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PR ACTIVITY OF MUSLIM ORGANIZATIONS OF UKRAINE (ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE RAMU “*UMMAH*”)

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Abstract

The content and main directions of Public Relations (PR) activities of Muslim religious organizations of Ukraine were analyzed using the example of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine (RAMU) “*Ummah*.”¹ It was determined that the PR is characterized by the use of many resources and modern media technologies. PR activity has a multi-channel nature: through print and electronic media, as well as radio and television, although Internet resources, including social networks, prevail. A universal model of PR activities of Muslim organizations is the posting of general information on the basics of Islamic belief and features of religious practice, as well as digitized thematic literature, on electronic resources. The RAMU “*Ummah*” in its PR activities also uses streaming technologies, i.e. continuous broadcasting of events in real time, mainly to cover charitable, cultural, and educational PR actions conducted by the organization. An important direction of these PR activities is the coverage of the participation of their leadership in state events, as well as the adoption of declarations of their interaction with the authorities and the public. The signing of the Charter of Muslims of Ukraine and the Social Concept of Muslims of Ukraine is significant. PR activity in the field of science is implemented, firstly, through the support of scientific and educational projects, and, secondly, through the coverage of scientific events, especially in the field of history, on the organization's media platforms. Likewise in two aspects of the field of culture as patronage and as intercultural mass communication. Substantial adjustments to the PR activity of the RAMU “*Ummah*” were made under the influence of the events of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The leitmotif of PR activity was the affirmation in the media space of the ideas of peace, support of their co-religionists, the Crimean Tatars, and the military through participation in the chaplaincy movement. And after the 2022 large-scale invasion they provided humanitarian aid to the victims (regardless of religious affiliation) and updated their need to identify Ukrainian Islam.

¹ *Umma* is the entire Muslim community bound together by their religion.

Keywords: religion, religious communication, Islam, PR activity, public relations, Muslim organization, Islam in Ukraine, mass communications.

Introduction

The purpose of the article is to analyze Public Relations activities of Islamic organizations of Ukraine at the beginning of the 21st century, integrating methodological approaches of religious studies, journalism and social philosophy by identifying conceptual differences and common features. PR activity is a component of public activity, which involves establishing a dialogue between a person, a group of persons or an organization with other persons using the tools of public opinion. The latter is the quintessence of views, ideas, opinions and assessments formed (not always rationally, because it is influenced by accounts) in the mass consciousness, which can act as a factor in the joint reaction of large groups to the specific stimulus of social action. This determines the presence of a significant number of forms and methods of activity regarding the formation of specific ideas or correction of existing ones. In the history of humankind, various elements of PR activity can be observed, which to a large extent began to be institutionalized only in the 19th century. Of course, the desire to create artifacts on a huge scale to perpetuate, in the mass consciousness, ideas about certain political figures or socio-political events or the creation of a court written chronicle heritage made it possible to form a certain attitude of glorified or disgraced objects in the population. But in the 19th century, the emergence of structural divisions of organizations or individual companies was observed, the purpose of which was to exert a targeted influence on public opinion in order to form and maintain one's own positive image, less often the negative image of competitors, and to create tools for overcoming *force majeure* circumstances that radically change. Nowadays, the basis of PR activities is a civil consensus, the achievement of which actualizes the need for dialogue between different sections of society, both in subject-object vertical relations and subject-subject horizontal ones. Religious organizations PR activity was oriented towards established traditional forms, such as the distribution of official documents, acts that regulate the activities of the community, sermons, theological discussions, ritual integral actions, etc. The institutionalization of PR, primarily under the influence of the establishment of mass communication means poses a challenge to religious organizations' adequate and optimal methods of influencing public opinion. Currently, both the central management bodies of religious organizations and local representative offices have appropriate structural divisions that, firstly, functionally ensure the development and support of PR campaigns, and secondly, control various types of individual PR actions for compliance with the general conceptual

program. The problem of studying both the forms and methods of PR activity of various religious organizations, as well as the analysis of their choice and application in accordance with traditional forms of religious activity in general, with specific social conditions, and with available media tools, is becoming an actual problem for scientists. Islamic organizations in Ukraine have a much smaller number of believers, but at the same time, there are religious and cultural traditions of the Crimean Tatars as one of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, as well as traditions of interreligious relations. At the same time, the research involves taking into account stereotypes about Ukrainian-Crimean-Tatar relations, which were established in the mass consciousness by Soviet historical science, stereotypes about the image of “Muslim terrorists” produced by Westernized culture in the last thirty years.

The Main Content and Results

Analyzing PR activity in the religious sphere as a component of social activity in our previous studies, we noted that an antinomy is currently observed: the current media reality symbolizes modernity and rapid development, and religion is the world of traditions, while performing similar functions.² In order to prevent the partial displacement of religious institutions from the social space by constructing their own modern rituals, performing the function of symbolic production, religious organizations both master and implement the latest tools of PR activity, as well as the implementation of the latter comprehensively, developing integrated PR strategies. Analysis of the PR activities of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “Ummah” confirms the systematic and consistent implementation of PR strategies, multi-channel broadcasting, and the use of the latest tools. In our work, we will identify these organizations as the object of analysis since the others do not carry out active PR activities. As Larisa Vladychenko points out, eight religious administrations of Muslims currently operate in Ukraine. These are the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine, the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*UMMAH*,” the Religious Administration of Muslims of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the Religious Center of Muslims of Ukraine, the Religious Center of Muslims of Ukraine “*AHMEDIE*,” the Religious Administration Muslims of Crimea, Religious Center of Muslims of Crimea, Religious

² В. Слюсар, М. Маршевський. “PR-діяльність у релігійній сфері як складова соціальної діяльності: досвід України та Польщі”. [PR activities in the religious sphere as a component of social engagement: the experience of Ukraine and Poland]. *Українська полоністика*, 2019, № 16, 84–92; А. Kobetyak, V. Slyusar, O. Yevchenko, Y. Kondratyuk. Political institutions of parliamentarism in the processes of constituting the local church of Ukraine. *AD ALTA: Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 2023, 13/01-XXXIV, 172-176.

Administration of Independent Muslim Organizations of Ukraine “Kyiv *Muftiyat*,” as well as a number of independent religious organizations of Muslims and Shiite religious communities.³ Those identified by us have their own Internet pages, communities in social networks, produce and distribute their own media production; others are characterized by sporadic actions in the media space. Domestic Islamic scholars Oleg Yarosh and Mykhailo Yakubovych also define, in addition to the mentioned, the All-Ukrainian Association of Public Organizations – Alraid, the Association of Muslims of Ukraine, the Information Office of the Islamic Party *Hizb ut-Tahrir* in Ukraine.⁴ They have a presence in the media space, but their activities are focused on education, and the latter on politics.

PR activity includes a whole complex of planned PR actions, which in their sequence are able not only to influence public opinion, but also to establish a long-term interaction of a religious organization with the public. Of course, such work presupposes the presence of relevant divisions in the structure of the organization, but, as a rule, domestic religious organizations do not publish information about them. At present, conclusions about the existence of similar divisions in the organization “Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” can be drawn from the principles of activity presented by them. All Muslim organizations in Ukraine, including RAMU “*Ummah*,” focus on the defined strategic goals of the religious organization's relations with the public, as well as developing an optimal public response to challenges that are image risks for them.

We have analyzed the principles of certain Islamic religious organizations activities, which are decisive for the formation of a strategy for PR activities. The Religious administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” positions itself as a “religious association for all Muslims,” thus emphasizing the dialogic principle of mutual relations of its parishioners, regardless of belonging to certain schools and focusing on ethno-confessional differences. The PR strategy, in fact, is expressed in the following maxims: “There is no and cannot be a “Tatar,” “Arab” or “Turkish” mosque—there is only a Muslim mosque. The religious unity of all Muslims is our goal. We are Muslims of Ukraine. Our vector is European.”⁵ At the same time, the emphasis is on the principle of citizenship, that is, not reducing the activity to the

³ Л. Владиченко. “Мусульманські організації в контексті державноконфесійних та міжконфесійних відносин в Україні”. [Muslim Organizations in the Context of State-Religious and Interfaith Relations in Ukraine]. *Релігійна свобода*, 2019, № 22-23, 55–60.

⁴ О. Yarosh, М. Yakubovych. Ukraine. *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, 2021, № 13, 675–689.

⁵ Our principles. <https://umma.in.ua/en/our-principles>.

implementation of the ideas of Euro-Islam, rather, on the contrary, correlation with the domestic tradition of Islam with an emphasis on the history of Islam in Ukraine.

The main channels of mass communication in the PR activities of Muslim organizations, as well as many other types of activities, are television, electronic media, including YouTube, Facebook, and Telegram channels, which are less resource-intensive than television and have a significant regional reach network, as well as, to a lesser extent, print media.

Traditional for all Muslim religious organizations of Ukraine are the following components of websites: Basic information about the organization (news, media resources (video, audio, religious literature); religious services such as marriage (*nikyah*), rituals related to newborns, funeral rituals (*jinazah*), treatment (*ruqya*), in RAMU “*Ummah*” also chaplaincy and acceptance of Islam, Inter-religious services (“*Halal*” certification), and prayer times. A universal model of PR activities of Muslim organizations is the placement on electronic resources of general information about the basics of Islamic belief and the peculiarities of religious practice. This information is aimed, first of all, at a non-Muslim audience and aims, firstly, to increase the level of recognition of the organization through the content of the ideas it proclaims (there is an identification of the main aspects of Islam with specific individuals who practice it and represent in society), and secondly, educational activity, which is a tool for overcoming stereotypes about this religion formed in the mass consciousness, individual xenophobia, and also, especially in the conditions of McLuhan's “global village,” a way of establishing a dialogue with potential new converts. As for the latter, familiarization is, of course, one-sided, but since it is cognitive in nature, it is based on a motivating principle, which is realized through the dialectic of the known and the unknown and allows establishing feedback with the audience.

Each of the main Muslim organizations of Ukraine places tabs on the website, where the reader has the opportunity to get acquainted with electronic and digital copies of printed publications. Yes, the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” offers to choose books or video materials on the “media” tab. Digitized books are freely available and are mostly translations into Ukrainian of authoritative works (Tahiya al-Isma'il Muhammad “Biography of the Prophet based on the earliest sources”), Hasan Hathout “Smart Reading of a Muslim”, Ali At-Tantawi “General Concept of Islam,” and others published by the “Ansar Foundation” and the International Institute of Islamic Thought (H. Hathout. Intelligent reading

of a Muslim. Ichnia: PP “Format.”⁶ The translation of the meanings of the Qur'an is also distributed in Ukrainian by Mykhailo Yakubovych from his own publishing house.⁷

As for the video content, it is universal in nature, the main content is sermons (Friday sermons), educational lessons, greetings of the community on religious holidays. A certain part is posted on the website, most of the video content is on the YouTube platform and social networks.

A feature of the PR activity of religious organizations is the functioning of individual religious, or rather confessional, television channels. The specificity of such channels is their informational and educational orientation, which involves the limitation of entertainment content and talk shows, emphasis on cultural programs, documentaries and programs for children. Theological programs are the specific content of these TV channels, in which religious instructions are explained and provisions of religious texts are interpreted. At the same time, the goal is not only to reach believers of specific denominations, but also representatives of other or non-denominational ones. A feature of public relations through one's own TV channel is that it is resource intensive. Currently, there are no Muslim religious channels in Ukraine. This is explained not only by the lack of necessary material resources, but also by the lack of information sources and a permanent audience. An important aspect is the language of communication, since a significant number of Muslims in the country do not speak the Ukrainian language. At the same time, religious Islamic programs were broadcast on some channels. Thus, since March 2020, on the “UA: Crimea” channel every Friday, the television program “Friday Sermon of the Mufti” was broadcast (on a parity basis, three spiritual authorities are presented and read in one of three languages – Ukrainian, Crimean Tatar, and Russian.⁸ The main purpose of the broadcast was to ensure the religious rights of believers, which could not be fully realized due to the restrictions of covid. The channels of this media group broadcast worship services of various religions and denominations.

⁶ Х. Хатхут. *Розумне читання мусульманина*. [Intelligent Reading for a Muslim]. (Ічня: ПП “Формат” 2019); Т. аль-Ісмаїл. *Мухаммад (Життєпис Пророка на основі найбільш ранніх джерел)*. [Muhammad (The Biography of the Prophet Based on the Earliest Sources)]. Пер. з англ. (Ічня: ПП “Формат” 2019); А. ат-Тантаві. *Загальне уявлення про Іслам*. [An Overview of Islam]. Пер. Юрій Косенко. (Київ: Ансар Фаундейшн, 2014).

⁷ М. Якубович. *Коран. Переклад смислів українською мовою*. [Quran. Translation of Meanings in Ukrainian]. (Київ: ДУМУ “Умма”, 2017).

⁸ Телебачення транслюватиме проповіді мусульман у мечеті і молитву в синагозі. [Television to Broadcast Muslim Sermons in the Mosque and Prayer in the Synagogue]. *Релігійно-інформаційна служба України*. 30.03.2020. https://risu.ua/telebachennya-translyuvatime-propovidi-musulman-u-mecheti-i-molitvu-v-sinagozi_n103527/amp.

At the same time, YouTube channels are an alternative channel for PR activities of religious organizations, which are less resource-intensive than television and have a significant regional network. The analysis of the content of the YouTube channels of Muslim religious organizations of Ukraine allows us to conclude that, firstly, they have a limited audience (this is evidenced by the number of subscribers and views), secondly, the main video materials are reports and spiritual and educational programs, thirdly, there are almost no live broadcasts. As for the Ukrainian segment of YouTube, it is not sufficiently developed due to small number of requests from consumers. The number of subscribers to the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” channel is 340.⁹ It is interesting that channels that do not have a brand identification with a specific organization, but only a contextual one, are more popular. In particular, more than 69,000 users subscribed to “Islamic Media Ukraine,” and the regularity of posting video materials is 4-5 every month, “Islam in Ukraine” has 389,000 users.

Muslim religious organizations also use streaming technologies in their PR activities, i.e. continuous broadcasting of events in real time. The massive use of continuous online broadcasting technologies (whether on television or through Internet resources) allows not only collective prayer, but also individual prayer to be made public. There is now a practice of continuous broadcasting from the Al-Haram Mosque in Mecca (for example, on the YouTube channel “Makkah Live”) and the Al-Nabawi Mosque in Madinah (for example, on the YouTube channel “Madinah Live HD”). Ukrainian Muslim religious organizations use streaming technologies unsystematically and, as a rule, the main object is sermons. This is explained by religious instructions to regularly attend *Juma* (Friday prayer), without missing more than two in a row. Under these conditions, streaming contains conflict-causing features, but it is an effective means of highlighting charitable, cultural, and educational PR actions carried out by the organization. So, for example, in 2021, as part of the activities of the X School of Islamic Studies, organized by the Ukrainian Center for Islamic Studies, which is headed by Said Ismagilov, who at that time served as the *mufti* of the Religious Administration of Muslims “*Ummah*”, lecturers' speeches were broadcast live on the “Facebook” platform.

In addition to comments and correspondence opportunities, there are various forms of response to messages and easier access to information and its distribution to its audience through smartphones. Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram are the main social media channels used by Muslim organizations for PR activities. It should be noted that both the central

⁹ *Духовне управління мусульман України “Умма”*. [Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*”]. <https://www.youtube.com/@ummaua>.

structures of Muslim organizations and regional ones have their own pages, which, along with their own content, post official addresses of *muftis*. A more important tool of PR activity of a religious organization is the formation of the image of a spiritual leader, who in the communicative act is oriented not on mentoring, but on dialogue and cooperation. This happens through the expression of the position of the heads of the organization regarding issues that are relevant for society. The spiritual leader's communication through posts in social networks about certain fragments of community life allows for the production of unofficial information that forms the image of the organization as a whole organism. It also creates a sense of awareness in the audience regarding various aspects of the activities of both the religious organization and its leaders. An assessment of the effectiveness of this form of PR activity is the inclusion of *mufti* Said Ismagilov, who held this position from 2009 to 2022, in the TOP-100 list of the most influential Ukrainians by the Kommersant publication in 2020.¹⁰ In this context, the following tools for combining the image of leaders with the image of the organization are relevant: coverage of the activities of regional offices and their heads, blogging by *imams* on the official website of the organization (blogs of 6 people are posted), maintaining official pages of *imams* and regional organizations in social networks, primarily on the platform “Facebook.” Analysis of media content shows that the last tool is the most requested by the audience.

An important direction of PR activities of Muslim organizations in Ukraine is the coverage of their leadership's participation in state events. Firstly, greetings on the occasion of public holidays are regularly posted on behalf of the *mufti*, and secondly, their participation in official events initiated by the state is highlighted (for example, “Murat Suleymanov took part in an event at the British consulate in Lviv” dated 22.05.2023, “Representatives RAMU “*Umma*” received state awards from the hands of the President” dated 18.04.2023) and embassies and consulates (on September 7, 2023, a delegation of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” visited the Embassy of Pakistan at the invitation of the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Ukraine Nadir Khan, to discuss the situation of the Muslim community of Ukraine, to the Embassy of Indonesia on September 21, 2023. Met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

¹⁰ ТОП-100 найвпливовіших. Рейтинг Корреспондента. [Top 100 Most Influential. The Correspondent's Ranking]. *Корреспондент.net*. 18.12.2020. https://ua.korrespondent.net/ukraine/4307734-top-100-naivplyvovishykh-reitynh-korrespondenta?fbclid=IwAR0HUsrqd9wRqlOV3w90tFV3Ykp1KdzOKPY_uk3O4ucv0ZYCH_heO47o7s0.

of the Republic of Indonesia to Ukraine).¹¹ Such actions allow organizations to demonstrate their openness and publicity in relations with the authorities.

One of the areas of PR activity implemented by the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” together with the Religious Administration of Muslims of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, as well as more than 30 public organizations and communities, is the adoption of a declaration and other official documents that declare the main principles of relations between Muslims and the state and the public. In December 2016, they signed the Charter of Muslims of Ukraine, which had previously received a favorable expert opinion from the department of religious studies of the Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences. It states that “the understanding of Islam cannot be reduced to one theological or legal school or to a group of followers of one Islamic leader, and also condemns the practice of accusations of apostasy from Islam (*takfir*) contrary to the religious and legal procedures adopted in it,” “Muslims of Ukraine demonstrate how active citizens are allowed to participate in the political life of the country, because citizenship implies political activity in terms of participation both in voting and in the political institutions of the country.”¹² Thus, it proclaims the principle of civil activity of Muslims, especially in matters of maintaining the territorial integrity of the state. And a year later, the Social Concept of Muslims of Ukraine was signed, which establishes a common position of Muslims of Ukraine regarding various aspects of social life, including ethics, law, family institution, science, education, economy, etc.

Organization and implementation of charitable and volunteer activities is a component of the activities of Muslim religious organizations analyzed by us. Of course, the main thing is the distribution of sacrificial meat on the *Eid al-Adha* holiday, but along with this, the organizations also implement other charity projects. The women's public organization “Maryam” organized a series of actions to collect aid for military and civilians, including children and low-income families, and also made and sent trench candles for the military to the front.¹³ The joint initiative “Feeding the Country” created by Muslim activists has made a number of trips to the frontline areas of Donbas with the aim of providing aid, primarily food, to the victims. The Muslim community of Ukraine actively participated in providing assistance

¹¹ *Духовне управління мусульман України “Умма”*. [Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “Ummah”]. https://www.facebook.com/umma.ua/?locale=ua_UA.

¹² Ukrainian muslims charter. *Islam in Ukraine*. 07.12.2016. <https://islam.in.ua/ua/suspilstvo/hartiya-musulman-ukrayiny>.

¹³ Мусульмани-волонтери нагороджені подяками від Київської ОВА. [Muslim volunteers were awarded thanks from Kyiv Regional Military Administration]. *Духовне управління мусульман України “Умма”*. 05.04.2023. <https://umma.in.ua/ua/node/3258>.

to the residents of the Kherson and Mykolaiv regions, which most felt the consequences of the Russians' detonation of the Kakhovskaya HPP. However, the coverage of charitable activities by Muslim organizations occurs to a small extent, it is obvious that this occurs due to a religious position to strive for the anonymity of charitable activities.

A component of the PR activities of religious organizations is PR activities in the sphere of culture and science. The first is implemented in two aspects, patronage and as intercultural mass communication. The first involves selfless patronage of education and culture, which is expressed in the sponsorship of cultural and artistic actions of a religious orientation or the holding of one's own actions. The second is a concomitant of globalization, including migration processes.¹⁴ The appearance in the social space of a sufficient number of representatives of different beliefs for self-organization naturally causes interaction and intercultural communication in ethnic and religious aspects. Therefore, cultural and artistic actions are held under the auspices of religious organizations. So, for example, according to the portal “Religious Information Service of Ukraine” in the second half of 2019, an All-Ukrainian competition of Qu’ran readers was held in Kyiv; campaign “Islam – peace,” during which Muslims gathered in the Shevchenko garden in Kharkiv in order to familiarize the city's residents with their own cultural and religious traditions, on August 22, 2023, on the eve of Independence Day and Flag Day, the *mufti* of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” Murat Suleymanov took part in the prayer breakfast in Irpen. At the same time, representatives of the leadership of Muslim religious organizations participate in cultural events held by representatives of other religions, in particular, on February 2, 2023, Sheikh Muhammad Mamutov honored the memory of the victims of the Holocaust in Lviv.

PR activity in the field of science is implemented, firstly, through the support of scientific and educational projects, and, secondly, through the coverage of scientific events, especially in the field of history, on the organization's media platforms. As for the first direction, RAMU “*Ummah*” regularly covers events initiated or co-organized by the Ukrainian Center for Islamic Studies (annual summer schools of Islamic studies, the International Congress of Oriental Studies, events commemorating the 120th anniversary of the birth of the Islamic thinker, translator, diplomat Muhammad Asad, etc.), and participation of Ukrainian Islamic scholars in international forums. Attention on the media resources of RAMU “*Ummah*”

¹⁴ В. Слюсар, М. Маршєвський. “PR-діяльність у релігійній сфері як складова соціальної діяльності: досвід України та Польщі”. [PR activities in the religious sphere as a component of social engagement: the experience of Ukraine and Poland]. *Українська полоністика*, 2019, № 16, 84–92.

is given to the translation of the meanings of the *Qu'ran* into Ukrainian by Mykhailo Yakubovych and the study of the history of translations on Ukrainian territory. With regard to the coverage of scientific events, in 2023 the organization's website published the following messages: “The Message of the *Qu'ran*” by “Muhammad Asad became the object of research by a Ukrainian scientist,” “At the bottom of the Kahovsky Reservoir – “Muslim Atlantis,” “A project to restore the historical toponymy of Crimea has been developed,” and others.

Over the last thirty years, the stigmatization of Muslims as “subjects capable of violence” has been established in the mass consciousness of many societies. Important for Muslim communities is PR activity aimed at destroying the stereotype “Muslims are terrorists,” which takes place through socio-political and educational PR actions. It is carried out both by broadcasting sermons (*khutb*) and by the participation of spiritual leaders in thematic radio and television programs, during which this problem is discussed. This is done both in the context of implementing the strategy of PR activities and as a reaction to specific events. The Religious administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” uses scientific and public platforms for this purpose: conferences, round tables, etc.

Substantial adjustments to the PR activity of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” were made under the influence of the events of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Since *Mufti Said Ismagil* had been in the occupied territories since the beginning of hostilities in 2014, he regularly commented in the media on the position of the Muslims of the organization headed by him, emphasizing that one of the main reasons for the community's support of the Ukrainian authorities is to provide believers with more sufficient rights and freedoms than Muslims in of Russia. In particular, he emphasized: “when you compare our freedoms and rights with those enjoyed by people in the post-Soviet space, Ukraine is a very tolerant country, Ukrainian laws are democratic.”¹⁵ The keynote of the PR activity of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*” was the affirmation in the media space of the ideas of peace and support for fellow believers, the Crimean Tatars.

Subsequently, RAMU “*Ummah*” joined the organization of the chaplaincy movement by various religious communities. In particular, the RAMU “*Ummah*” Ukrainian Muslims' Military Chaplains was formed, which is entrusted with the functions of conducting prayer, preaching, and ritual activities in the Joint Forces Operation zone (Anti-Terrorist Operation

¹⁵ Дивують співвітчизники, які кажуть: “Що мені дала Україна? А що ти зробив?”. [Compatriots who say: “What did Ukraine give me? And what did you do?"]. *Gazeta.ua*. 06 травня 2014. https://gazeta.ua/articles/people-and-things-journal/_divuyut-spivvitchizniki-yaki-kazhut-so-meni-dala-ukrayina-a-scho-ti-zrobiv/556230?mobile=false.

Zone) and in places of permanent deployment of military units.¹⁶ The chaplaincy's Facebook page regularly posts information about the organization's activities, Muslim soldiers serving in the Armed Forces (both own materials and reposts from the media), prayers (*du'a*) and quotes from the *Qu'ran* for spiritual support. An interesting report is "How soldiers of different religions communicate with each other: the story of an Islamic chaplain," filmed by the "SK-1" channel, in which the head of the organization, Murad Putin, who shared his own experience of interaction with Muslim soldiers at the front, interaction with representatives of other religions.¹⁷ The most significant in the context of covering the activities of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine "*Ummah*" during the period of the large-scale invasion as a stage of the Russian-Ukrainian war are the regular public statements of *Mufti Said Ismagilov*, who headed the organization in the period from 2008 to 2022. The statements are spread directly from the combat zone, where he served as a driver-shooter, a paramedic. Also, the *mufti* regularly posted videos of him reciting verses from the *Qu'ran* against the background of bombed-out Ukrainian settlements, in particular, in the half-destroyed Cathedral Mosque in Bakhmut, Sura 75 "*al-Qiyama*" ("Resurrection") was read with Ukrainian subtitles.¹⁸ In general, there was an appeal to the idea of the need to identify Islam as a phenomenon of Ukrainian culture, and therefore the original Ukrainian Islam as a part of the national spiritual culture, was followed.

Conclusions

Analysis of the PR activity of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine "*Ummah*" in the context of global trends allows us to state that it is carried out with the use of many resources and modern media technologies, although there is a lack of systematicity. It is carried out through multiple channels, the main of which are television and Internet resources, including YouTube channels, which are less resource-intensive than television and have a significant regional network. The strategic goal of the PR activity of each Muslim organization is determined, on the one hand, by an integral direction to spread the foundations of Islamic

¹⁶ Chaplains' Spiritual Support on the Frontline and in Cantonment Areas. *Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine "Umma"*. <https://umma.in.ua/en/chaplaincy>.

¹⁷ Як між собою спілкуються військові різних релігій. [How soldiers of different religions communicate with each other]. *Телеканал СКІ*. 26.10.2022. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=578013444126735/>

¹⁸ С. Ісмагілов. Українське місто Бахмут і напівзруйнована російськими окупантами Соборна мечеть міста. [The Ukrainian city of Bakhmut and the partially ruined Soborna Mosque, occupied by Russian invaders]. *Ісмагілов Саїд*. 28 листопад 2022 р. https://www.facebook.com/said.ismagilov/videos/993866148088393?locale=uk_UA.

beliefs, and on the other hand, by its unique mission. The websites of the organizations provide universal content related to the basics of belief and religious practice, and the library collection (digital printed editions) is excellent. All organizations produce their own unique video content. They use streaming technologies in PR activities, which are primarily related to the coverage of PR actions organized by them. The main directions are PR activities covering the participation of their leadership in state events, charitable, cultural, and artistic (including intercultural) events.

The article analyzes the PR activity of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “*Ummah*,” leaving out other Muslim organizations of Ukraine, which will be the subject of our further research.

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