer objectives and a stronger emphasis on measurable outcomes.

// Strengthened FAO's global communications network through targeted training, peer learning and practical tools, building shared capabilities, stronger professional connections and more consistent communications standards.

// Advise senior management and technical leadership on strategic communications, positioning, messaging and reputational issues; represent FAO in UN-system communications coordination.

2022–2023 **Planning Editor / Technical Communications Coordination**

// Re-established and led FAO's annual corporate communications planning process across 20+ technical divisions, introducing divisional workplans and a systematic approach to identifying priorities, anticipating communications opportunities and planning major initiatives.

// Built a centralized communications planning and forecasting system, consolidating divisional workplans and producing regular management forecasts to anticipate priorities, resource requirements and opportunities for strategic engagement.

// Led coordination between corporate communications and FAO technical divisions, convening regular cross-divisional meetings, targeted planning sessions and strategic consultations around major reports, initiatives and emerging issues.

// Managed a five-person team and coordinated a wider network of divisional communications professionals, providing strategic advice, shaping corporate messaging on sensitive issues and contributing to FAO-wide communications guidance.

2018–2021 **Communications Coordinator, Emergencies and Resilience**

// Led strategic communications for FAO's global emergencies and resilience portfolio, advising senior management and coordinating media, digital, advocacy and other communications activities across headquarters and country operations.

// Led communications during the 2019–21 Desert Locust crisis and coordinated with UN and humanitarian partners on major food-security emergencies, famine prevention and the COVID-19 response.

02 EXPERIENCE / CONTINUED

2018–2021 **Communications Coordinator, Emergencies and Resilience / continued**

// Led communications and production for major evidence-based publications, including *The Impact of Disasters and Crises on Food and Agriculture*, translating complex technical findings into accessible global narratives.

// Collaborated with Netflix on *Pandemic* and EU-DEVCO on the *Global Report on Food Crises*; contributed messaging to the UN Secretary-General's 2020 policy brief on COVID-19 and food insecurity.

2016–2018 **Senior Media Relations Officer**

// Managed international media relations on high-profile FAO issues, developing news releases, op-eds, talking points and features, pitching stories to journalists and helping shape corporate messaging.

// Helped shape corporate messaging on sensitive technical and policy issues, oversaw media monitoring, and deployed to FAO's Somalia operation during the 2017 food-security emergency.

2014–2016 **News Coordinator**

// Led FAO's corporate news operation, setting editorial priorities and overseeing timely, accurate and high-impact coverage of the Organization's work.

// Managed a multilingual team of journalists, translators and support staff, exercising editorial judgment across competing priorities and ensuring the quality and consistency of international news coverage.

2006–2014 **Media Relations Officer**

// Handled international media relations across FAO's mandate, writing and pitching news, features and op-eds, organizing media events and interviews, and supporting communications on field missions in Asia and Europe.

// Pioneered social media approaches to FAO's media work, helping establish its flagship Twitter presence and first corporate Twitter policy; organized FAO's first live Twitter chat during the 2011 Horn of Africa crisis, reaching an audience of 1.4 million.

// Established FAO's media monitoring and analytics systems using Meltwater and collaborated with IT to improve digital publishing and communications planning tools, including workflows, guidance and staff training.

// Twice served as acting News Coordinator and periodically as officer-in-charge; provided direct communications support to FAO's Director of Communications and Deputy Director-General during the 2011 Horn of Africa crisis.

2003–2005 **Assistant Web Editor**

// Wrote and edited in-depth features, explainers, human-interest stories and news for FAO's online newsroom. Managed FAO's first online newsroom.

// Collaborated with IT to create FAO's first digital news-publishing systems, developing workflows, user guidance and training for editorial staff.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS CENTER (IRC) • NEW MEXICO, U.S.A.

1997–2003 **Senior Program Associate / Writer & Editor**

// Researched, wrote and edited policy analysis on U.S.–Latin American relations, transboundary issues and regional economic integration; previously served as managing editor and lead writer of a bilingual monthly publication covering immigration, human rights, labor issues, and sustainable development in the US-Mexico border region.

// Contributed to institutional strategy and messaging, commissioned and edited external writers, oversaw publications and secured significant grant funding through successful proposals and donor engagement.

EARLIER JOURNALISM • VARIOUS LOCATIONS

1993-2000 Freelance journalist (U.S.A, Mexico, Paraguay, Spain); Writer, Ohio University News Service; Writer/Associate Editor, *Montage Magazine*.

03 EDUCATION

Ohio University M.A., International Affairs, 2000
Latin American Studies · Contemporary History · Journalism

Kalamazoo College B.A., English, 1993 · Minor in Biology

Universidad San Francisco de Quito Study abroad, Ecuador, 1992

04 LANGUAGES

English / native

Spanish / fluent

Italian / advanced

French & Greek / basic