**Club of Venice**

## 8<sup>th</sup> StratCom Seminar, 12-13 March 2025

## Meeting Venue: FCDO King Charles Street Building, London, UK

## FINAL Agenda (13 March)

*Strengthening cooperation in crisis communication, neutralising foreign influence threats and information manipulation & applying AI to communications*

**Day 1** - Wednesday 12 March 2025 - 1800-2000 - *Evening reception + Introductory panel Venue: Admiralty House Building, Whitehall, London, SW1A 2AY*

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| 1730 | Delegates' arrival and registration | |
| 1800 - 1845 | Welcome and opening remarks<br><br>To focus on:<br><br>*Strategic communication and public diplomacy role in Government communications on the verge of a crucial geopolitical strategic shift & the changing communication landscape.*<br><br>● *The impact of recent changes on the global stage to CoV partners*<br>● *How are governments adapting communication approaches to reach target audiences?* | James Stewart, Executive Committee Representative of the UK GCS<br><br>Vincenzo Le Voci, Secretary-General of the Club of Venice<br><br>H.E. Piotr Wilczek, Ambassador of Poland to the United Kingdom<br><br>H.E. SiniŠa Grgic, Ambassador of Croatia to Sweden and Latvia<br><br>Luca Kadar, Head of Division, Global Communications and Public Diplomacy, European External Action Service (EEAS) |
| 1845 - 1945 | Drinks reception and networking | |
| 1945 - 2000 | Closing remarks | Vincenzo Le Voci, Secretary-General of the Club of Venice |

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| **Day 2 - Thursday 13 March 2025 - 0830-1730**<br>*Full day of sessions*<br>*Venue: FCDO King Charles Street Building* | | |
| 0830 - 0915 | Delegate arrival and registration<br>Coffee on arrival | |
| 0915 - 0930 | Opening remarks and agenda for the day. Scene setting of two main themes and the impact on communications:<br>● Information Threats<br>● AI | Simon Baugh, Executive Committee Representative of the UK Government Communications<br><br>Vincenzo Le Voci, Secretary-General of the Club of Venice |
| **Theme 1** | **Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference and the AI revolution** | |
| 0930 – 1030 | *Strand 1:* Government communication organisational **plans and methodologies to counter disinformation, foreign information manipulation and interference**: shared challenges, ongoing impact of modern digital campaigns on policies, procedures and political processes<br><br>(**European cooperation models** and **UK GCS RESIST 3 Model)** | Moderator: Angela Kellett, United Kingdom GCS, Head of Insights<br><br>Katarzyna Szaran, Poland, Acting Director of the Department for Strategic Communications and Countering Foreign Disinformation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (on the Resilience Council)<br><br>Viktorija Urbonaviciute, Head of Communication/Spokesperson, Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the EU, Member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice<br><br>Andrei Tarnea, Director-General of Communication, Romania<br><br>Juliane von Reppert-Bismarck, Executive Director and Founder, Lie Detectors |
| 1030 – 1130 | *Strand 2:* **Shaping the AI revolution**<br><br>● tackling digital challenges and embracing and managing opportunities<br>● governmental and institutional plans and strategies in progress<br>● how to maintain a human-centric AI: analytics, | Moderators:<br>Amanda Svensson, Deputy Director, Applied Data and Insight Team at the UK Cabinet Office and Siniša Grgic, Ambassador of Croatia to Sweden and Latvia<br><br>Simon Piatek, Director, The Imagination Lab, UK |

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| | interaction, workforce transformation | Fabiana Zollo, Professor of Computer Science, Ca' Foscari University, Venice, Italy (from remote)<br><br>Andrea Baronchelli, Professor of Complexity Science, School of Science & Technology, City St George's University of London, UK<br><br>Giulia Dino Giacomelli and Elliot Grainger, DSC2 - Defence, Democracy Security Strategic Communication Community<br><br>Linda Jakobsone, Civic Alliance Latvia, Expert in Strategic Communication and Policy Development (from remote) |
| 1130 - 1145 | Coffee break | |
| 1145 – 1230 | *Strand 3:* **The End of fact checking**?: **rebuilding deals with the web industry Group/Panel discussion**<br><br>● Choosing relevant algorithms to develop sustainable methodological models<br>● Investing in data exchange and interconnectivity<br>● **Trust and cooperation**<br>● **Q&A** | <u>Moderator</u>: Maja Mazurkiewicz, President of PZU Foundation, Co-founder of Alliance4Europe, host of Anatomy of Disinformation, Poland<br><br>Virginia Padovese, NewsGuard, Managing Editor & Vice President, Partnerships, Europe, Australia and New Zealand (from remote)<br><br>Walter Quattrociocchi, Professor of Computer Science, Head of the Data and Complexity for Society Lab, Sapienza University, Rome, Italy (from remote)<br><br>Anthony Zacharzewski, Director, The Democratic Society |
| 1230 – 1240 | **Group photos** | |
| 1240 – 1330 | Lunch | |
| 1330 - 1355 | *Strand 4:*<br>Outline of the morning sessions and round table with<br>- Carlotta Alfonsi, senior policy analyst from the Open Governance Division, OECD Headquarters<br>- Fiona Speirs, head of the Communications Academy, UK Cabinet Office<br>- Simon Piatek, Director of The Imagination Lab, UK<br><br>moderated by Vincenzo Le Voci | |

| Section 2 | Crisis communications and monitoring and applying behavioural insights | |
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| 1400 – 1445<br><br>Strands 5 and 6 | | |
| | *Strand 5:* **Monitoring behaviours and evaluating trends**<br><br>● A lever for integrated communication strategies and focused work in partnership<br>● Ethics and transparency implications and security indicators | Moderator: Susanne Weber, Austria, Head of the International Media Relations Unit, Federal Chancellery<br><br>Dr Moria Nicolson, UK GCS Behavioural Scientist<br><br>Chloe Collingwood, UK GCS International Ukraine Team<br><br>Professor Riccardo Viale, Founder and Secretary-General of the Herbert Simon Society<br><br>Erik den Hoedt, Netherlands, Director of Communications, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Vice President of the Club of Venice<br><br>Nikola Hořejš, Executive Director, STEM Institute for Empirical Research, Prague, Czech Republic |
| | *Strand 6:* **Preparing for a crisis**:<br><br>● Enhancing communication toolkits<br>● Focus on enhancing cooperation with scientific communities<br>● Optimising risk communication | Moderator: Joseph Palasz, UK, Government Communication Service Crisis Team<br><br>Professor Elena Savoia, Co-Director Emergency Preparedness Research Evaluation and Practice Program (EPREP), Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (from remote)<br><br>Paolo Caridi, Head of the Communication Unit, European Commission DG Climate Action<br><br>Francien Machielse, Netherlands, Communications specialist at National Coordinator for Counter-terrorism and Security (NCTV) and the National Crisis Center (NCC)<br><br>Natalie Maroun, France, Managing Partner, Element-EU, Crisis Management Expert |

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| 1445 – 1500 | *Coffee break* | |
| 1500 – 1545<br><br>Strands<br>7 and 8 | *Strand 7:* **Engaging in a rapidly evolving public diplomacy scenario**<br><br>● contingencies, effective practice and threats to public trust<br>● impact of energy, climate, public health and social unrest on governmental and institutional reputation | Moderator: Daniel Höltgen, Director of Communications, Council of Europe Headquarters, Strasbourg<br><br>Mary Keenan, Ireland, Assistant Secretary, Corporate Services Division, Department of the Taoiseach<br><br>Pereric Högberg, Sweden, Ambassador, Head of Communications at the MFA<br><br>Luca Kadar, Head of Division, Global Communications and Public Diplomacy, European External Action Service (EEAS) |
| | *Strand 8:* **Digital by default: not negotiable!**<br>● Synergies between governmental and external digital platforms<br>● Synergies with digital specialized communities<br>● Investing in fostering **digital comm literacy** | Moderator: Rachel Coldicutt, Executive Director, Careful Industries<br><br>Viktoras Dauksas, Director, DebunkEU.org, Lithuania (from remote)<br><br>Ana Esteban, Acting Head of Section, Digital Outreach and Brand Section NATO Public Diplomacy Division (PDD)<br><br>Gemma Taylor, Audience Lead, New Media Unit, UK Cabinet Office<br><br>Carys Whomsley, Digitalis Director, Digital Risk; Head of Research and Thought Leadership (from remote)<br><br>Rosa Cavallaro, Senior Officer, Italian Communication Regulatory Authority (AGCOM) |
| 1545 - 1550 | *Pause after Breakout Sessions* | |

| Section 3 | Innovation, Technology, Communications and Establishing Partnerships | |
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| 1550 - 1645 | **Strand 9:** **Building alliances** to respond to citizens' expectations and safeguarding democratic values<br><br>Investing in Strategic communications, fostering proactive resilience and strengthening capacities to navigate the evolving communication and media landscape | Moderator: Vincenzo Le Voci, Secretary-General of the Club of Venice<br><br>Ed Bearryman, UK Government Communications Service, New Media Unit<br><br>Ms Magdalena Sobkowiak-Czarnecka, Poland, Undersecretary of State, European Union Affairs Division<br><br>Tancredi Francese, Italy, Head of the StratCom Unit, Directorate General for Public and Cultural Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (from remote)<br><br>Brad Marshall, UK Government Communications Service, International Project Lead<br><br>Mark Gray, European Commission, Head of Unit, Political Strategy and Communication, DG International Partnerships (INTPA) |
| 1645 – 1700 | Final remarks | Gemma Walsh, UK Government Communications Service<br><br>Vincenzo Le Voci, Secretary-General of the Club of Venice |
| 1700 | Delegates depart | |