

INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT
COMMUNICATION
FORUM 2015
22 – 23 FEBRUARY, SHARJAH, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



**FINAL REPORT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

@SharjahMedia #IGCF15 #IGCF



SharjahMediaCentre

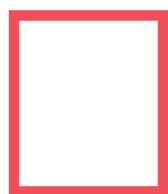




SPECIFIC ACTIONS
BETTER RESULTS

We extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to the partners and sponsors of the International Government Communication Forum 2015 for their support and contribution to the success of the forum.

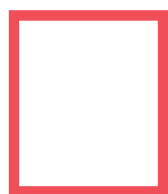
STRATEGIC MEDIA PARTNER		INTERNATIONAL MEDIA PARTNER		CONTENT PARTNERS			OFFICIAL CAR	OFFICIAL AIRLINE	Sharjah Arab Tourism Capital
TRAINING PARTNER		PARTNERS				MEDIA PARTNERS			



**His Highness Sheikh
Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi**

UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah





**His Highness Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad
bin Sultan Al Qasimi**

Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Sharjah



CONTENT

1.	Introduction	11
2.	Final Recommendations	12
3.	Day 1 Opening Ceremony	15
4.	Day1Session1 Panel Discussion: The future of government communication	19
5.	Day 1 Session 2 Case Study: Government communication departments: Communication and dialogue platforms	24
6.	Day 1 Session 3 Interview with Julia Gillard, Prime Minister of Australia (2010-2013)	29
7.	Day 2: Opening Remarks	32
8.	Day 2 Session 1 Interview with Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (2004-2005)	35
9.	Day 2 Session 2 Panel Discussion: The future of digital government communication	38
10.	Day 2 Session 3 Case Study: The Spokesperson: Between the present and the future	44
11.	Workshops and Interactive Lectures	50
12.	Closing Ceremony	55
13.	Statistics:	60
	Participation	61
	Media Coverage	66
	Social Media	78
	Social Media Corner	82
14.	Team Spirit	84



INTRODUCTION

Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, Sharjah Media Centre organised the fourth edition of the International Government Communication Forum (IGCF 2015) from February 22-23 under the theme '**Specific Actions...Better Results**'.

The forum discussed the immediate actions needed today to ensure a better relationship between the government and the public using effective and clear government communication mechanisms. The forum embellished its thought sessions with relevant local/ regional/ international case studies and hosted a group of global experts in the field of government communication who identified the actions required on the international and local levels to further elevate the role of government communication.

Among the guests who attended IGCF 2015 were guests of honour General Michel Sleiman, President of the Republic of Lebanon (2008-2014), President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, Julia Gillard, Prime Minister of Australia (2010-2013), and Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (2004-2005), as well as Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission (2004-2014) and Prime Minister of Portugal (2002-2004) and James Rubin, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs under President Clinton (1997-2000), together with a number of political figures, media representatives, academicians, thought leaders, and local, regional and international government communication professionals.

Recognising the impact of social media on the government communications landscape, the forum this year included for the first time a Social Media Corner and a Social Media Award to encourage the forum's participants and social media users to directly express their views, share comments and ask questions. They were able to do this through tweets, Instagram images and video messages recorded using a special booth designed for the purpose.

The fourth edition of the International Government Communication Forum hosted four workshops and four interactive lectures over the two-day event, seeking to equip nearly 450 participants with skills in decision making, social media communication strategies and crisis management.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The International Government Communication Forum 2015 recommended the following:

First: Recommendations for Governments and Leaders

1. Promote public communication through live TV and radio programmes to create direct dialogue between officials and civil society, highlight the achievements of government institutions and create awareness about the services provided to citizens and the decisions taken in the form of decrees and laws.
2. Enhance communication between departments and ensure the participation of citizens in public service to establish the values of citizenship, support national initiatives and promote activities, cultural life and sports, as well as explain the role of the different institutions to the public.
3. Follow the policy of decentralisation in management to achieve better communication at all levels and locations, and involve specialists, officials and the public in the decision-making process.
4. Spread the culture of communication between officials and the public and create the right environment for it to flourish.
5. Remove the barriers between officials and the public and provide ways for the public to learn more about their leaders, who should have the courage to apply self-criticism and factor in public feedback to evaluate their work.
6. Leaders must trust their people and seek to conduct a responsible, serious dialogue with them on sensitive matters.
7. Focus on selecting qualified media advisers to help make the right decisions and try to win public opinion.
8. Governments need to take the lead and devote time and effort to positive interaction with the public before they turn into negative recipients of information from non-credible sources.

Second: Recommendations for Government Institutions

1. Hire the most suitable communication professionals for appropriate positions.
2. Realise and promote awareness of the new strategic role of government communication among government officers and officials in various ways.
3. Conduct a professional and objective self-assessment to measure the administration's ability to apply the principles of government communication in daily operations and measure the quality of the services provided.
4. Institutions need to adopt sophisticated and modern thinking to keep pace with the technological development and flow of information.
5. Individuals need to understand the media environment and the differences between working with a government, an institution or an international organisation.

Third: Recommendations for Government Communication Departments

1. Adopt a positive openness with the media and apply optimal and constructive communication methods in dealing with them.
2. Government communication officials need to be proactive in their actions, be publicly accessible across various communication platforms, particularly social media, and be quick to interact with their core stakeholders – the public.
3. Government communication needs to be characterised by precision, transparency and objectivity. In addition, it must be understandable, sustainable, comprehensive and timely.
4. Tailor specific messages for each segment of the society in order to engage all segments, while ensuring not to use a standard or neutral message to communicate with people who have different aspirations and fears.
5. Apply a comprehensive training plan for government communication employees.

Fourth: Recommendations for Digital Communication

1. Open channels of communication through the various platforms offered by modern technology and launch innovative interactive initiatives to address the audience.
2. Protect users' personal data from being made public in order to minimise related risks that are a negative side-effect of technology.
3. Regularly update the various platforms used to communicate with the public and ensure permanent and continuous presence in the digital interaction space.

DAY 1 | OPENING CEREMONY 22 FEBRUARY 2015

Fifth: Recommendations for Crisis Communication

1. Governments need to analyse and respond quickly to emergency situations, and be ready to act effectively through a well-trained team capable of handling crises.
2. Develop plans and strategies on how to deal with all contingencies, instead of waiting for the crisis to happen and dealing with it in an impromptu and unplanned manner.
3. Create a crisis coordinating body that involves all stakeholders and representatives of the international community and civil society to instill a sense of collective responsibility towards solving the problem.
4. Put in place the necessary procedures to deliver the right information to the public during a crisis and not disseminate false information or attempt to hide the truth.

Sixth: Recommendations for Official Spokespersons

1. Grant adequate authority to the spokesperson within the government communication department in a crisis scenario to get positive results.
2. A government spokesperson needs to send out clear and credible messages that are well drafted and studied and find the best ways to promote their content to achieve the desired result.
3. Government agencies must coordinate with one another to ensure the success of the spokesperson's messaging by making certain that all the facts given contribute to providing adequate information to the media and the public.
4. A government spokesperson needs to be proficient in using all communication tools available within the 21st century communication landscape to achieve his/her mission.
5. A government spokesperson needs to communicate with the different segments of the society by using the manner, method and tools that they understand. He/she needs to adapt his/her communication to the nature of each different audience.



His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, inaugurated the fourth International Government Communication Forum (IGCF 2015) in the presence of guest of honour General Michel Sleiman, President of the Republic of Lebanon (2008-2014). The opening day of the definitive forum was also attended by over 40 administrative, political and media leaders, together with more than 2,500 government communication professionals and university students, as well as government and media representatives.



Presenter Day 1
George Kordahi
Media Personality
and TV Presenter



**HH Sheikh Dr Sultan
bin Muhammad Al Qasimi**

UAE Supreme Council Member and
Ruler of Sharjah

“Public communication, particularly that represented by live radio and television programmes where people call in with their concerns on important social issues, is crucial for the exchange of information and messages between the government and the people. Such initiatives help the public to better understand the aspirations of the government. They are also vital in engaging citizens and society and introducing government policies, legislations and services to the public.

Such communication activates the process of democracy through informing the people about government policies and triggering a healthy debate on their effectiveness. They also, consequently, help drive government policy and shape public opinion.”

“If a government is to convince the public of its goals, the public must prompt the government to hear its concerns and aspirations, and meet its growing demands. Despite the fact that the media is still a successful channel of persuasion, it only flows in a single direction, especially if the media lacks freedom and objectivity. Effective communication, on the other hand, is richer and more humane for it allows the exchange of thoughts, measures reaction, and encourages participation. Furthermore, communication today is no longer limited to public speaking and includes modern technologies and governance techniques as well.

We must spread the culture of communication between officials and the public and create the right environment for its dissemination in a way that is independent of any influences from legislative, executive and judicial authorities. We need to enact laws that protect communication from any political arrogance. We must fight strict media censorship, and not restrain the media with dictatorship. Last but not the least, officials need to leave their ivory towers and get closer to the public.”



**HE President General
Michel Sleiman**

President of the Republic of
Lebanon (2008-2014)





**HE Sheikh Sultan bin
Ahmed Al Qasimi**
Chairman - Sharjah Media Centre

“The time when the type and sources of information were controlled by governments is long gone, and has now been replaced by an era of interaction and dialogue in which the public has the ability to express its opinion about events in home countries and countries around the world.

The speed of delivering information and influencing the public is creating a challenge for some governments due to the nature of their administrations. However, the emirate of Sharjah looks at this challenge as an opportunity to develop this aspect of government work, as effective government communication that is based on transparency and objectivity has become one of the main factors that characterise effective governance.

Today we live in a time of freedom that prioritises sharing of information and opinion, thus the knowledge of citizens and their ability to communicate are as important a measure of success as the strength of a country's army or economy. No one can deny the power of armies in resolving conflicts, governments around the world now realise that an army may withhold a story or impose an opinion for some time, but will not be able to limit the spread of a counter-story or restrain impressions and ideas all the time.”



DAY 1 | SESSION 1

PANEL DISCUSSION | THE FUTURE OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION



The first session discussed the current and future relationship between governments and the public against a continually evolving landscape. Specific and immediate measures that need to be adopted to ensure greater effectiveness of government communication were also outlined.

Topics:

- Current relationship between governments and the public
- Changes in the expectations of the public vis-à-vis methods of communication
- Future relationship between governments and the public in the continually changing landscape
- Specific and immediate measures that need to be adopted to ensure greater effectiveness of government communication
- Challenges likely to impact the shift in government communication methods

“ Governments need to be proactive, adapt and shape their communication messages to be as close to the truth as possible. Today, we need to understand that the old ways of diplomacy and hiding the truth do not work anymore. Governments should take the initiative and reach out to the public to explain or inform them about developments, while encouraging them not to be passive but rather interact and express their points of view. Governments need to engage with the youth on social media platforms to ensure maximum impact. ”



Speaker
José Manuel Barroso
President of the European Commission (2014-2004) and Prime Minister of Portugal (2004-2002)



Speaker
General Sir Richard Shirreff
Deputy Supreme Allied Commander NATO Europe (2011-2014)

“ Media consultants play an important role in mediating between authorities and the public, and shaping the right communication messages. At the same time, it is essential to get public support to achieve our missions, and this can only be done through building trusted communication with people. ”

“Prior to the media and IT revolution, governments used to monopolise the media and control the news. Today things have changed dramatically and we are witnessing a lack of confidence in the official story. We need to rethink how to convey the message accurately to the public to build greater credibility. We need to be transparent and honest. Interfering with the media will cause us to lose every opportunity to gain and retain the trust of the public.”



Speaker

HE Faisal Al Fayez

First Deputy Speaker of the
Jordanian Senate Council



Moderator

Jeremy Bowen

Middle East Editor - BBC

DAY 1 | SESSION 2

CASE STUDY | GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENTS: COMMUNICATION AND DIALOGUE PLATFORMS



The second session of the fourth International Government Communication Forum featured a debate on the multifaceted roles of government communication professionals and the challenges faced by their departments. The immediate steps needed to prepare them for their dynamic roles were also explored.

Topics:

- Role of government communication departments
- Challenges facing government communication in creating an environment that fosters dialogue and interaction with the public
- Steps needed to prepare government communication departments for their role
- Future role of government communication departments amid the rapid socio-economic changes

“Government communication experts in social media should leverage these platforms to deliver their communication messages to the right audience, at the right time and in the right format. They should test the impact of the communication and strive to address societal concerns emerging from such messages.”



Speaker

Alex Aiken

Executive Director
for Government
Communications -
UK Government



Speaker
Yomna Kamel

Government Communication
Consultant - UAE Ministry of
Cabinet Affairs

“ We need to use proactive communication methods to make people understand how they can benefit from government initiatives. We also need to factor in their feedback to smoothen further interactions with people. We have to be strategic in the way we communicate and reflect that we are not only using social media for the sake of being seen on these platforms.

”

“ Government communication needs to use diverse platforms to communicate with audiences. Such communication should not be restricted in reaching the people in the most accurate and effective ways to avoid misunderstandings. Governments can learn from proactive business models that leverage social media platforms to reach their target audiences and address their felt needs. ”



Speaker
Karen Sanders
Professor, IESE Business
School/CEU San Pablo
University



Speaker
Shanto Iyengar
 Professor of Political
 Science, Stanford University



DAY 1 | SESSION 3

INTERVIEW WITH JULIA GILLARD, PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA (2010-2013)



Gillard shared her experience in the successful management of Australia's economy during the global financial crisis, highlighting the important role that government communication continues to play in shaping public opinion and in addressing key social and economic issues of a country.

Topics:

- Insight into Gillard's practical experience
- Relationship with the media, especially in times of crisis
- Role that government communication plays in vital issues of the country
- Challenges that are likely to hinder the development of government communications
- Future relationship between governments, people and the media



Julia Gillard
Prime Minister of Australia
(2010-2013)

“ A leader should trust his people and seek to conduct a responsible, serious dialogue with them on sensitive matters. He should be able to communicate with honesty, transparency and integrity. If he once made promises and could not fulfill them, he should have the courage to explain to his people the circumstances that made these promises impossible to achieve.

Social media plays a major role in bridging the gap between the government and the public. At the same time, press conferences, interactive forums and talk shows can deepen the dialogue and take communication to the next level through debating crucial issues that affect the lives of the people in order to bring about the desired change.

Governments should undoubtedly respond quickly to urgent matters. However, the speed at which we operate nowadays can adversely impact communication if we do not commit to honesty and truth and if we keep focusing on the urgent matters rather than the important ones. The speed at which news is communicated could sometimes make it challenging to distinguish real issues from fake ones. ”



Moderator
Stephen Sackur
Presenter - BBC HARDtalk

DAY 2 | OPENING REMARKS 23 FEBRUARY 2015



The second day started off with the opening remarks by president of Liberia, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, followed by a number of sessions, workshops and lectures. The first session was an interview with Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (2004-2005), followed by a panel discussion exploring the future of digital government communication. The last session was a case study titled The Spokesperson: Between the present and the future.



Presenter Day 1
Rita Maalouf
News Presenter -
Sky News Arabia

“The story about Liberia on the international media landscape has changed significantly over time - from one of fear to hope, and currently to an unqualified assurance of collective and determined progress. The local media also played a remarkable role in the systemic reporting of the crisis based on released and certified information by an Incident Management System.

The participation of the community was a valuable lesson we learnt - which found huge resonance with the people. We also learnt that forging valuable partnerships through sustained good relations can result in effective support in times of crisis.”

President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf
President of Liberia





Osama Samra
Director - Sharjah Media Centre

“Sharjah Government’s vision stems from the belief that people are the focus of all decisions and activities, and the government communication process must reflect the truth and aim to achieve concurrence between what is said and what is done. The accomplishments that Sharjah has achieved in all domains have led to greater credibility in our messaging and inspired us to leverage innovative ways in developing a model to communicate with the world. This model of credibility is based on the principle that government messages must reflect government actions and not be separated from them or in conflict with them.”



DAY 2 | SESSION 1

INTERVIEW WITH LAKHDAR BRAHIMI, SPECIAL ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS (2004-2005)



Exploring the relationship that exists between international decision makers and the public, Lakhdar Brahimi’s interview-style session focused on the vital role and challenges of government communication in contentious diplomatic issues, particularly in shaping public opinion.

The session was attended by His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Salem Al Qasimi, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah, Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and a number of political figures, media representatives, academicians, thought leaders and professionals from government communication departments in the UAE and across the globe.

Topics:

- Glimpses of Brahimi’s practical experience
- Relationship with the media, especially in times of crisis and diplomacy
- The role that government communication plays in the vital issues of the country
- Challenges that could face the development of government communication
- Future relations between the government, people and the media



Lakhdar Brahimi

Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (2005-2004)

“ One of the core challenges is developing capacities and tools that allow governments to deal with crises. Governments need to engage proactively with civil society and independent influential individuals to form informal associations capable of monitoring changes. Such moves will benefit governments and develop them further.

This forum is the only model for dialogue on government communication regionally and internationally, and I hope that other Arab governments follow the example of Sharjah and the UAE in adopting policies of openness and constructive communication towards people and the media. ”



Moderator

Raghida Dergham

New York Bureau Chief -
Al Hayat Newspaper

DAY 2 | SESSION 2

PANEL DISCUSSION | THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION



Discussing measures that need to be taken with immediate effect to promote effective digital government communication in the future, this session reviewed the impact of digital government communication on the cultural, social and economic development of nations.

Topics:

- Importance of digital government communication and its current features
- Future of digital government communication
- Measures that need to be taken today to promote effective digital government communication in the future
- Challenges that could impair the effectiveness of governments' digital communication

“ We are in the era of social media. The next generation is around the Internet of Things. Today, everybody is reachable and the main challenge as we become more connected is the natural concern of protecting our privacy and security. The government plays a big part in protecting our data as everything will become even more accessible. ”



Speaker
Jared Cohen
Founder and Director
of Google Ideas



Speaker
Hugh Pinney
Vice President News EMEA -
Getty Images

“ We have the responsibility to promote truth and accuracy. We need to conform to the values of authenticity and credibility. Governments, meanwhile, are still communicating neutral messages to all audiences instead of tailoring specific messages for each segment of the society in order to engage all segments and build real communication that achieves progress. ”

“ It is important for governments to be part of the ongoing conversation. Tools for governments are important to use properly - which is why I urge governments to go to where the people are talking. Governments need to work on reducing risks and providing security to their people by proactively using communication tools to protect future generations from terrorist groups. This can be done by engaging with the youth and influencing them by example. ”



Speaker
Ben Hammersley
Journalist and researcher on
social networking tools



Speaker
Muna Abu Sulayman
 Preenter - MBC

“The future of government communication should be built on a new common denominator, which is high awareness of people’s needs, fears and aspirations. The more people are able to express their thoughts and opinions to the government, the easier the job is for the latter. Instead of oppressing opinions, governments need to approach the public and adopt an open discussion that builds trust and confidence and drive both towards a better future.”



Moderator
Rima Maktabi
 TV Journalist and
 Reporter - Al Arabiya News

DAY 2 | SESSION 3

CASE STUDY | THE SPOKESPERSON: BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE



The fourth International Government Communication Forum concluded its sessions with a panel discussion highlighting the role of the modern spokesperson in delivering messages and building public awareness in light of the growing social media presence in the overall communication landscape today.

Urging governments to recognise the need to cultivate a fresh approach to communication in order to truly engage with society, panelists concurred that government-level communication is a dialogue and not a monologue. With the use of case studies and experiences to underline the competencies that a spokesperson must possess, the session reiterated the importance of continuous training to maintain and improve the spokesperson's delivery of quality government communication.

Topics:

- The multidimensional role of today's official spokespersons
- Empowering the spokesperson with effective communication tools
- Grooming a spokesperson
- Future role of official spokespersons



Speaker

James Rubin

Assistant Secretary of
State for Public Affairs
under President Clinton
(2000-1997)

“Officials often think that the problem lies in communication, but actually most of the time, it is a policy problem. Hence, the rule is good policies can be damaged by a bad communication strategy, but at the same time, a great communication strategy cannot fix what bad policies have incurred.”

“ Governments today may be faced with social challenges that can only be effectively resolved with public intervention. Such dialogue can help governments identify the most urgent issues and problems. The spokesperson is a product of teamwork. He should balance his relationship with social media audiences as well as remain in the good books of key decision makers. ”



Speaker

Mustafa Al Khalfi

Minister of Communication
and Spokesperson of the
Moroccan Government



Speaker

Robin Gordon-Farleigh

News Planner - UK Prime Ministry

“ From my experience I have learnt that the spokesperson has three key responsibilities: deliver important government messages, remain credible at all times, and ensure that the messages are of high quality and can be smoothly understood by the audience. ”

“Today, we are witnessing four mega technological trends, and we should try to leverage them to help the spokesperson achieve better results in communicating with the public. We have a wealth of data and information, and we must not keep the speaker disconnected from this information. Therefore, spokespersons have to keep a close eye on social media feeds and utilise them to come across as more realistic and more credible.”



Speaker

Khaled Hazem

Industry Solution Manager,
Government Middle East &
Africa Public Sector - Microsoft



Moderator

Turki Al Dakhil

General Manager of
Al Arabiya News Channel

WORKSHOPS AND INTERACTIVE LECTURES



The fourth edition of the International Government Communication Forum hosted four workshops and four interactive lectures over the two-day event, seeking to equip nearly 450 participants with skills in decision making, social media communication strategies and crisis management.

WORKSHOP 1

Communicating complex issues to a sceptic audience - case of the EU budget 2014-2020

The workshop presented a case study to illustrate the complex issue of the EU budget with a view to improving public perception of this issue. The session provided participants with an understanding of the timeline for the decision-making process, as well as insights into the communication models prepared and how social media is used within the process.

Focus of the workshop:

- Whom to target and how?
- What communication tools (press releases, Twitter and other social media, background briefings) should be used?
- What can be done to simplify the message? (use of metaphors, models, examples)
- What is the role of one-on-one communication and personal contacts?



Trainer
Ron Korver

Head of the Service for Science
and Economy at the Press Unit
of the European Parliament

“ The Euro40 billion budget of the European Union is efficiently leveraged for common objectives of the member countries, such as the environment, with minimal delays. In the same way the GCC region can also leverage a common fund or monetary union to tackle core issues that need prompt redressal. ”

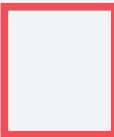
WORKSHOP 2

Digital communications - future and challenges

The second workshop explored lessons learnt from Malaysia Airlines and other recent incidents, providing an insight into how social media is changing the dynamics of government relationships with citizens. The importance of speed in government communication without dilution of the accuracy of messaging was also highlighted.

Focus of the workshop:

- How social media can create an immediate information vacuum and cause authorities to lose control at a critical moment through an overwhelming demand for information that is simply not available
- How should authorities respond to such a demand to ensure reputations are not damaged and control of the agenda is not lost?
- How does one prepare for such eventualities?



Trainer
Donald Steel
Specialist in Reputation,
Media Relations and Crisis
Management

“ Information is being transmitted at unprecedented speeds, a reason why it is important to report incidents rights away and communicate the right message during crisis situations. It is also important to provide a prompt response to what is being said on relevant channels if we are to avoid miscommunication with our audience. ”

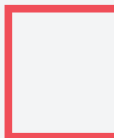
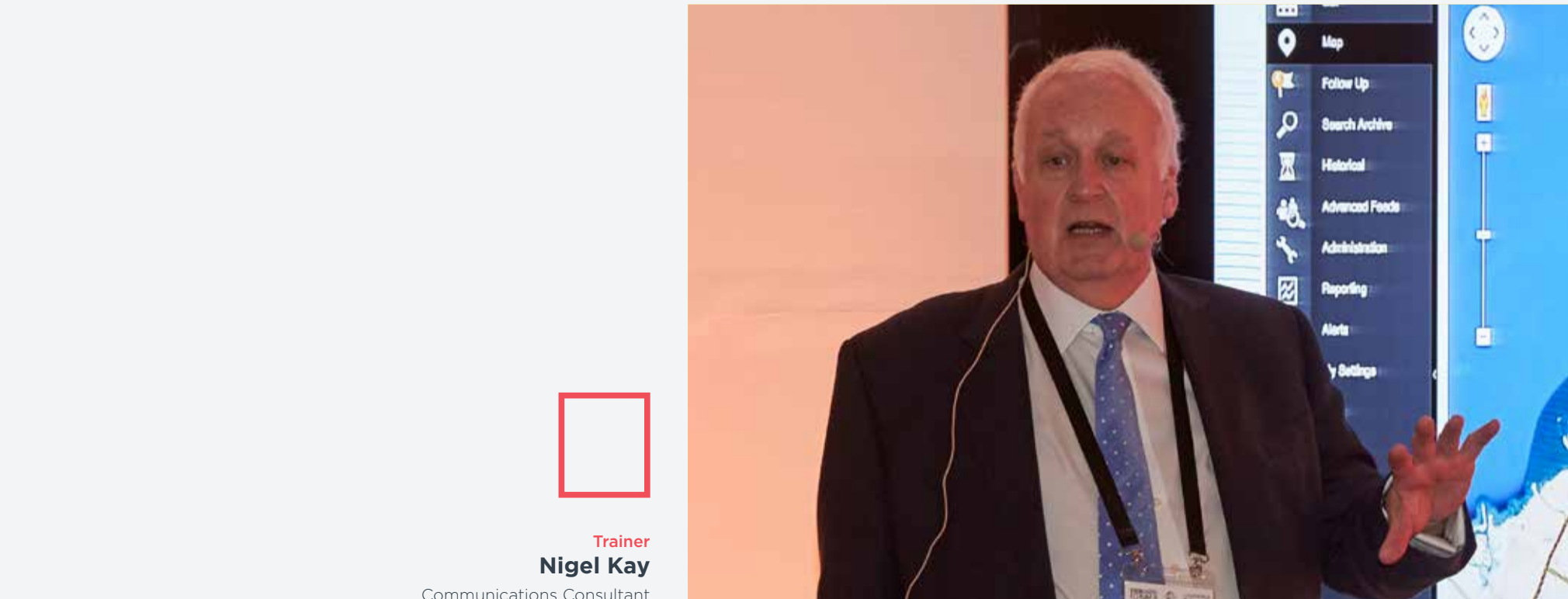
LECTURE 1

Crisis communications in the digital age

The first interactive lecture elaborated on the role of governments during crises and the impact of social media on traditional emergency management processes. The lecture also provided participants with the ability to analyse whether social media is the most effective tool when it comes to communicating with the public during emergency scenarios.

Focus of the lecture:

- Role of governments in a crisis
- Impact of social media on traditional emergency management processes



Trainer
Nigel Kay
Communications Consultant

“ The government’s handling of crisis and emergency communication has undergone a sea change today, thanks to the impact of social media in every aspect of our lives. The police and civil defence can also effectively leverage social media to contain negative publicity. ”

LECTURE 2

Case study of BP and the Deepwater Horizon disaster

The second lecture highlighted the role of crisis communication in limiting reputation damage and financial loss. It also underlined the importance of preparedness and the need to have an effective corporate PR strategy in place for crisis situations.

Focus of the lecture:

- Role of crisis communication in stemming reputation damage and financial loss
- Importance of preparedness and ensuring an effective corporate PR strategy to deal with crises
- Importance of selecting the right spokesperson to communicate the right degree of empathy, contrition and sincerity to key target audiences in crisis scenarios
- Need to engage with all key stakeholders and the legal team before facing the media



Trainer
Mark Webster
Communications Consultant

“ Every organisation should not only have a well-structured plan but must also stick to what is agreed upon in the eventuality of a crisis. It is important to have specific messages ready to be communicated to the audience. Drawing upon the BP experience in crisis communication, we saw that although BP had a pre-planned communication strategy, the company was unable to communicate properly with its audience as it failed to stick to its pre-planned approach. ”



DAY 2 | CLOSING CEREMONY 23 FEBRUARY 2015



His Excellency Sheikh Sultan bin Ahmed Al Qasimi, Chairman of Sharjah Media Centre (SMC), brought the curtains down on the International Government Communication Forum 2015 at a gala dinner that was held at Al Majaz Amphitheatre in Sharjah.

His Excellency honoured the speakers and moderators of the International Government Communication Forum 2015 for their role in the success of the seminal event. He also acknowledged all the government departments, companies and media organisations that supported the forum as sponsors, including Emirates Airlines (Airline Partner), Arabian Gulf Mechanical Centre – BMW (Official Car), Getty Images, twofour54 and Microsoft (Content Partners), Sky News Arabia (Regional Media Partner), The New York Times (International Media Partner), Thomson Foundation (Training Partner), National Media Council, Al Khaleej newspaper, Al Bayan newspaper and Dubai Radio (Media Partners), National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority (NCEMA), as well as Pink Caravan, Tim Hortons and Expo Centre Sharjah (Partners).



Presenter
Zeina Yazigi
TV host - Sky News Arabia



HE Sheikh Sultan bin Ahmed Al Qasimi
Chairman - Sharjah Media Centre



“ No word of thanks is adequate enough to express our gratitude to His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah. Our Ruler’s enlightened vision has been a sustained inspiration and contributed to the success of the forum in its four consecutive editions. As we bring down the curtains on yet another successful edition, we thank you for your valuable participation and hope you will take back beautiful memories of the forum, as well as of the emirate of Sharjah.

We, in the UAE, are fully aware of the fundamental elements that need to be put in place to leverage government communication and drive its progress. We believe that through hosting this forum annually, we bring a new dimension to the concept of government communication. ”





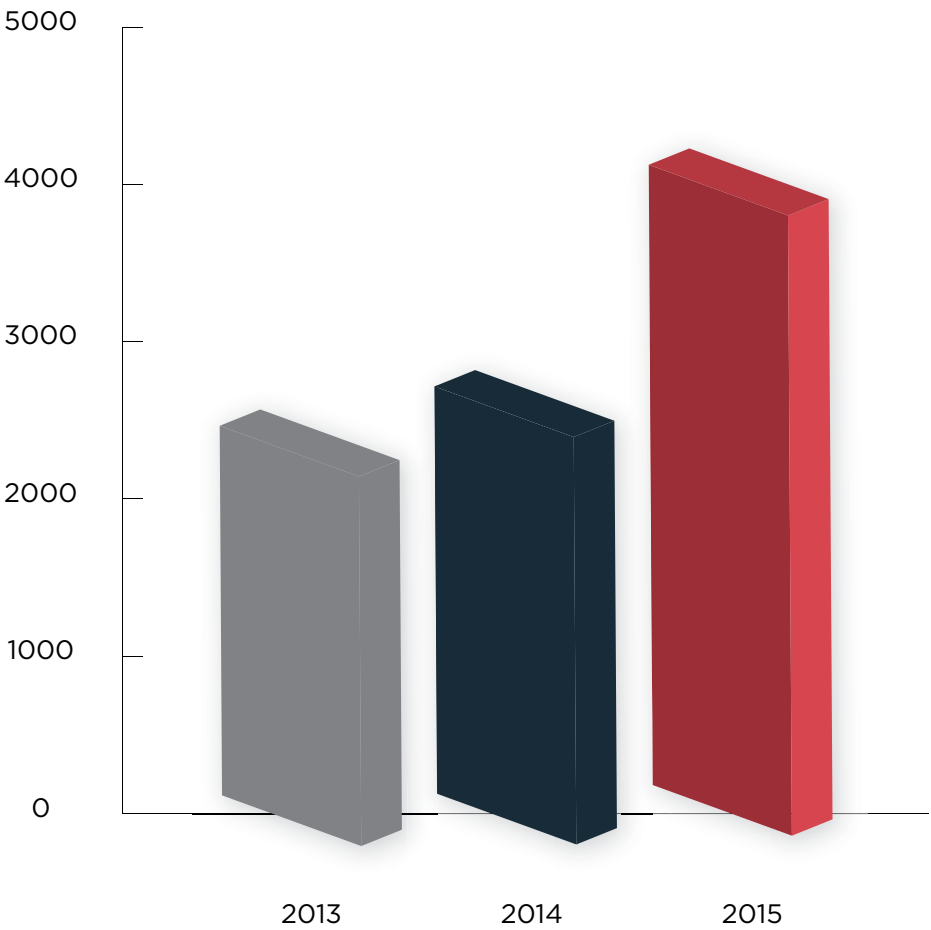
STATISTICS
22-23 FEBRUARY 2015



PARTICIPATION

Attendance at IGCf 2015 compared to previous editions

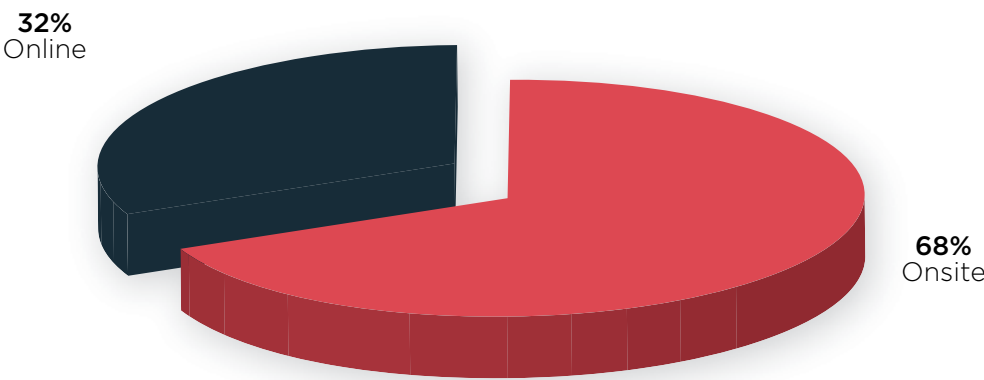
Forum	Count
2015	4196
2014	2756
2013	2500



PARTICIPATION

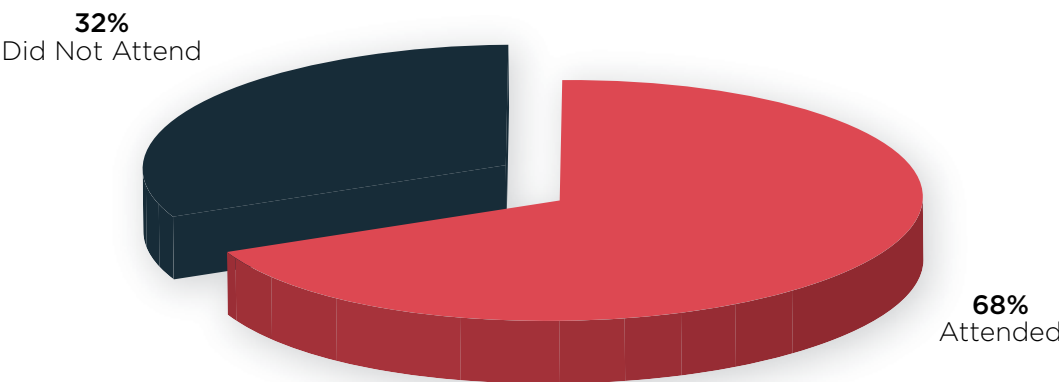
Registration mode analysis

Mode	Count
Onsite	2835
Online	1361
Total	4196



Pre-registrants attendance analysis

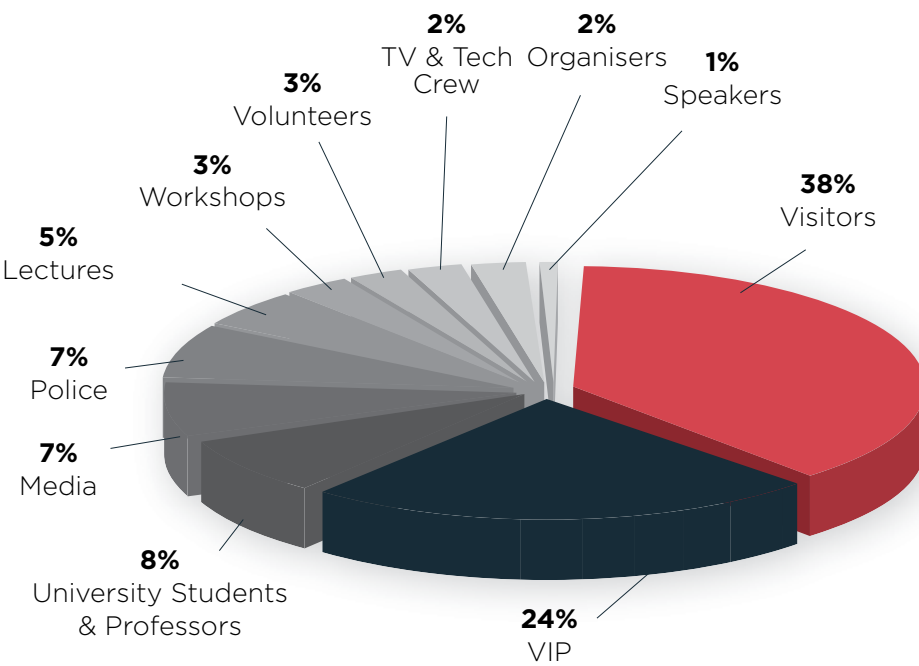
Pre-registrants	Count
Attended	1361
Did Not Attend	628



PARTICIPATION

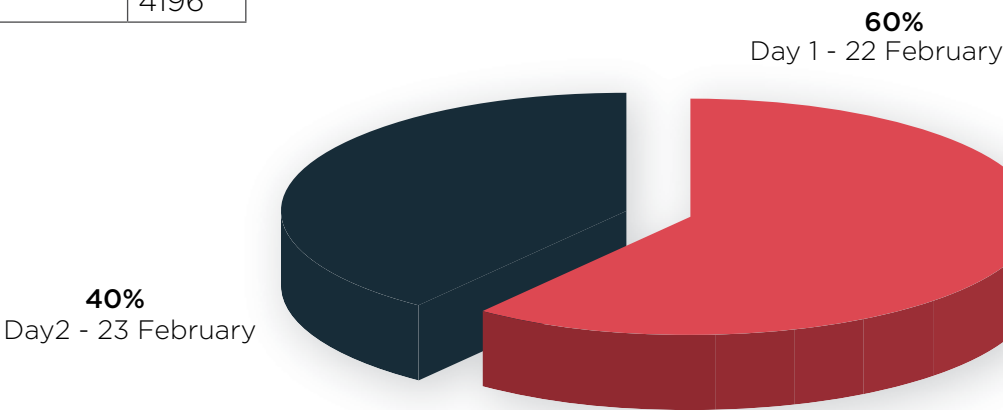
Badge category analysis

Type	Count
Visitors	1586
VIP	993
University Students & Professors	330
Media	306
Police	300
Lectures	205
Workshops	128
Volunteers	110
TV & Tech Crew	105
Organisers	103
Speakers	30
Total	4196



Day-wise attendance analysis

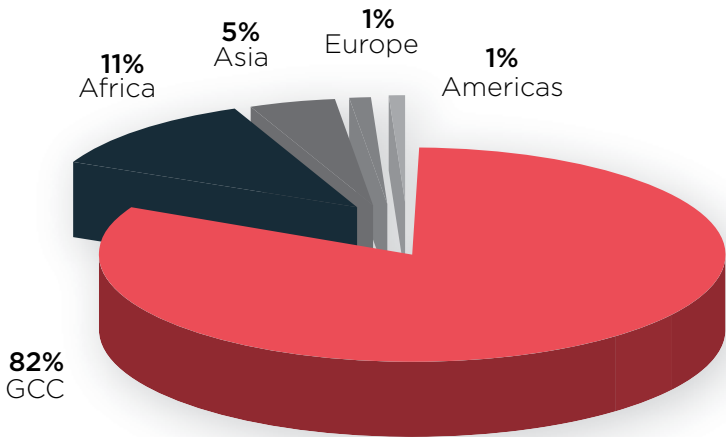
Date	Count
Day 1 - 22 nd February	2536
Day 2 - 23 rd February	1660
Total	4196



PARTICIPATION

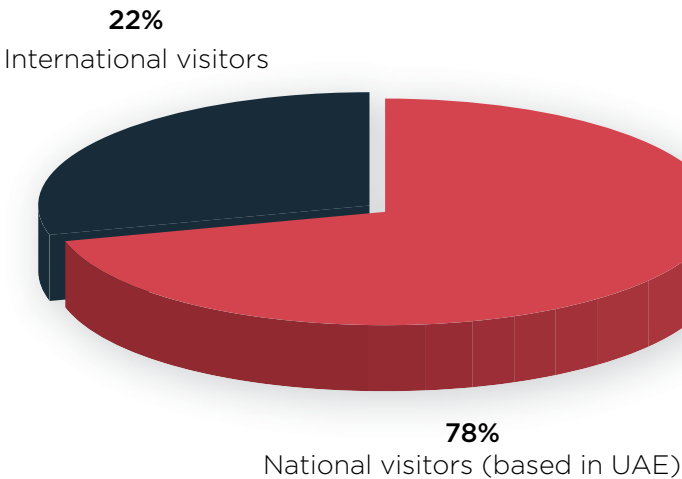
Region-wise analysis

Region	Count
GCC	3446
Africa	483
Asia	193
Europe	42
Americas	32
Total	4196



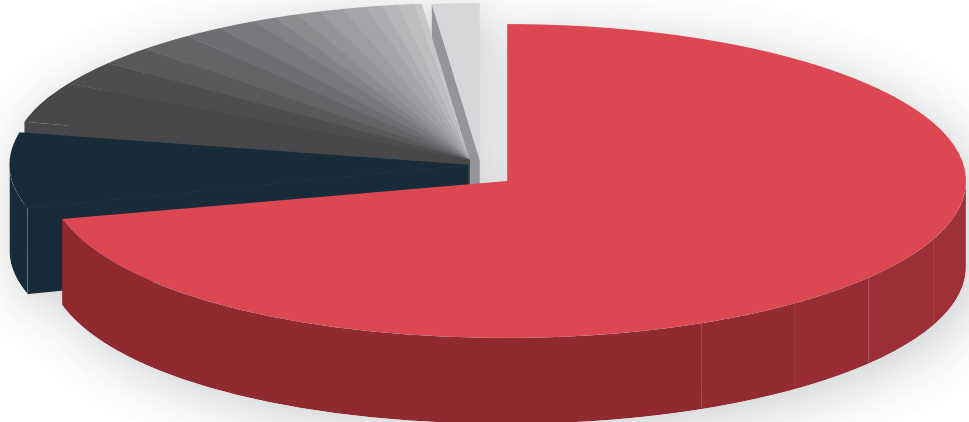
National / International visitors

Type of Visitors	Count
National (based in UAE)	2975
International	1221
Total	4196

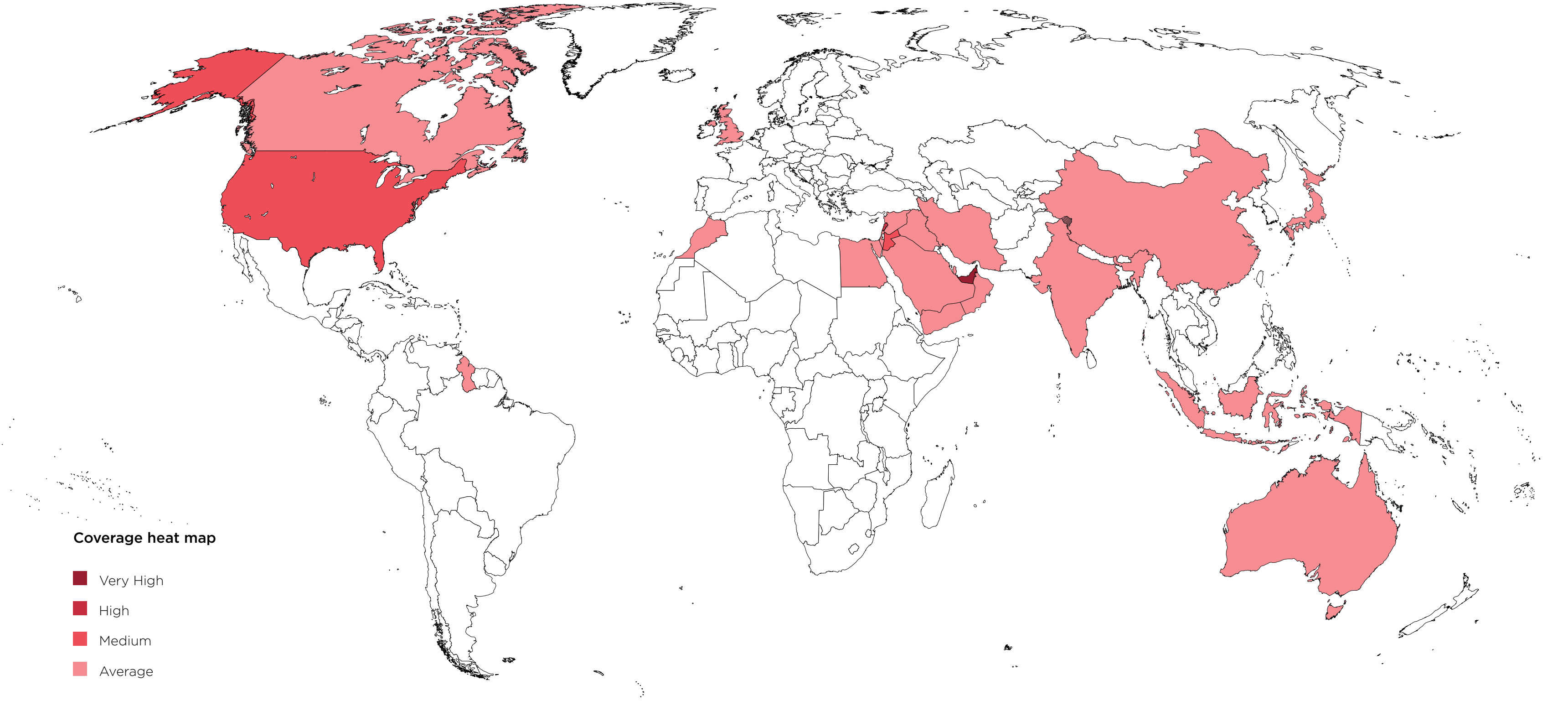


PARTICIPATION

Country-wise analysis

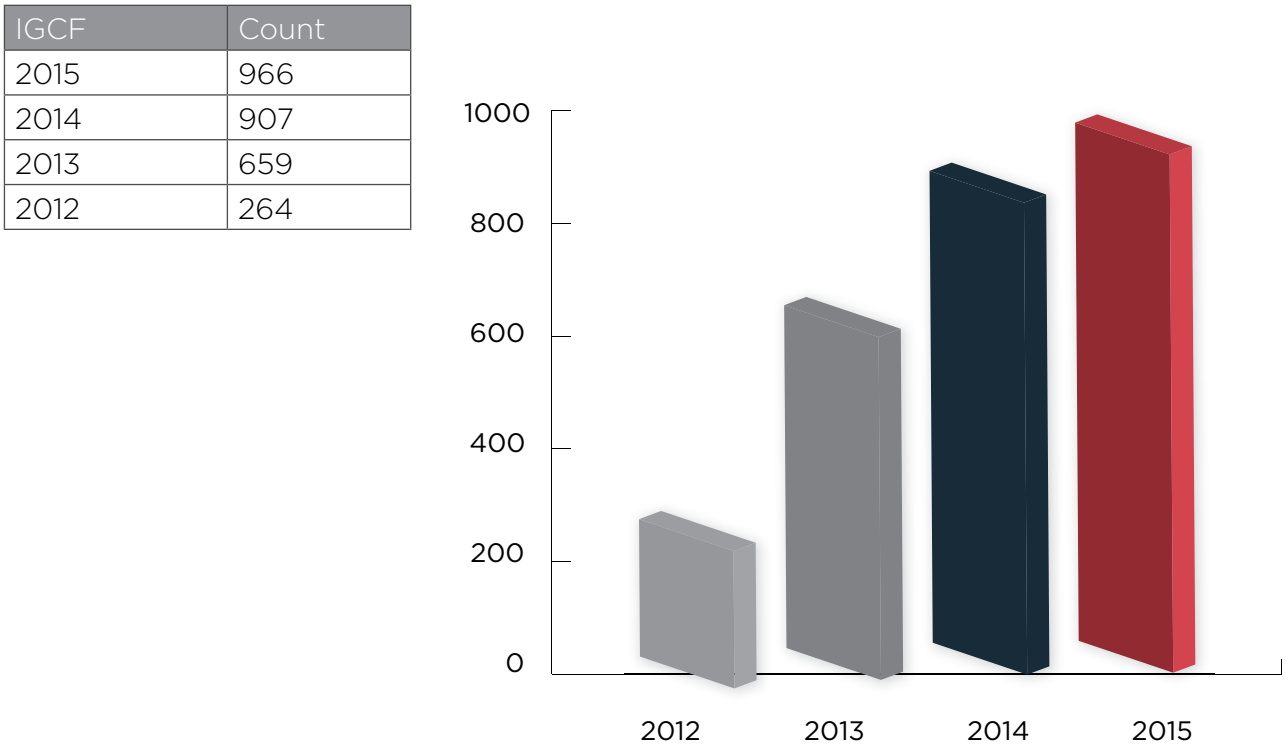


United Arab Emirates	2975	United Kingdom	36
Saudi Arabia	316	Qatar	36
Lebanon	181	United States of America	26
Jordan	99	Syria	26
Egypt	85	Oman	24
Palestine	78	Somalia	23
India	62	Algeria	22
Kuwait	54	Iraq	18
Bahrain	41	Malaysia	13
Morocco	38	Other	43

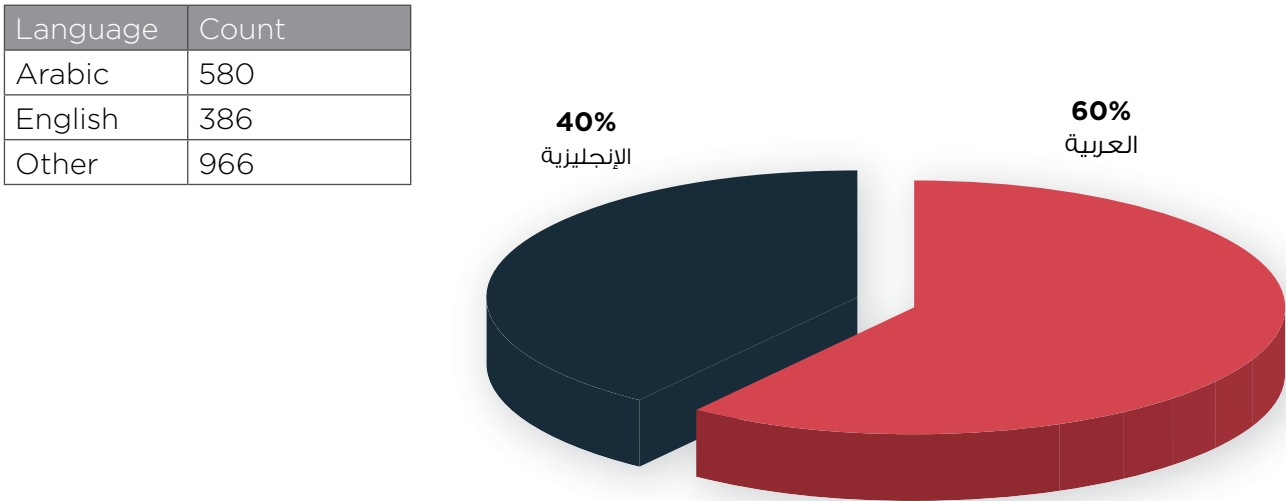


MEDIA COVERAGE

Media coverage of IGCF 2015 in comparison with previous editions

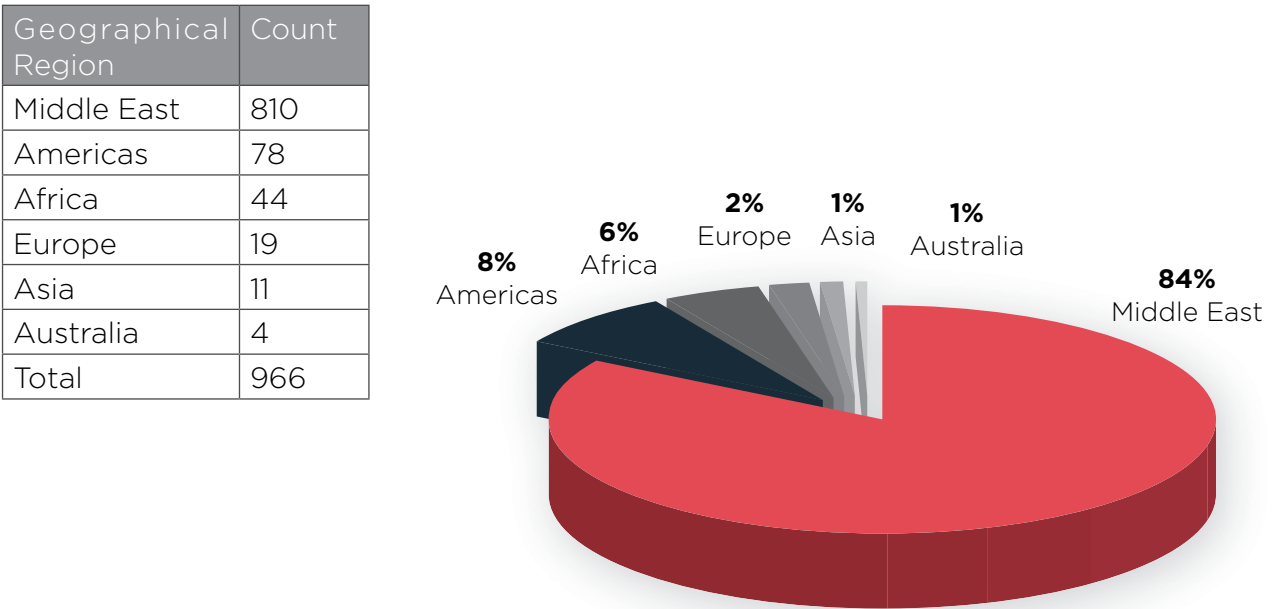


Clipping distribution by language

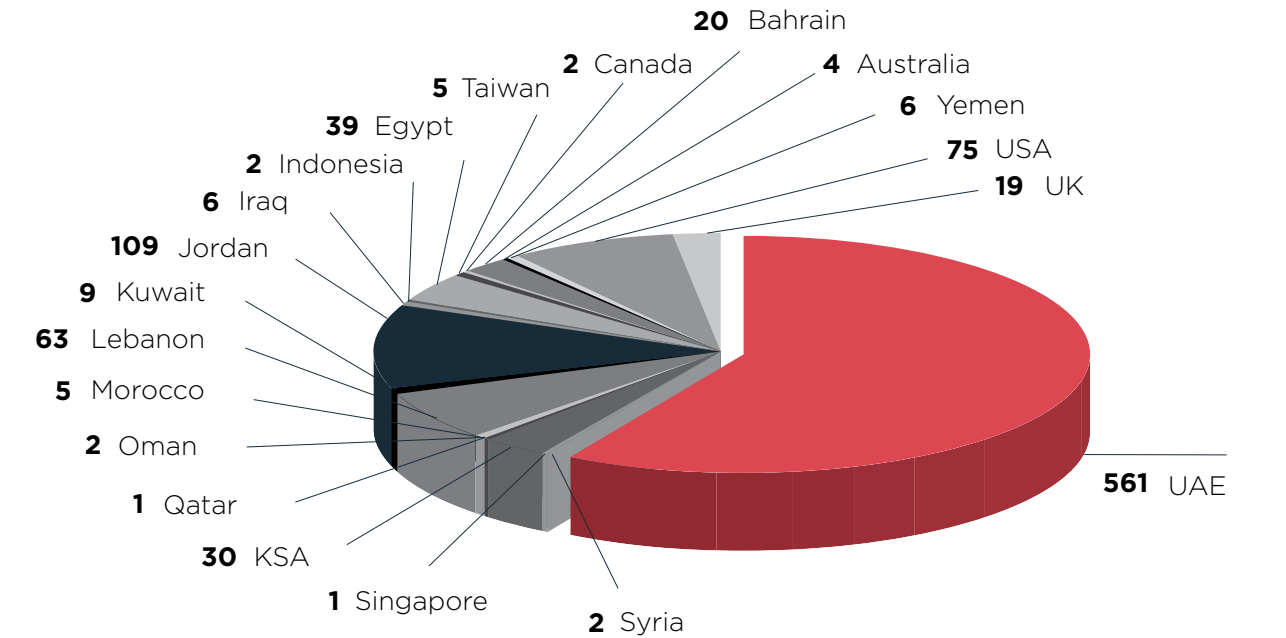


MEDIA COVERAGE

Clipping distribution by geographical region



Monitored period: January - March 2015



MEDIA COVERAGE

MEDIA COVERAGE

Top 10 sources covering IGCF 2015

Source	Count
Fana News	60
Zawya	52
Al-Bayan	43
Dar Al-Khaleej	37
Gulf News	26
Emirates Voice	21
Gulf Today	16
Yahoo Maktoob News	15
Al-Fajer	15
Dubai City Info	12

Cloud: keywords mostly associated with IGCF

communication forum **country** disease forum

Al Qasimi government communication IGCF government

International Government Communication Forum Liberia people

President Barack Obama President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Sharjah

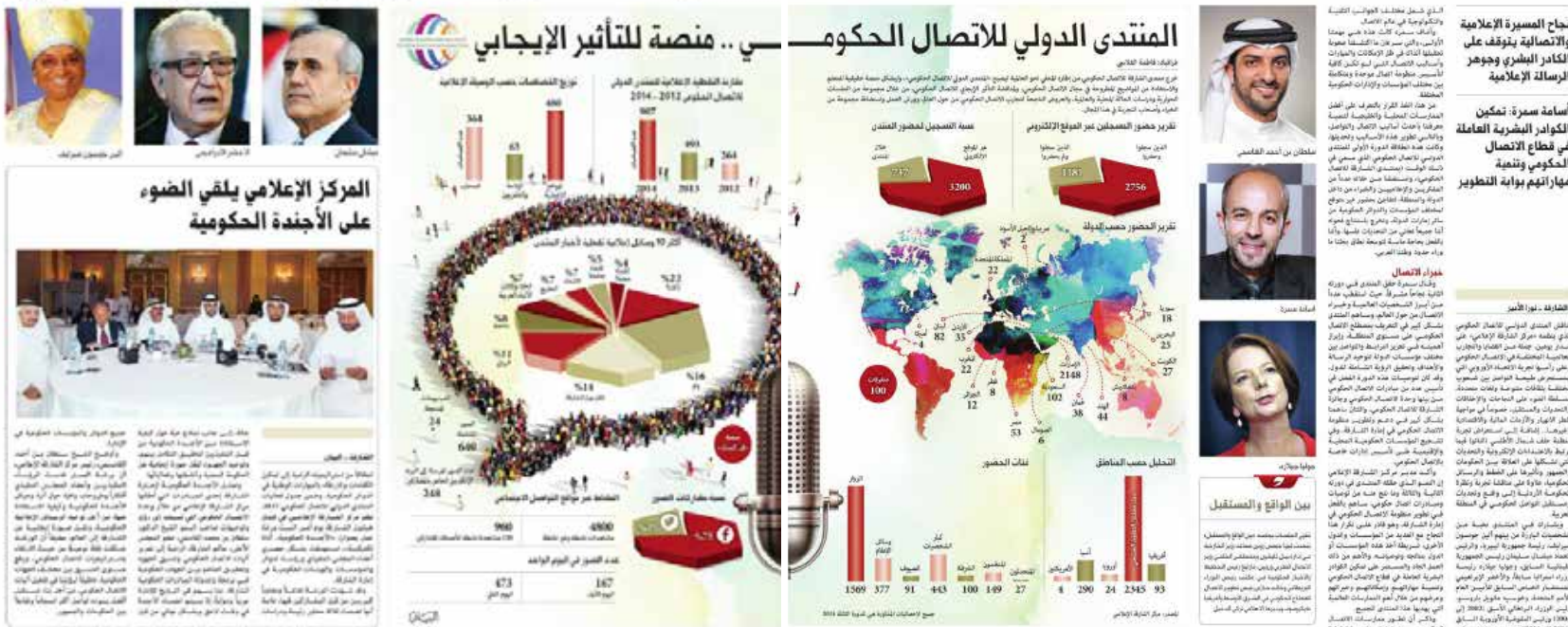
Sharjah Media Centre Sirleaf social media support

UAE Supreme Council Member United States



30 متحدثاً و8 جلسات حوارية يقدمها نخبة من الشخصيات السياسية والإعلامية

تجارب عالمية على طاولة النقاش وجلسات لتحديد الآليات المطلوبة لتفعيل دور الاتصال الحكومي

[illegible]

[illegible][illegible]

Dharunha Gokulan

Using social media as an effective tool, academic circles and religious leaders need to target the youths and protect them from extremist ideologies, said *Tahsin Afjees*, First Deputy Speaker of the Pakistan Senate Council. Concerning military action against religion extremists in Pakistan, Dushanbe only asked him to be added.

As effective, truthful, sincere and freely communicative exchange between people and their governments that can lighten extremist groups is urgently the need of the hour, said policy makers and experts on the first day of the *South Asian Government Conference*.

Abstract

Concerns must tell people the truth because there is credibility in truth, added José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission (2004-2014) and former Prime Minister of Portugal (2002-2004).

General Alioum Bahadou Niamé, Deputy Secretary-General of the National Conference (2011-2014) was also one of the panel. His two speakers dealt with cooperation with foreign forces, Middle East Education at the UN, and:

"It is crucial to use social media. But there should be the direct communication between them [in power and citizens], said Ali Faye. Ali Faye said that several countries in the Middle East are trying to build a democracy and there is need to carry out a gradual political reform.

Quoting the example of WikiLeaks, Ali Faye said crucial government documents pertained

only when particular events take place. This is really, governments' basic message for a long time. It is not a statement that can be made public for a long time. It is a statement that is made only when the government has information that is not wished to protect the political outcome of policy initiation or power. But in most cases, it is a matter to the nature of trust and security.

The speakers also addressed the need for governments to be careful while communicating with people. "The most basic rule in government communication, or any communication is the truth," said the speaker. "The government should be careful for the records of the US," said also the gap in communication with the audience, resulting from lack of communication tools in some today.

The speakers suggested that traditional means of communication like Maifu or a Shazhu wherein face-to-face communication is encouraged, can be used to communicate with youth.

All parties said that governments must not interfere with youth and press.

By Anand Kishore



... during a panel discussion during
NT photos by M. Sajjad



الكلمات الشائعة: لغة الجسد، والحدود، والمخاطبة، والتواصل، والعلاقات.

[illegible]

<p>التي هي عبارة عن مجموعة من التغيرات الجينية التي تحدث في كائن حي نتيجة لتأثير العوامل البيئية أو الكيميائية أو الفيزيائية. يمكن أن تحدث الطفرات في جميع الكائنات الحية، سواء كانت بدائية أو متقدمة. وتعتبر الطفرات من أهم العوامل التي تساهم في التنوع الجيني والتطور.</p> <p>تتسبب الطفرات في تغيير تسلسل الحمض النووي (DNA) في الخلية. يمكن أن يحدث هذا التغيير إما بشكل عشوائي، أو نتيجة لتأثير العوامل البيئية مثل الإشعاع أو المواد الكيميائية. يمكن أن تكون الطفرات ضارة، أو مفيدة، أو محايدة.</p> <p>تعتبر الطفرات من أهم العوامل التي تساهم في التنوع الجيني والتطور. يمكن أن تؤدي الطفرات إلى ظهور صفات جديدة، والتي يمكن أن تكون مفيدة للكائن الحي في بيئته. يمكن أن تؤدي الطفرات أيضًا إلى ظهور أمراض وراثية.</p>	<p>الطفرات الجينية هي تغييرات في تسلسل الحمض النووي (DNA) في الخلية. يمكن أن تحدث الطفرات بشكل عشوائي، أو نتيجة لتأثير العوامل البيئية مثل الإشعاع أو المواد الكيميائية. يمكن أن تكون الطفرات ضارة، أو مفيدة، أو محايدة.</p> <p>تعتبر الطفرات من أهم العوامل التي تساهم في التنوع الجيني والتطور. يمكن أن تؤدي الطفرات إلى ظهور صفات جديدة، والتي يمكن أن تكون مفيدة للكائن الحي في بيئته. يمكن أن تؤدي الطفرات أيضًا إلى ظهور أمراض وراثية.</p>	<p>الطفرات الجينية هي تغييرات في تسلسل الحمض النووي (DNA) في الخلية. يمكن أن تحدث الطفرات بشكل عشوائي، أو نتيجة لتأثير العوامل البيئية مثل الإشعاع أو المواد الكيميائية. يمكن أن تكون الطفرات ضارة، أو مفيدة، أو محايدة.</p> <p>تعتبر الطفرات من أهم العوامل التي تساهم في التنوع الجيني والتطور. يمكن أن تؤدي الطفرات إلى ظهور صفات جديدة، والتي يمكن أن تكون مفيدة للكائن الحي في بيئته. يمكن أن تؤدي الطفرات أيضًا إلى ظهور أمراض وراثية.</p>
---	--	--

BY IRIS MOSE

STARVING: Julia Gillard, the Prime Minister of Australia, is seen here in her office, has urged governments to respond first to important matters rather than urgent ones. She is seen here participating in an interview at the 2011 International Governmental Forum (IGF) in Tokyo.

the IGF, the director of the Stephen Barker, presenter of the ABC's award-winning *HARDtalk* program, said that governments should undoubtedly respond quickly to urgent matters. However, the speed at which we operate in the digital age, and the communications of we do not keep to is loosely and tenth and if we keep looking at urgent matters, then that means that the speed at which news in communicated could sometimes make it impossible to distinguish and issues from fake ones."

She noted that a leader has to have a high sense of self and a sense of responsibility. "It might arise whenever he or she people or fellow citizens are in need."

"Digital communication platforms may have many disadvantages, but we have to find a way to use them to help us to benefit from them and achieve our greater goals," she said.

Gillard shared her experience of the IGF, and the importance of Australia's economy during the 2011 IGF.



Julia Gillard during the interview moderated by Stephen Sackur.

important financial crisis, highlighting the impact that role that government has in the economy. The panelists also discussed the importance of transparency in shaping public opinion and addressing key social and economic issues in a country.

"The Internet and media plays a major role in bridging the gap between the government and the people," said the panelists. "References, interactive forums and talk shows can deepen the dialogue and take communication to the next level. It is important for the government to share the views of the people in order to bring about the desired changes in the country."

"A government should trust the people and seek to render a responsible, serious dialogue with them," said the panelists. "The government should be able to communicate with honesty, transparency and integrity. If you make promises and could not keep them, it will lose the trust of the people. It is important for the government to be courageous to explain to the people the circumstances that made the government take a particular decision. It is important for the government to be honest and achieve. Surely people will forgive them for their honest admission," said the panelists.







Dr. Gnanapavan served as the prime minister of Australia from 2010 to 2013. During her tenure, Gnanapavan was the first woman to be the prime minister of Australia. She was also the first woman to be the prime minister of Australia to visit China, India, Japan, Indonesia and South Korea. She represented Australia at the G20, and was the first woman to host the 2014 meeting.

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

Sharjah Media Centre’s official Twitter account : @SharjahMedia

Timeline Deliveries	Contributors	Reach	Tweets
139,826,180	5,848	12,772,303	29,774

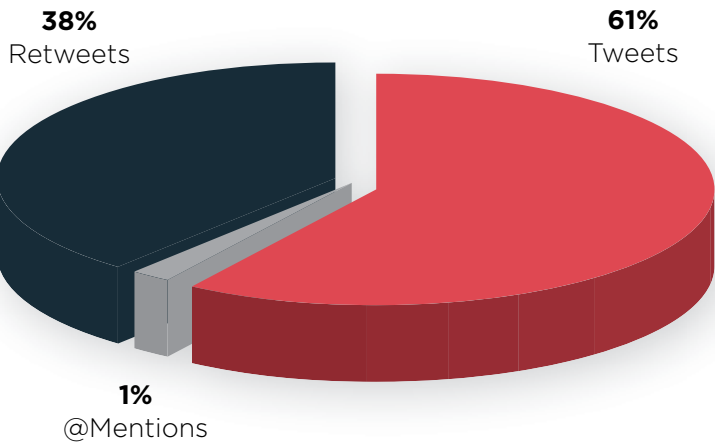
Most timeline deliveries

 @alarabiya_eng 6,026,297	 @neshantv 2,117,959	 @skynewsarabia 1,280,840
 @rimamaktabi 3,415,200	 @munaabusulayman 5,625,560	 @SharjahMedia 18,211,692

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

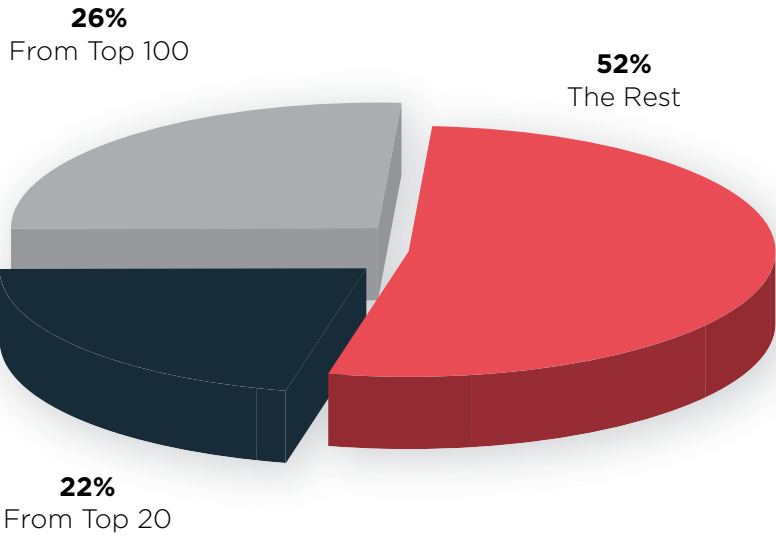
Engagement

- Tweets
- @Mentions
- Retweets



Participation

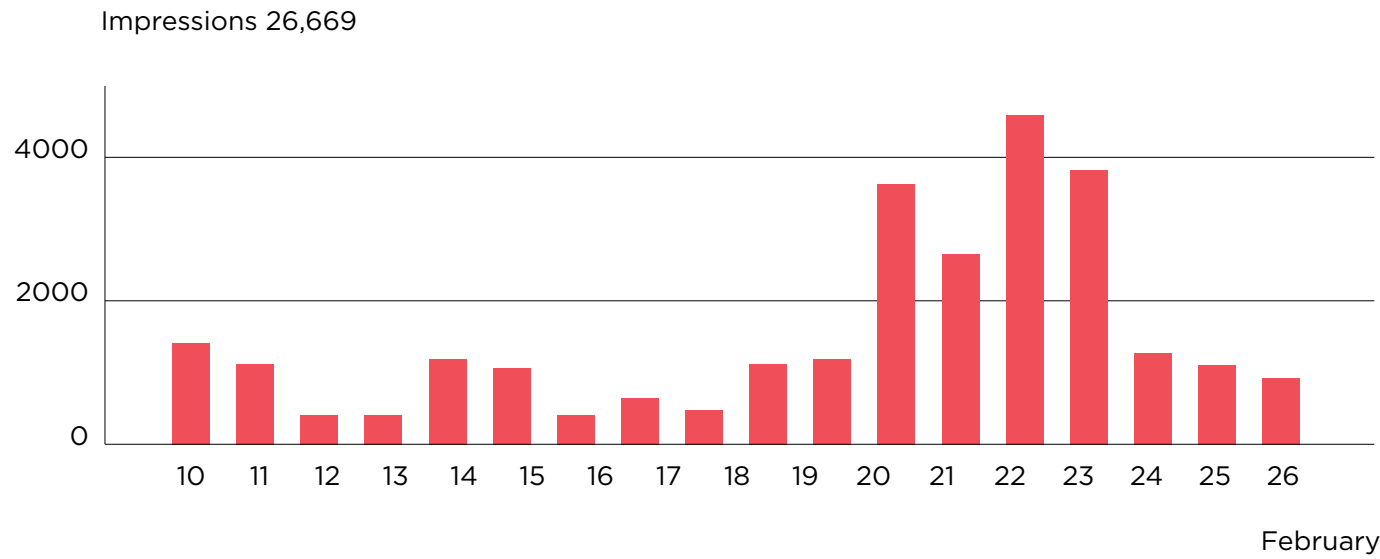
- From Top 20
- From Top 100
- The Rest



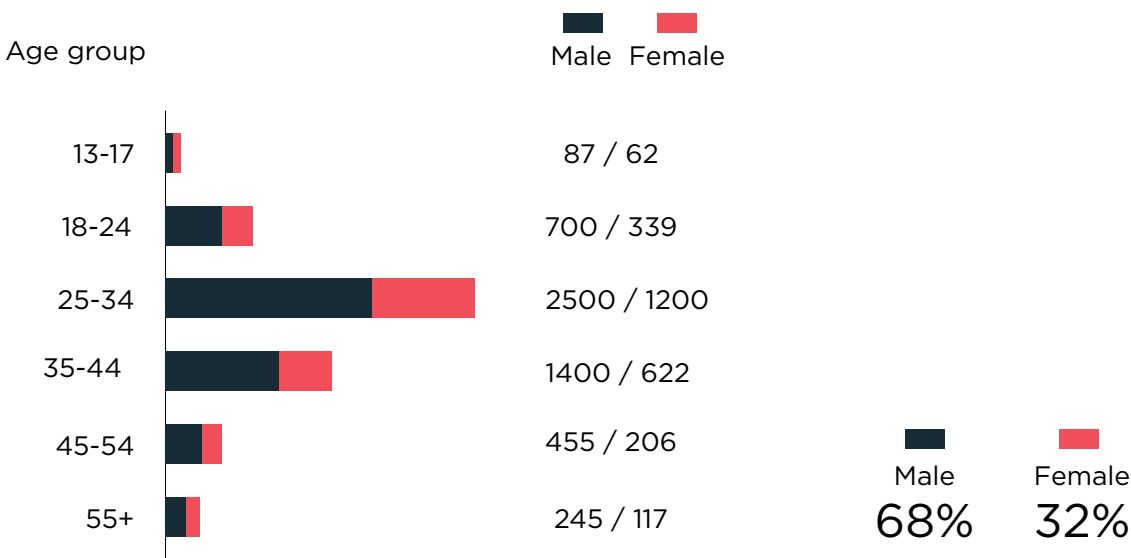
Sharjah Media Centre’s official Facebook account : SharjahMedia

Interactions	Users	Impressions	New facebook fans
609	8,140	26,669	82

Page impressions between 10 and 26 February 2015 by 8,140 users



Impression demographics: age and gender



Impression demographics: top countries

United Arab Emirates	4600
Sudan	379
Algeria	361
Saudi Arabia	360
India	188

Impression demographics: top cities

Dubai, UAE	2800
Sharjah, UAE	908
Abu Dhabi, UAE	572
Khartoum, Sudan	323
Riyadh, KSA	188

SOCIAL MEDIA CORNER

SOCIAL MEDIA CORNER

Statistics

Photos Snapped	Emails Collected	Instagram Prints	Twitter Prints
558	558	75%	75%
Shares on Facebook	Shares on Twitter	Shares on Pinterest	Shares on Google+
58%	18%	13%	11%



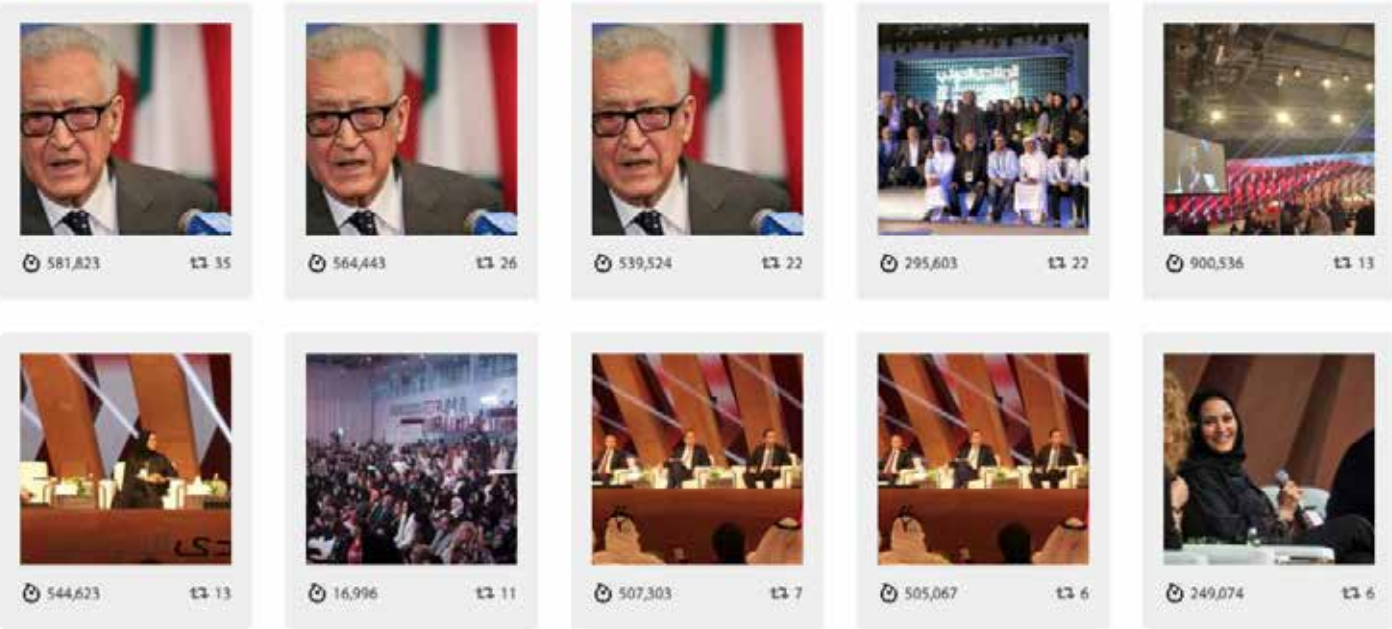
Say Something Booth

“Say Something” was a unique addition to IGCF 2015. It allowed guests to commemorate their visit to the forum and share their opinions on government communication.

Social activity of users

7,560*	30,240*
120 friends active views per share	Active + Passive views

Number of twitter prints



TEAM SPIRIT

TEAM SPIRIT



The International government communication forum is one of the major projects held at Sharjah Media Centre; the forum aims to build a vital platform for governmental communication development, and create a source of information and training where all experts and professionals meet from all

over the world. Therefore, the team at Sharjah Media Centre had worked together to put the strategic plans that met the objectives of the forum, establishing an integrated system for governmental entities in Sharjah, UAE and Arab region.

Sharjah Media Centre