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*Office of the General Counsel
Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Office*

August 25, 2017

RE: Request Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act – FOIA #17-058

This letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated June 16, 2017 to the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), which the Agency received on June 20, 2017. In your request, you sought a copy of the Monthly Reports to the BBG Board from January 2012 through July 2015.

On June 30, 2017, our office notified you that your request had generated \$227.65 in chargeable fees. As that amount exceeded the amount you had initially agreed to pay, we offered you the opportunity to amend your request by narrowing its scope. You responded to us via letter dated July 6, 2017, which the Agency received on July 11, 2017, and stated you wanted to narrow your request to include only the reports from the IBB and VOA during the applicable time period. You also agreed to pay up to \$50 in fees for your amended request.

On August 9, 2017, our office notified you that your amended request generated \$77.80 in chargeable fees. On August 21, 2017 we received your check payment in that amount, and the documents responsive to your amended request are provided on the enclosed CD-ROM. No information was redacted or withheld, and all documents responsive to your amended request have been provided to you.

This concludes the Agency's response to your request and it is now closed. If you have any questions regarding your request, please contact me at 202-203-4550 or the Office of the General Counsel at the above address. You may also contact the Agency's FOIA Public Liaison at 202-203-4550 or the same address for additional assistance or to discuss any aspect of your request.

Sincerely,



Andrew T. Krog
FOIA and Privacy Act Officer



DATE: March 14, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: Interim Management Team

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for February 2014

FEBRUARY HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

- BBG FM transmitters in N'Djamena, Chad and Kigali, Rwanda were repaired and returned to operational status in February. In March, TSI expects to continue planning and site surveys for FM transmitters in Senegal and the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as the installation of a new transmitter in Nouakchott, Mauritania. The refueling ship offloaded 300,000 gallons of diesel fuel to power the BBG Sao Tome Transmitting Station in record time. Deliveries of this nature occur approximately every nine months.
- The annual Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) audit will begin in March.
- The Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) worked with RFE/RL, VOA, and other agency elements to respond quickly to the crisis in Ukraine. With OSD coordinating BBG-wide efforts in the region, the agency secured additional funding for Ukrainian, Russian, and Tatar-language programming from the U.S. Department of State and uncovered a number of potential new affiliate arrangements in Ukraine.
- The Office of Performance Review (OPR) conducted two spot-checks of VOA and RFE/RL online (in English) coverage of the crisis in Ukraine. The review found that timeliness of our reporting was heavily dependent on time of day, and that the two broadcasters did not consistently share online content.
- On March 19, OPR will host a discussion with VOA and RFE/RL to evaluate how greater cooperation among the two entities can improve BBG's impact in this critical market.
- In recognition of his team's effort to launch a news app in 43 languages, South by Southwest conference organizers invited Will Sullivan, Director of Mobile in the Office of Digital and Design Innovation (ODDI), to discuss his team's experiences in executing such an unprecedented feat among media organizations.
- ODDI and TSI responded to "digital graffiti" on the site for VOA's pronunciation guide, <http://pronounce.voanews.com>. The attack was unsophisticated and the offending source IP was successfully blocked from future attacks. ODDI staff addressed a vulnerable piece in the site's code shortly after the incident.



March 14, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for March

KEY ISSUES/CHALLENGES

- There is a new reason of concern for VOA about the safety of our people and the issue of press freedom in South Sudan. On March 13, VOA South Sudan Project bureau chief Andrew Green was picked up from the Juba office for questioning by national security officers of the South Sudan government. VOA Juba bureau staff immediately contacted VOA English to Africa Service Chief Sonya Laurence Green, who forwarded the information to the VOA Language Service management and to the South Sudan Project funding partners at the State Department. After being detained for about 5 ½ hours, Green was released, following a visit by a U.S. Embassy Consular officer to the national security services office. Green says that what appears to have aroused the concern of the South Sudan government is a section of the February 7 show, in which listeners expressed anger about the presence of Ugandan troops in South Sudan and blamed the South Sudan government and opposition leader Riek Machar for the country's crisis. The situation in Juba is currently calm, but the situation is not calm elsewhere. In a note sent Friday morning, Andrew Green said another VOA reporter, Michael Atit, was detained yesterday by security forces in the city of Wau and questioned about a story he is working on. Atit was not harmed and has been released, but security officials told him that he cannot do any additional reporting in Wau unless he meets with them first to get permission on specific stories. VOA journalists in South Sudan have asked that their names not be used publicly when discussing these incidents.
- There is also growing concern for the safety of journalists in Afghanistan, after a Western reporter was fatally shot in Kabul March 11. VOA's Islamabad-based correspondent Sharon Behn, who will be in Kabul for the April elections, said the reporter was walking with his interpreter down a heavily guarded street when two men came up to him and shot him in the head. In another incident that same day, VOA Afghan stringer Farooq Faizi was briefly detained by the campaign staff in Herat of a leading presidential candidate. Faizi, who reports for Ashna TV and Karwan from Western Afghanistan, was visiting the campaign offices in Herat of presidential contender Zalmai Rassoul and talking with campaign workers when the office manager became upset and ordered his guards to lock Faizi up in a room. He was released about an hour later after local journalists intervened on his behalf. Rassoul's

campaign has issued a statement expressing regret for the incident and announcing that the office manager has been removed.

- Meanwhile, the VOA Deewa reporter in the Waziristan region of Pakistan has been threatened by a Taliban group in that area. On Friday morning (March 14), Adnan Khan received a phone call from someone who identified himself as Azam Tariq, a member of Pakistani Taliban. The caller accused Adnan of working for “spy agencies” and warned him to stop reporting on the region or he should prepare to be tried by a Taliban court that would punish him for his reporting. Nafees Takar, the Deewa chief, has advised Adnan to stop reporting for a while and keep a low profile.
- A stringer for VOA’s Azerbaijani Service was assaulted February 21 while covering a student demonstration in Baku. Tapdig Farhadoglu said the chief of the security force at Baku State University struck him and kicked him in an attempt to get him to stop recording video of security personnel attacking the demonstrators. About 500 students were protesting a new credit system they say is designed to get them to pay more money to the university. They were also angry at what they claimed was the widespread corruption of university officials. In spite of the attack, Farhadoglu managed to keep his video of the demonstration and filed it to the Azerbaijani Service, which broadcast it the same day the incident occurred.
- The severe restrictions the Maduro government is placing on Internet access in Venezuela have prompted VOA’s Latin America Division, IBB’s Office of Strategy and Marketing and Radio Free Asia to begin collaborating on providing Venezuelan media with Internet circumvention tools. The project has started with La Patilla, a VOA affiliate and one of the leading news websites in the country, and nine other media organizations in Venezuela have expressed interest in partnering with VOA.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim Director, André Mendes
DATE: March 17, 2015
SUBJECT: IBB Monthly Report for February 2015

GLOBAL STRATEGY:

- Global Strategies is launching its FY 2015 Performance Review / FY 2016 Future Strategic Goals process later this month; through this process we establish and then evaluate performance against yearly objectives in achieving our Strategic Goals. (All Board members are welcome to attend any session, and we can send out a schedule.)

Office of Digital & Design Innovation (ODDI)

- Alhurra Mobile App wins 2014 Society of News Directors Award for ‘Best Redesign’ (ODDI design with MBN).
- ODDI launches an app for feature phones in low-data connectivity markets.
- ODDI teams participated in ‘largest hackathon’ in West Africa with partners Hub Accra and Hack for Big Choices and joined with BBC Connected Studios and iHub Nairobi for a Pan-Africa ‘news hack’.

GLOBAL OPERATIONS:

Technology Services and Innovation (TSI)

- The BBG FM station in Tikrit, Iraq, which had been silenced since earlier disturbances in that city, was placed back on the air on March 1.
- Following some incidents of vandalism, the BBG FM facility in Ajloun, Jordan, has been operating at reduced power. TSI continues efforts to restore the facility to full operating status.

DATE: May 8, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for April 2013

APRIL HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

Mobile Applications Launching: The general news applications for OCB, MBN and VOA will be hitting iTunes and Android stores. The RFA applications will be launching over the summer. This is a general news application which will enable users to receive headlines, watch video, and listen to audio (livestreaming will be coming over the summer). The application will also enable users to upload video or pictures to help report on the news; a feature we will be expanding over the summer and into the fall. When these applications are in the stores, we will send notification to Board members if they wish to download the application.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

Sequestration Transmission Reductions: We continued implementation of the agency shortwave and medium wave sequestration transmission reductions in the summer 2013 broadcast schedule, which went into effect on March 31. These transmission reductions will save about \$5 million over the next six months.

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: Because of reorganization of the South Korean government after the election of a new President, we are waiting for the Korea Communications Commission (KCC) reorganization to be completed in order to assess the status of our proposed medium wave transmitter construction project with the Far East Broadcasting Corporation (FEBC). At this time, we have no indication that there are any new threats to the project.

Maintaining and Improving OCB Transmissions to Cuba: We have prepared a joint document with OCB detailing the costs, opportunities, and risks associated with potential methods of increasing broadcast coverage to Cuba. We produced an additional report on FM ducting and potential reception issues, and we conducted an in-depth analysis of reception reports that may be helpful in designing new facilities.

SW and MW Transmission Projects:

- As a cost saving initiative, we are examining economical but effective shortwave antenna designs using surplus materials available in the network. These antennas could be constructed at BBG stations like Kuwait where operating costs are very low in order to transfer broadcasts that are currently scheduled at higher cost BBG or leased facilities.

- We have been assisting the Office of Strategy and Development in examining possibilities for a new medium wave transmitter that could serve high priority target areas in Northern Africa.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

- The BBG General Counsel's office has retained a local attorney in **Iraq** to help address the demand from the Iraq Ministry of Communications to pay FM frequency license bills for 2011, 2012, and probably 2013 at the rate of \$17,000/frequency/year. BBG has 13 sites in Iraq, two FM's each, so this would be \$442,000/year.
- The BBG FM facility in **Ajloun, Jordan**, is still off-air because of acts of vandalism and theft. The embassy in Amman is working to contact the Government of Jordan to discuss the security situation. We have learned that security is provided by the Interior Ministry and not by the military.
- An agreement was signed on November 2, 2012, with VOA affiliate FM Liberté in **N'Djamena, Chad**, to host a BBG 24/7 FM facility. We procured a new electrical generator that should arrive on site in early May, and we hope to be able to install all equipment by the end of June.

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities: On April 5, a developer and designer from Oliver + Coady conducted in-person user interface testing and feedback collection for their Android mobile app with representatives from VOA PNN, the IAC team, and other TSI staff.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION

Mobile Websites Growing/Getting New Look: The MBN mobile websites for Radio Sawa and Alhurra have launched under the direction of RFE/RL, which now manages mobile websites under the Pangea CMS. ODDI has completed several usability studies (<http://www.innovation-series.com/2013/04/23/using-usability-tests-to-create-better-mobile-experiences/>) to help improve the mobile design. These studies helped point out where we had gotten the mobile presentation perfectly, but also a number of fixes we could put in place to promote longer time-on-site and easier navigation. ODDI is working with RFE/RL to create and upload the improved mobile designs.

First USIM iBook Being Published: ODDI has partnered with RFA to create the first iBook for U.S. international media (USIM). The book is focused on lives of those activists who participated in the 1989 Tiananmen Square events and their lives today. The iBook will be published in the Apple iTunes store and uses a mixture of text, video, audio, interactive maps and other features to tell a rich, immersive and compelling story that could not be fully told using just text. This is also a test case for the potential for electronic books to further advance our publishing of long-form content. This could mean taking collections of columns on similar themes (i.e. a definitive look at corruption in Central Asia) or places (i.e. the recent history of the Congo) or events (i.e. a review of the US Presidential election) and creating new audiences using this growing channel.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT (OSD)

LSR Process Wrap-Up: All regional and topical meetings have been held in the agency's annual Language Service Review Process. IBB and broadcasting entity management are now finalizing proposals for language service additions, deletions, enhancements, and reductions for presentation to the BBG Strategy and Budget Committee on May 15.

OSD-Broadcaster Retreat: On April 24, OSD held an off-site meeting with representatives of all five BBG broadcasters to discuss effective partnership between the editorial and business sides of the organization. The off-site distilled best practices in marketing and business development, and explored ways of further enhancing OSD-broadcaster joint efforts. Discussions involved key business issues going forward, including regional priorities, digital affiliations, deeper affiliate engagement, and new strategy and marketing systems developed in OSD. The retreat was well-attended, with an overflow crowd of around 50, and very productive discussions led to many items for follow-up over the coming weeks and months.

Formal Agreement with Russian Business Channel (RBC): OSD-Prague has signed an affiliation agreement with Russian Business Channel that solidifies VOA-RBC cooperation in the way of NYSE reports, news exchanges and daily stand-ups. RBC is partnering with VOA Russian because of VOA's presence in the United States and ability to provide custom content on topics of mutual interest for this high-value affiliate. RBC claims 23 million viewers monthly.

VOA Interactives with Bolivian TV: La Paz-based Cadena A featured Skype segments to cover the story of the Boston marathon bombings. For more than a year now, OSD and VOA have been in talks with News Director Verónica Yupanqui on ways in which this important station could take advantage of VOA's "US Bureau" strategy to feed Cadena A's morning TV news magazine, Levántate Bolivia. As has been the case with other major breaking news events, VOA's excellent marathon bombings coverage provided an opportunity to secure a high-value partnership in a country with serious challenges to press freedom.

Power 99 FM Signs affiliation deal with VOA: Power 99 FM in Pakistan has signed an agreement to distribute VOA Urdu news in Abbotabad, Vehari and Islamabad. The station has received PEMRA clearance and will consider taking other programs in the future. They are now taking the 1900 Urdu newsfeed.

Kaocen FM in Arlit, Niger: New affiliate, Arlit FM, will broadcast the following VOA programs: LMA Edition pour L'Afrique de L'Ouest, Dialogue des religions, Carrefour Santé et Sciences and Hausa programs. Launched in 2011, the station is located in Arlit, an industrial city in northern Niger near the Algerian border. It has a population of about 150,000 inhabitants. Installation of downlink equipment will commence shortly.

Anglophone Caribbean Carries English Programming: According to station manager Ransford Ricketts, CVM TV in Kingston will be soon featuring content from VOA English. Meaningful TV (MTV) in Grenada became the second Anglophone affiliate to sign up, after U.S. Chief of Mission Louis Chrishock introduced VOA to news supervisor Josephine McGuire.

Burundi Citizen Journalist Training: U.S. Embassy Burundi has invited – and will pay for – a BBG journalist to train citizen journalists in Bujumbura.

Health Journalism in South Africa: Brian Armstead trained health journalists at a USAID-sponsored conference in Johannesburg in April on issues surrounding the health of newborn children.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: All parts of the Office of Communications and External Affairs – Congressional, public affairs, and graphics – worked long hours under tight timelines with the agency’s CFO and other offices in the agency to pull together comprehensive messaging and briefing materials for the roll-out of the agency’s FY 2014 budget submission. The Congressional Coordinator ensured that for the first time ever, the BBG had a seat at the table in the briefing for the international affairs (Function 150) budget presentation to Hill staff. This office also coordinated distribution of the Congressional Budget Justification to staff on our oversight committees.

Working with several parts of the IBB and broadcast entity leadership in tandem with the Office of Management and Budget, we coordinated a congressional notification of sequester-related transmission reductions.

We met with new House Foreign Affairs Committee majority staffer Tom Hill and provided requested follow-up materials. We also scheduled a meeting with Governor Meehan and ensured that he had all the needed preparatory information about Mr. Hill and the priorities of his new boss, Chairman Royce, who has expressed strong interest in crafting legislation affecting the BBG. At the end of the month, we arranged for Mr. Hill to visit the Cohen Building to meet with IBB/VOA leadership and to take a technical tour of the facilities that he had requested.

The Congressional Coordinator accompanied OCB Director Garcia-Perez on visits with Senate staff to discuss current operations.

We monitored House and Senate Congressional hearings featuring Secretary of State Kerry regarding the international affairs budget request and reported to the Board any issues that arose concerning the BBG or its broadcasters. This effort included helping the State Department prepare for anticipated questions on the BBG. We later coordinated with State to answer Questions For the Record that were submitted by members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) for the Secretary’s response.

We took an active role in planning meetings with VOA, State Department and USAID contacts for the May 13-14 Global Diaspora Forum conference, which will involve four events with participation by the BBG and its broadcasters.

We coordinated the briefings schedule for nominee Jeff Shell and accompanied him to most of the appointments for his April 15 visit. We also finalized and submitted the notarized paperwork for his nomination to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

We shared the White House announcement of nominee Matt Armstrong with key Hill staffers and began working to set up internal and external meetings for Mr. Armstrong, including obtaining travel orders and coordinating logistics. We worked with White House confirmations team members to update the nominee's paperwork and submit it for review and clearance.

And we conferred with SFRC key staff regarding the likely timing of the confirmation process for both Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Shell now that a pair of nominees had been named.

As of this writing, plans were in the works for a joint visit to Washington by both nominees from May 6 to 8. During this time, nominees will focus on courtesy visits to Capitol Hill with members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and their key staff.

Media: BBG Public Affairs put in the lion's share of the planning and legwork on the FY 2014 budget briefing book. Using it as a basis, we hosted a telephone briefing for members of the media and academia on the day of the budget roll-out.

On the heels of the news that the suspected Boston bombers were of Chechen descent, a timely media advisory about RFE/RL and VOA experts on the region generated increased media interest in these subject matter experts, including interviews with NPR and *The Washington Post*.

Our Notebook blog, which provides a first-person look at U.S. international media, featured posts on VOA and Alhurra journalists, the agency commemoration of Willis Conover Day, and the visit of RFE/RL's Havel Fellows to Washington.

We responded to queries from Fox News and *The Weekly Standard* about a planned speaker for the agency's Diversity Day, clarifying that the speaker's invitation had been revoked.

Ongoing outreach on the agency's Internet anti-censorship program generated interviews with *Ars Technica* and the author of a book to be published later this year.

Planning continued for a journalists' round-table in Miami to showcase recent developments at the Martis, but the event has been postponed due to the smoke and water damage from a fire.

Outreach: BBG Public Affairs has contributed to the planning for the Global Diaspora Forum, referred to in the previous section of this report, and will provide considerable logistical support.

Planning continued for an event on Capitol Hill, tentatively scheduled for mid-June, to showcase innovation across the agency. Members of the public, as well as Hill staffers, would be invited.

We hosted graduate students from Columbia University's Journalism School and Syracuse University's public diplomacy program, both of which resulted in rich conversations about new models of journalism, as well as a class from the National Defense University that focused on the influence of the media.

With the cancellation of a briefing by the State Department's Director of Policy and Planning, David McKean, to coincide with the Language Service Review on April 10, we worked with the

State Department to arrange for this briefing to be conducted by Under Secretary for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman on May 15.

Graphics: The Graphics Department completed a number of agency priority projects in April: The proofs of the annual report, logo designs for two VOA language services (Albanian and Serbian in time for 70th anniversary celebrations), banners for a Latin America event in Caracas, the design for a poster highlighting the Jazz Appreciation Month concert, and posters/bookmarks for Launchpad, among creative services.

Design and production work continued on the Language Service Review book and the Office of Strategy and Development catalog.

Discussion of a theme and photo research for the 2014 VOA Calendar began in April. This project is being undertaken in tandem with VOA's public relations office.

Work continued on the VOA Logo Usage Guide to ensure uniform application of this branded graphic across language services and on all manner of broadcast and print materials.

Internal Communications: On April 29, we debuted "Launchpad," an internal platform to exchange ideas and share knowledge among colleagues. This project had been in development for a year; it involved researching agency regulations, reviewing potential software vendors and conferring with other federal government agencies on their own forays into such systems, with perhaps the best-known one being the State Department's "Sounding Board." This is a venue for interactive discussion and a community of ideas where all are welcome to share thoughts and best practices. Progress on implementing submitted ideas is tracked via the site so that users can know which ones are under way and completed. Within its first week, "Launchpad" generated more than 200 log-ins and 20 suggestions, as well as numerous comments on those ideas.

Efforts are under way involving all parts of the Communications and External Affairs office, working in close coordination with VOA counterparts, to encourage participation in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. Outreach tools have included e-mails, posters and flyers.

Support of the Health and Wellness program is ongoing through the Workplace Engagement Action Group.

Planning began for a May 15 town hall meeting focused on the budget as requested by Strategy and Budget Committee members.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW (OPR)

French to Africa Review. April 16, 2013: Research: Three recent surveys fed into the French to Africa Review: a national survey of the DRC and two city surveys of Bamako (Mali) and Bangui (Central African Republic). While the French to Africa Service considers 22 countries among its target markets, the bulk of its audience (about 2 million adults) is located in the populous Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). With the growing importance of TV in many of the target markets, it was recommended at the Review that adding some short VOA TV

segments – “Washington Bureau” style – would have the potential to significantly boost the audience. Review: Performance Review analysts conducted a broad review of VOA French programming, using an alternative, more holistic analytical approach involving the VOA Language Programming Directorate and the Office of Strategy and Development. The review combined the traditional qualitative examination of programming with a forward-thinking strategic look at distribution options including more affiliate placement and 24/7 FMs in key markets. Elements of this approach will be incorporated in other reviews.

Somali Review. April 23, 2013: Research: BBG’s first ever nationally representative survey of all of Somalia showed that *one in two Somalis tune in to VOA Somali on a weekly basis*, which makes the VOA Somali Service VOA’s leading radio service globally, in terms of percent of adults reached in a country. VOA’s impact in Somalia goes beyond sheer audience size; it was named among the most important news sources in the country (second only to BBC) and 94% of regular listeners consider VOA’s news trustworthy.

OIG-GAO Activities:

OIG Inspection of VOA Latin America Division: An entrance conference was held on May 2, 2013 with the division, and a number of interviews with relevant senior managers in both VOA and IBB offices are being conducted by the OIG.

OIG Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, Report No. ISP-IB-13-07: The OIG’s Compliance Branch contacted OPR for copies of the Articles of Incorporation, Charters and By-laws for RFE/RL, RFA and MBN. The OIG’s Compliance Branch is working on the analysis of the BBG’s responses to the report, and requires the documents to complete their analysis. OPR provided the OIG with the requested documents on April 30, 2013.

Several other Compliance Follow-up Reviews are being coordinated by the Office of Performance Review with the OIG. The *Compliance Follow-up Review of the IBB Botswana Transmitting Station, Report No. ISP-IB-11-52A (June, 2011)* was submitted by OPR to the OIG on April 23, 2013. There are still five open recommendations pending further action that TSI is working to close in their latest response.

OPR is also coordinating the BBG response for two other pending Compliance Reviews and Analyses – that of the *Inspection of RFE/RL, Report No. ISP-IB-12-43*; and that of the *Inspection of the IBB Philippines Transmitting Station, Report No. ISP-IB-13-11*, both of which are due by May 15, 2013 to the OIG.

In mid-April, 2013, OPR submitted BBG’s response to the first draft report and informal recommendation from the *OIG’s Review of BBG’s Operations in Baghdad, Iraq* issued on March 27, 2013; and BBG’s comments on paragraphs related to the BBG, included in the report from the *OIG’s Inspection of Embassy Juba, South Africa*.

Broadcasting to Cuba – Actions Needed to Improve Strategy and Operations. (GAO-09-127, January 2009 and (GAO-12-243R, December 2011): OPR coordinated the BBG

response to the GAO on the status of four recommendations from GAO reports that the GAO considers “unimplemented”; the BBG response was sent to the GAO on May 2, 2013.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES (OHR)

Chief Financial Officer: The vacancy announcement for the Chief Financial Officer closed April 29. OHR has reviewed the applications, but because of the number of applications received, a review panel needs to be held to narrow the field to the best qualified. Once the top candidates have been identified, a referral certificate will be issued.

Workplace Engagement: Complete a Review of all Position Descriptions in the Federal Entities: OHR is in the process of conducting employee planning sessions to identify issues and challenges related to conducting a full review of all agency position descriptions. This initiative is part of the Performance Based Rewards and Achievement category in the agency’s Workplace Engagement Action Plan.

Performance Management: OHR has initiated a new campaign to remind Rating Officers of their obligations under the agency’s performance management program. Beginning May 1, 2013, Rating Officers will receive up to nine email messages per year notifying them of upcoming deadlines and obligations.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS (OCR)

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day/April 25, 2013: The Broadcasting Board of Governors (IBB/VOA) and its employees invited their daughters, sons and other sponsored girls and boys between the ages of eight and sixteen to attend the “2013 Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day.” This year’s theme was “Work in Progress”, which reflected the growing need to ensure that our young people are prepared to become the future leaders of our society. Initially 40 students were registered for the event and by the end of our registration, over ninety girls and boys actually attended. The activities for the day included: Security Awareness Presentation; Activity Icebreaker; Behind the Scenes VOA Tour; Master Control Tour; and a Jazz Concert celebrating Jazz Appreciation Month. The concert, showcasing the music of Willis Conover, also featured the Agency House Band.

Fiscal Year 2012 Federal Agency Annual Equal Employment Opportunity Program Status Report: OCR completed the above report and it was signed by Presiding Governor Michael Lynton on April 24. The report, which is required to be completed by all federal agencies, will be forwarded to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The statistical data submitted with the report shows that as of September 30, 2012, the agency’s total workforce constituted a total of 1684 employees: 650 females; 1034 males; 284 White females; 611 White males; 208 Black females; 161 Black males; 40 Hispanic/Latino females; 89 Hispanic/Latino males; 114 Asian females; 160 Asian males; and 2 American Indian/Alaska native males.

OFFICE OF POLICY

Meeting with Dan Sreebny, Senior Advisor for BBG to the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs:

Policy Office staff met with Dan Sreebny, Senior Advisor for BBG to the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, on April 17. A wide range of issues relating to VOA editorials was discussed – clearance, topic selection, engagement with senior policy makers at State and the general thrust of current USG public diplomacy.



May 9, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for May

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

Boston Bombing

VOA services reacted quickly to the bombings at the Boston Marathon.

- The Indonesian TV team filed 15 live Skype reports and one phoner for six Indonesian TV stations in the hours after the bombings. The TV team also produced eight TV packages. This in addition to the service's reports on its regularly scheduled programs, Laporan VOA for Metro TV and Kilas VOA for Kompas TV. The service's interview with Jerry Ng, president Director of Indonesia's National Retirement Savings Bank and a marathon participant, was picked up by at least 10 Indonesian print and/or online media outlets.
- VOA Deewa and Urdu interviewed residents of Boston, including eyewitnesses and a Pakistani-American runner who was only a few miles from the finish line when the blasts occurred.
- The Spanish Service sent New York correspondent Celia Mendoza, a video journalist, to Boston to cover the bombings' aftermath. She provided live shots for radio and television affiliates in the region, including Colombia's NTN24, Peru's Andina Television, Venezuela's Radio Caracas and Mexico's Radio Formula. She also provided daily TV and radio packages and photos for the web.
- Central News sent correspondents Carolyn Presutti and Jerome Socolovsky and shooters/producers Mike Burke and Brian Allen to provide on-the-scene coverage for the House. Presutti and Burke were the first journalists to be allowed into the new trauma center

at the Tufts University School of Medicine where many of the bombing victims were treated. They provided a unique point-of-view report about how hospital personnel train to handle such an event.

- Learning English got into the mix by conducting live Skype interactives with participants from Russia, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Vietnam, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Turkish did a phone interview with a Turkish-American marathon participant, and Ukrainian had a Skype interview with a Ukrainian couple who were running in the marathon and were near the explosion.

Spanish Service Goes South of the Border with Obama

President Obama's recent three-day trip to Mexico and Costa Rica evoked wide interest throughout the region. It also gave the Spanish Service the opportunity to dazzle its audience and its affiliates. The service covered a total of 40 radio feeds with original material, and placed original interviews on *Estudio 45*, *Desde Washington* and other Spanish Service programs. It also provided multiple affiliates with original Q/A, TV packages, and Skypes. In the course of the three days, it tweeted 250 messages, many of which were subsequently retweeted by U.S. Embassies in the region.

70 Years of VOA Albanian

On May 7, presidents, diplomats, Balkan officials and members of the U.S. Congress paid tribute to the Albanian Service as it celebrated the 70th anniversary of its first broadcast. New York Congressman Eliot Engel, a ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, told the celebrants gathered in the VOA auditorium that he could personally attest to the popularity of Albanian Service. He said that he has been interviewed by VOA so many times that he is easily recognized when he visits Albania or Kosovo. "I think that we in the United States," Engel said, "need VOA to show to the peoples of different oppressed countries what America is all about... Every dollar that we give to VOA comes back to us with hundreds of dollars of goodwill for America, hundreds of dollars of good faith for what America is and what it stands for." The president of Albania, Bujar Nishani, was not able to attend the ceremony, but he sent a videotaped message, telling how the service "gave us hope during a dark time in our history. It had the power to help our people forget their starvation." After the message from President



Nishani, an envoy of the Albanian government presented a presidential award to VOA, which was accepted by David Ensor, and an individual award to former Albanian Service broadcaster Elez Biberaj, now director of the VOA Eurasian Division. IBB Director Dick Lobo and IBB Deputy Director Jeff Trimble joined Ensor in remarks praising the service, as did several professors and politicians from Albania and other

Balkan countries. One of the veteran Albanian staffers, Zamira Edwards, also spoke. She said her journey to VOA began one night in the 1980s, when she and her sister, both desperate to escape Communist Albania, were rescued by a passing ship as they were trying to swim from Albania to Greece. She said she never could have imagined that she would one day have the "noble mission" of working for VOA.

70 Years of VOA Serbian



VOA's Serbian Service celebrated 70 years of continuous VOA broadcasts on April 18. Some of those who joined VOA Director David Ensor and IBB Director Richard Lobo in marking the occasion: U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Philip Reeker, Serbia's ambassador to the United States, Vladimir Petrovic, and two former U.S. diplomats who served in the region, Michael Polt and Richard Miles. A special TV report on the history of

VOA Serbian broadcasts produced by VOA Serbian's George Putic was also part of the program, which also included a video statement by former Senator George Voinovich.

West Coast Audiences Get the Message about VOA

Director Ensor travelled to the West Coast early in May to speak to three very distinguished audiences. First stop was Portland, Oregon, where he told the World Affairs Council of Portland about VOA and its role in today's world. On May 3, VOA was again the focus in an address he gave to the annual conference of public diplomacy scholars at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. Final stop was Pullman, Washington, where he had the largest audience – about five thousand people – of the trip. He delivered the commencement address to the graduating classes in the schools of business, education and journalism – named after Edward R. Murrow – at Washington State University. VOA again featured in this address, but he also gave advice, as commencement speakers do, to all the aspiring journalists in the audience. The advice came in a quote from an old friend: “You are stepping into a world that is riper, more pregnant with newness, new ideas, new opportunities than most journalists before you. You are lucky to be you, very lucky.”

Africa 54 is on the Air

On April 1st, the English Division re-launched its daily news TV program *In Focus* as *Africa 54*. The re-vamped show is targeting a younger, more urban demographic. It incorporates several new segments, including a daily *Cover Story*, *Africa Student Union*, and *What's Trending* – a look at what's popular on web/social media sites.

Venezuela Votes

VOA Spanish Service teamed up with Central News to send a team of reporters to cover the April 14 elections in Venezuela, where the government's candidate, Nicolas Maduro, narrowly defeated opposition candidate Henrique Capriles. Besides radio and television packages, service reporters did an average of 25 daily live shots for radio and television from Caracas. The service also provided election – and post-election – coverage to Radio Marti and Martinoticias.com.

Roger Muntu: (Practically) Always on, Never off

French to Africa's Roger Muntu has been called a one-man broadcasting industry. But that might be an understatement. He does two completely different music programs every day of the

week, except for Sunday, when he only does one. On these shows, in addition to spinning disks, he teaches English, addresses vexing social issues, and chats nonstop with guests and callers. On a recent program, he engaged legendary Malian singer Salif Keita in a discussion of albino persecution in Africa. Emails and fan letters, often with pictures, attest to his growing following across francophone Africa. Though not a native speaker, Muntu even manages a few phrases of Bambara in his *RM Mali* show. He also appears in a segment of *Washington Forum* that specializes in the African diaspora in the United States.



Two Central Africa Service Shows Get Extended

VOA has reached a funding agreement with USAID and the U.S. embassy in Bujumbura that will extend the life of two Central Africa Service programs – *Kira*, a health show, and *Tujahe*, an entrepreneurship show – broadcast to Burundi. The agreement was reached in March and came 13 months after the launch of the two weekly half-hour programs in Kirundi, Burundi’s national language. Under the agreement, *Kira* will be extended for two years and *Tujahe* for one. Both programs are heard on VOA’s SW frequencies and on REMA FM, VOA’s Bujumbura-based affiliate.

Albanian Monthly Spotlights VOA Reporter



Keida Kostreci

VIP, an Albanian monthly magazine devoted to society, culture and entertainment, featured Keida Kostreci of VOA’s Albanian Service in a special section about Albanian-speaking reporters in Washington, Brussels and London. Kostreci answered questions about her life and work and challenges journalists face in Albania and in the U.S. Discussing the polarization in Albanian politics, she said Albanian political leaders should look to how democracy works in the United States: “My modest opinion is that one of the important lessons of American democracy is that if the democratic process is honored in favor of stability and the future of the country, the results will be tangible. It means that every society has its flaws, but perspective makes leaders see themselves as promoters of democracy, instead of indispensable actors.” Kostreci also answered questions about finding a balance between her work and life as a wife and mother of two. She has worked for VOA Albanian for the last 12 years.

VOA Ukrainian’s Chas-Time: Good Prison Viewing

Fresh out of prison, Ukrainian opposition leader Yuri Lutsenko went on Facebook recently to praise *Chas-Time*, the Ukrainian Service’s TV show. Lutsenko said, aside from ICTV (a private network in Ukraine), Chas-Time was the only show he watched while in prison. “You always,” he wrote, “generate such positivity and optimism.” Lutsenko was released April 7, after serving two years for embezzlement and abuse of office. From the time of his arrest, Lutsenko and his supporters, as well as human rights organizations around the world, dismissed the charges against him as baseless and politically motivated. His release came after numerous demands from the European Court of Human Rights and the European Union.

Kenyan Election

The Swahili Service's comprehensive network of reporters and stringers provided blanket coverage of Kenya's elections, as well as Uhuru Kenyatta's inauguration as president. The service had reports from the state house and the office of the electoral commission in Nairobi, as well as stories from Mombasa and Kisumu. Election and inauguration coverage was available on all the service's platforms, including web, mobile and social media.



Uhuru Kenyatta shows election commission certificate declaring him the winner of presidential race

Precarious Plight of Russia's Journalists

Since December 2012, there have been several firings and departures of editors and journalists from independent Russian media. To gain insight on the situation, VOA Russian's team in New York attended a conference on the future of investigative journalism in Russia, hosted by the Harriman Institute at Columbia University. One of the Russian journalists at the conference was Maria Stepanova, editor-in-chief of *Colta.ru*, an independent news site. "What's going on around us is very sad," Stepanova told VOA Russian, "It's an orgy of purges, closings, restructurings – they're being explained away as a work necessity, by the economic situation, or not explained at all... But we understand that there is an underlying reason for this." VOA Russian also spoke with Elizaveta Osetinskaya, editor-in-chief of *Forbes Russia*, about Russian civil society and the difficulties activists face. She told VOA that the Western narrative of the current media situation in Russia is very superficial. "What the West sees in Russia is based on big court cases, not the whole picture. Some things are getting worse, some things are getting better."

VOA Russian Finds the Iron Lady Had Friends behind the Iron Curtain

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who died April 8 at the age of 87, was famous for her anti-Soviet rhetoric. But in an interview with VOA Russian, former Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze suggested her reputation for hostility to the Soviet Union was overstated. "She did not want to end the Soviet Union," he said, "she wanted to end the Cold War" between Russia and the United States. Whatever her attitude toward the Soviet Union, there is no doubt that after its collapse Mrs. Thatcher developed a good relationship with its last leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. VOA Russian posted an interview it did with Gorbachev's personal translator, Pavel Palazhchenko, who said Thatcher and Gorbachev had some interesting and meaningful meetings and that their acquaintance continued after Thatcher left office. Palazhchenko later contacted VOA Russian via Facebook to say that he showed the interview to Mr. Gorbachev and that he "liked it a lot." VOA Russian also spoke about Mrs. Thatcher with Vladimir Bukovsky, a leading member of the dissident movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The interview garnered

more than 100 comments on the VOA Russian website, and was reprinted by the popular Russian website *INOSMI.ru*, where it received more than 160 comments.

Human Rights Lawyer Takes Calls on Studio 7's LiveTalk

Elections are slated later this year in Zimbabwe, and the political climate is heating up. Last



Blessing Zulu (r) with Beatrice Mtetwa

month, police arrested high-profile human rights lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa on charges of obstructing justice when she questioned the arrest of clients who were investigating senior Zanu-PF officials for corruption. Following her release, Mtetwa came to the United States and on April 26 joined the Zimbabwe Service's Blessing Zulu and Gibbs Dube on the service's call-in show, *LiveTalk*. Responding to questions from listeners, Mtetwa talked about her work as a human rights lawyer, the eight days she spent in jail and the increasingly tense political situation in Zimbabwe.

Nobel Laureate Receives Congressional Gold Medal

In mid April, Congress presented Dr. Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh with the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of his "efforts to combat global poverty." The award places Yunus in the company of a small group of people – including Norman Borlaug, Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, Elie Wiesel, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and Mother Teresa – who have received this award, as well as the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Nobel Peace Prize. VOA Bangla offered detailed live coverage of the ceremony from the Capitol Rotunda for radio and web. The service also produced TV reports for its *Hello America* and *Straight from America* broadcasts.



Dr. Muhammad Yunus (fourth from left) with members of the Bangla Service staff during his visit to VOA headquarters.

VOA and RFE/RL Cooperation and Content-Sharing

Content-sharing and cross-promotion between Radio Free Europe /Radio Liberty and VOA's Ukrainian and Balkan services continue on a broad spectrum of subjects. The two Ukrainian services share their web content weekly. During April, at least 41 RFE/RL materials were republished by VOA Ukrainian and some 29 VOA Ukrainian materials were republished by RFE/RL. VOA's Albanian and Bosnian services republished at least eight RFE/RL stories, and RFE/RL republished at least one VOA story, in addition to carrying VOA Bosnian's daily 60-second video web segment.

Collaboration between Ashna and Azadi

VOA and RFE/RL broadcasters in Afghanistan and Washington are now holding daily conversations on coverage. Representatives of the two services, usually VOA stringer coordinator Ekram Shinwari, Azadi Bureau Chief Hameed Momand and Ashna editors in Washington focus on coverage plans and content sharing opportunities. The collaboration has yielded benefits to both services, with Azadi producing story ideas suggested by Ashna and Ashna TV and Radio interviewing Azadi provincial stringers on key stories in Afghanistan.

VOA Greek Breaks News on Press Freedom Report

VOA Greek was the first media outlet in Greece to broadcast results of Freedom House's *Freedom of the Press 2013*. The report said deteriorating press conditions in Greece contributed to the "unprecedented" decline in the average rating of press freedom in Western Europe in the past year. Major media outlets reproduced the Greek Service story, which also went viral on Twitter.

Deewa Audience Feedback

VOA Deewa fans sent a homemade picture of the hosts of *The Deewa Top 10*, one of the most popular music shows on Deewa, to express their thanks for the broadcast. Deewa's Niala Mohammad and Muhammad Alamgir are pictured here...



On Earth Day, the VOA Deewa Breakfast Show focused on a nationwide cleanliness campaign. After the program, fans posted pictures on Deewa's Facebook page showing how their children got into the spirit of the day. ...



Training Workshops in Indonesia and Vietnam

VOA's Jakarta Office, working with the BBG Development Office, conducted two training workshops in Indonesia in April. The first, on disaster preparedness for journalists, was held April 7-10 in Bogor. Twenty-four young and mid-career journalists, producers and editors from print, online, TV and radio attended the workshop. Eight speakers representing WHO, FAO, USAID other international health organizations, along with two senior journalists and two social media activists, shared their experience with trainees. The second workshop, titled Journalism 101 Training, was held April 11-12, in Jakarta under the auspices of BBG/VOA and the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta. Ten young reporters from print, online and radio networks in Jakarta attended this workshop. Finally, from April 3-5, VOA Vietnamese Service Chief Judy Nguyen held a workshop in coordination with the U.S. Embassy and the Vietnamese Journalists Association. Twenty-two journalists from various newspapers, magazines and radio and TV stations across Vietnam participated in the workshop.

Other Notable Interviews

- The president of Paraguay, Federico Franco, spoke with the Spanish Service about relations with the United States and Venezuela. He accused the Caracas government of interfering in Paraguayan affairs and criticized the Organization of American States for not playing any role in the post-election crisis in Venezuela. The interview was played in its entirety by the VOA affiliate in Paraguay, Radio Nanduti, the leading radio station in the country.
- In an interview with VOA Bosnian, President Zeljko Komsic, a member of the collective three-member Bosnian presidency, explained what prompted him to form a new political party, one that he said aims to attract young people.
- Haiti's Prime Minister, Laurent Lamothe, visited VOA in mid April to participate in the service's highly popular call-in show. Prime Minister Lamothe answered questions from listeners on a wide range of issues, including the upcoming elections in Haiti and post-earthquake reconstruction.
- To examine the effect of sequestration on U.S. foreign aid, the Ukrainian Service interviewed Jed Burton, chief of USAID in Ukraine, and two development experts in Washington who explored the subject on a global scale. The package was shared with VOA Central News and subsequently aired by many other VOA language services.
- VOA Macedonian interviewed Meto Koloski, president of the U.S.-based United Macedonian Diaspora. The interview focused on NATO enlargement-related lobbying and the organization's initiative to enlarge the Macedonian congressional caucus. All major media in Macedonia – pro-government and pro-opposition – carried the interview, a rare occurrence for the heavily politicized media in Macedonia.
- Urdu's *Café DC* interviewed Representative Judy Chu (D-CA), the first Chinese-American woman elected to Congress.
- VOA Russian New York correspondent interviewed both sons of Igor Sikorsky, a great American-Russian aviation pioneer, on the occasion of a ceremony in New York transferring his archives to the Solzhenitsyn Foundation in Russia. The Sikorsky brothers said that their father came to the U.S. because the times in Russia were harsh but that he remained a Russian patriot. "My father loved everything Russian – Russian music, culture, religion," Igor Sikorsky, Jr., told VOA Russian.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Steve Herman, Tweeter Extraordinaire

As VOA's Northeast Asia bureau chief, Steve Herman's beat is the Korean peninsula and Japan, and it is not at all unusual for him to scoop the competition on big stories out of the region, such



as the Japanese tsunami or a North Korean missile launch. Not only is he a prolific correspondent, he is also a prolific tweeter. On big news days, he has been known to post more than 100 tweets in 24-hours. "In the Internet era," he says, "there is no traditional news cycle, it's instantaneous and never-ending. And on Twitter, where unreliable reports or speculation can be spread globally in seconds, I feel compelled as a journalist to immediately transmit whatever we witness and can confirm." Herman's output is so voluminous and so reliable that Mashable.com recently listed @W7VOA, Herman's handle, as one of 10 Twitter accounts to follow for North Korean news.

More Records for VOA Vietnamese

The VOA Vietnamese website reached a record high in March with almost 2.5 million visits and over 8.2 million pageviews. In April (as of 4/28) there were: 2,328,984 visits. The service recently introduced new English Learning programs on YouTube and switched to a new design that let it customize different looks for subscribers and non-subscribed viewers. The service's Learning English YouTube channel also reached a record high of 186,939 views in a month.

New Website Launched

On April 30, VOA Learning English began the live rollout of its new webpage. The site offers vocabulary, listening and comprehension exercises with each article, and reinforces the branch's rebranding as "Learning English." Initial audience feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with visitors commenting on the site's ease of navigation and clarity of content presentation. <http://learningenglish.voanews.com/> In the weeks ahead, the site will feature more audience engagement through Skype interactives and blogs.

Horn of Africa Service Capitalizes on 'Facebook Craze' in Ethiopia

Ethiopia's Internet community is reacting enthusiastically to the launch of VOA Amharic's interactive "Q&A" feature on its Facebook page. The launch coincided with the Boston marathon bombings. The first question asked whether listeners felt the bombings had cheated the Ethiopian winner of recognition for his spectacular achievement. The question elicited 12,000 views and 36 responses in four days. Perhaps most encouraging about the responses is that the vast majority appear to be coming from inside Ethiopia. Other audience measurement

tools have suggested a significant part of the service's SW and mobile phone audience is in the diaspora.

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Press Releases

- *VOA Albanian Service marks 70th Anniversary* – May 4
- *VOA Mobile Site Gets New Look, Features* – April 17
- *VOA Reaching Large Audiences in Latin America* – April 3

Highlights

- *VOA Khmer Shines Light on Land Rights Abuses* – April 24
- *Mika Plays Songs from New Album* – April 19
- *Photo Contest Winner Announced* – April 19
- *At the Top of His Game* – April 11
- *Dreamy Blog Post Goes Viral in China* – April 9
- *One Journalist, Two Voices?* – April 4

PR Supported Events

- Dir. David Ensor makes speech to World Public Affairs Council Portland, Oregon, May 2
- Dir. David Ensor makes speech to Public Diplomacy Council, USC, Los Angeles CA, May 3
- Dir. David Ensor delivers commencement address at Washington State University, School of Journalism – May 3
- Albanian Service 70th Anniversary – May 7
- Bangla Service Event with Dr. Mohammad Yunus – April 19
- Serbian Service Anniversary – April 18
- Staff visit from VOA Museum of Broadcasting – May 6, 7, & 8

VOA Studio Tour

All visits listed below took the VOA Studio Tour during their visit.

- Italian students meet with newsroom staffer – May 6
- Indonesian students meet Indonesian Service – May 3
- International Media Training participants take VOA tour – May 1
- Bowie State University students meet Persian Service staff – April 30
- Korean journalists meet VOA staff – April 26
- Multiple tours Sons & Daughters Day – April 25
- Mount Saint Mary's University students meet VOA senior staff – April 24
- Global Language Center class meets Mandarin Service staffers – April 23
- Vaclav Havel Fellows from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Moldova meet VOA language service staff – April 17
- Global Language Center class meets Korean Service staffers – April 17
- Participants in World Council's "Inside Washington" program meet VOA Director David Ensor – April 16
- International Visitor Leadership Program visit – April 2

Media Highlights

- Steve Herman interviewed on WTOP – April 11
- Radio World: VOA Reacts to the Sequester – April 4
- Steve Herman appears on BBC’s “World Have Your Say” – April 4

F. PERSONNEL

PPIA-VOA Broadcasting Fellowship

The newest PPIA-VOA Broadcasting Fellow, Mr. Rafki Hidayat, arrived in April for his year-long practical experience in the Indonesian Service. This is the sixth year of the fellowship program which is co-sponsored by VOA and the Indonesian-American Friendship Association (PPIA) in Jakarta. The highly competitive and selective program brings young Indonesian journalists and broadcasters to the U.S. to work alongside VOA’s professional team and to gain valuable experience with an international broadcasting organization. The 2012-2013 fellows, Ms. Retno Ningsih and Ms. Marsha Riyadi, returned to Indonesia on April 22.

US Institute of Peace Detail for Burmese Chief

VOA Burmese Service Chief Lwin Than began a two-week detail in late April with the U.S. Institute of Peace to conduct research in Thailand and Myanmar on the role of media in conflict resolution. Mr. Than returns to VOA on May 9.

Glenn Sauter, RIP

Glenn Sauter, Telecommunications Specialist in Radio Traffic at VOA, died suddenly on May 5, at the age of 53. Glenn started with USIA as a Radio Broadcast Technician in Master Control in 1985 and spent 10 years there before joining VOA Radio Traffic, where he worked for the past 17 years. Glenn began his radio career more than 30 years ago as a morning man at radio station WFIF in Milford, Connecticut. He also worked as an audio engineer at radio stations in Connecticut, New Jersey and at RKO Radio Networks in New York, before coming to VOA. Glenn always had a love for the oldies, especially songs from the ’50s, ’60s and ’70s, and he used his considerable record collection as part of a syndicated weekend radio music show – “Hits of Yesteryear” – which he started in the mid-1990s and continued to produce and host until the time of his death. He is survived by his wife, Janet, and his daughter Suzanne and his son Stephen. Glenn was a beloved and respected by his colleagues and friends at VOA and will always be remembered for the passion and dedication he had for his job, and for the pride he took in working at the Voice of America.

Irina Donskaya, RIP

Our long-time Russian colleague Irina Donskaya died of cancer in Moscow on April 18, at the age of 57. For more than 12 years, Irina was responsible for the day-to-day operation of VOA’s Moscow News bureau. She started as a researcher and then took over management of the bureau, working closely with the U.S. Embassy and News Division correspondents. In 2010, she received a Gold Medal Award for her exemplary contributions to the mission of the Voice of America and Broadcasting Board of Governors. To her co-workers, she was a hard-working and valued colleague and friend.



May 14, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for May

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- Officials at Channel 5 in Ukraine, a VOA affiliate that broadcasts the Ukrainian Service's [news program Chas-Time](#), have contacted the service to say that the station has lost its terrestrial signal in several cities in the eastern part of the country, including Donetsk and Luhansk. According to Channel 5, several cable providers in the region have also been threatened, potentially disrupting *Chas-Time* distribution via cable.
- On May 2 in Donetsk, a mob carrying knives and axes threatened two VOA reporters, Brian Padden and Arash Arabasadi. On May 7, a VOA stringer in Ukraine, Jaime Dettmer, was outside the regional prosecutors' office in Luhansk interviewing lawyers expelled from the building by gunmen. As the interview was taking place, three men carrying AK-47s approached and accused Dettmer of being an American spy. One of them grabbed his recording equipment and told him to leave the region for his own good. He eventually got his equipment back after meeting with the top separatist leader in Luhansk. This incident came two weeks after Dettmer learned from sympathetic sources that his name was on a "snatch list" of journalists targeted for capture.
- On April 28, VOA South Sudan Project reporter Michael Atit went to the U.N. compound in Wau to meet people who had fled there over fears of ethnically driven violence. As he was leaving, a group of government soldiers stopped and searched Atit and all the people he was with. When the soldiers found out that Atit and another reporter were journalists, they were slapped repeatedly and accused of selling information. The soldiers also confiscated Atit's phone. Atit has reported the incident to the VOA Juba bureau chief and to the local journalists' union. He has also asked that VOA not take any additional steps at the moment. This is the second time Atit has been harassed by government security forces this year. On March 13, he was detained by security forces in Wau, questioned about his work, and told that he cannot do any additional reporting without first getting permission. However, in spite of the threats, he has continued to report for the South Sudan Project.
- On May 1 a military police officer in Phnom Penh seized a mobile device that VOA Khmer reporter Kong Sothanarith was using to take pictures of a May Day rally. Sothanarith went after the officer to get the device back but another police officer threatened him with arrest if he pursued the matter. This happened even though, from the time the mobile was seized, Sothanarith repeatedly said he was a reporter for VOA. It was only after the intervention of a higher-ranking police officer that the VOA Khmer reporter got his mobile back.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim CEO & Director, André Mendes
DATE: May 20, 2015
SUBJECT: IBB Monthly Report for April 2015

GLOBAL OPERATIONS:

Technology Services and Innovation (TSI)

- TSI has assembled an easily transportable **Fly-Away FM Transmitting System** and demonstrated it on April 28. The system can be readily transported on a commercial flight and then set-up in minutes for urgent broadcasts to critical target audiences.
- Tropical Storm Bavi passed south of the Mariana Islands on March 15 and impacted operations at both the BBG Tinian and Saipan Transmitting Station sites. The storm damaged five of Tinian's antennas but final repairs were completed by March 31.
- Because of safety concerns with the severely corroded guy wires, it was necessary to remove a number of antennas at the Sri Lanka Transmitting Station from service until a thorough inspection could be made of the antenna towers. We are arranging for a structural expert to travel to the station to undertake these investigations.
- The Agency received no notifications from the United States Computer Emergency Response Team (US-CERT) of any suspicious activity being directed towards or emanating from the Agency's computing infrastructure. However, four workstations were detected communicating with command and control centers through a malware infection. These infections may have been a result of drive-by infections due to visiting sites serviced by a malicious Russian advertising site. All systems were remediated. Forensic scanning tools identified five additional workstations having indicators of compromise (IOCs). The workstations were also remediated.
- The Senior Agency Official for Privacy coordinated a Privacy Breach Notification Team meeting to review the impact of a privacy breach with the Agency PIV card application form on the Agency's legacy SharePoint site. Only nine employees were potentially impacted by the breach, and the breach was remediated. The Breach Notification Team prepared a notification letter that described the nature of the breach and actions employees could take to protect themselves.



May 14, 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for May

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- As the political crisis intensified in Burundi, VOA began boosting broadcasts to the country adding shortwave and FM broadcasts in Kirundi, Kinyarwanda, Kiswahili, French, and English. VOA is now able to provide more reporting from the ground, new drive-time newscasts, and an expanded call-in show. Daily VOA broadcasts air on 95.2 FM and 94.9 FM in Bujumbura and on 104.3 FM in Kigali. There are also new VOA shortwave broadcasts from 04:00 to 05:30 UTC and from 19:30 to 20:00 UTC on 7350 kHz, 9815 kHz, and 11905 kHz; and from 16:00 to 16:30 UTC on 13630 kHz, 15460 kHz, and 17530 kHz.
- The family of VOA Macedonian stringer Borjan Jovanovski received a funeral wreath while he was on a trip to Brussels. According to his spouse, the unknown man who delivered the wreath said that he was doing so on behalf of Todor Aleksandrov, a controversial, violent historical figure glorified by the party in power, VMRO-DPMNE. Mr. Jovanovski is a prominent critic of the Macedonian government. His long career includes engagements as a correspondent from Brussels and news editor for the now defunct A1 TV, a former VOA affiliate closed by the government. The [International Federation of Journalists](#) (IFJ) and the [European Federation of journalists](#) (EFJ) and journalist associations in Macedonia condemned the incident and called on authorities to prosecute the perpetrators. Media freedom in Macedonia has been declining rapidly. Freedom House's Freedom of the Press 2014 report ranks Macedonia as "partly free," 122nd among 197 countries and territories, with the worst record among its neighbors, and on a downward spiral, just four points away from slipping into the "not free" category.
- VOA Zimbabwe "Studio 7" stringer Frank Chikowore was recently summoned to a police station in Harare, Zimbabwe and advised to have a lawyer or a friend accompany him to the station. Upon arriving, he was told the authorities are investigating the theft of his equipment – a phone and computer – he reported a few weeks ago. Chikowore was attacked by a group of men who took his equipment and then tried, unsuccessfully, to force him into a vehicle.
- The Azerbaijani authorities are demanding that VOA stringers working in the country undergo accreditation with the foreign ministry, even though Azeri laws do not require such accreditation.

DATE: November 7, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for October, 2012

OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

Jamming of BBG Satellite Transmissions to Iran: VOA PNN satellite jamming by Iran resumed on October 3 for about two days. The attack was quite intensive as three satellites were affected. PNN was clearly the target, but other VOA, RFE/RL, RFA, and Radio Sawa programming was also impacted as collateral damage.

The most recent set of jamming efforts originated out of Syria from October 15-30 on the Eutelsat Hotbird 13B satellite. The jamming was intermittent, and BBG's higher power uplink signal often successfully overcame the jamming. It is believed that this latest round of jamming was in retaliation for the removal of Government of Iran programming on the Eutelsat fleet.

BBG established backup capacity on October 22 for all programming affected, except VOA PNN and Radio Fardo, so as not to attract more jamming. VOA PNN is currently on five different frequencies targeting Iran on five different satellites. Radio Farda does not seem to be a direct target of satellite jamming; it is on seven different frequencies on seven satellites.

Visit by Todd Park: On October 19, the U.S. Chief Technology Officer (CTO), Todd Park, came to BBG and ODDI to learn more about our innovation work. After a tour, Mr. Park spent time with both the ODDI staff on a one-on-one session, as well as a round table discussion with representatives from MBN, VOA and RFA. We are in further discussions with the CTO about participating in a future Presidential Innovation Fellows program that they are contemplating in 2013.

2012 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey: The agency received initial results from the 2012 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, administered every year by OPM. The overall results show a decline compared with last year. OPM will release more detailed data and government-wide trends in mid-November at a press conference. The initial results are posted on the BBG website. The IBB, VOA and OCB directors met with union presidents to discuss the initial results before they were posted.

Update on OIG-GAO Inspections: The OIG is in the final stages of drafting its report on the Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. The OIG inspection team will conduct the Exit Briefing with the BBG Governors on November 19.

OPR continues to coordinate with the GAO regarding its current engagement on USIB streamlining, including agency responses to ongoing GAO questions. OPR submitted an official

legal opinion, prepared by the IBB General Counsel's office at the GAO's request, examining BBG statutory responsibilities related to preventing duplication and overlap in BBG activities.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

Emergency Notification System: The agency has acquired a system for sending emergency alerts to agency personnel who choose to participate via email, text message, and phone calls. The system will be used for emergency situations that only affect our agency and the premises we occupy. OCB employees are participating, and the Department of Health and Human Services will also use the system for building-wide alerts. In October, the first quarterly test of the system was successfully completed.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

- VOA's Sonya Green traveled to **Juba, South Sudan**, in October and helped to coordinate installation plans for a new BBG FM station on the U.S. Embassy compound carrying VOA programming. VOA is planning a January 18, 2013, launch of the new station.
- Equipment for a new BBG FM system in **Misratah, Libya**, the third BBG FM in that country, has been shipped to Benghazi. The equipment remains in secure storage there until it can be safely transported to Misratah. On-air should be about two weeks after arrival in Misratah.
- All of the equipment has arrived to complete the installation of remaining BBG FM stations in Afghanistan. **Mehtar Lam** (Langhman Province) and **Sharan** (Paktika Province) are expected to be on air by the end of November.
- TSI engineers finished restoring and upgrading **14 VOA FM affiliates in Haiti** that were damaged in the 2010 earthquake. TSI will conduct a training session for technical staff of the affiliates in December.

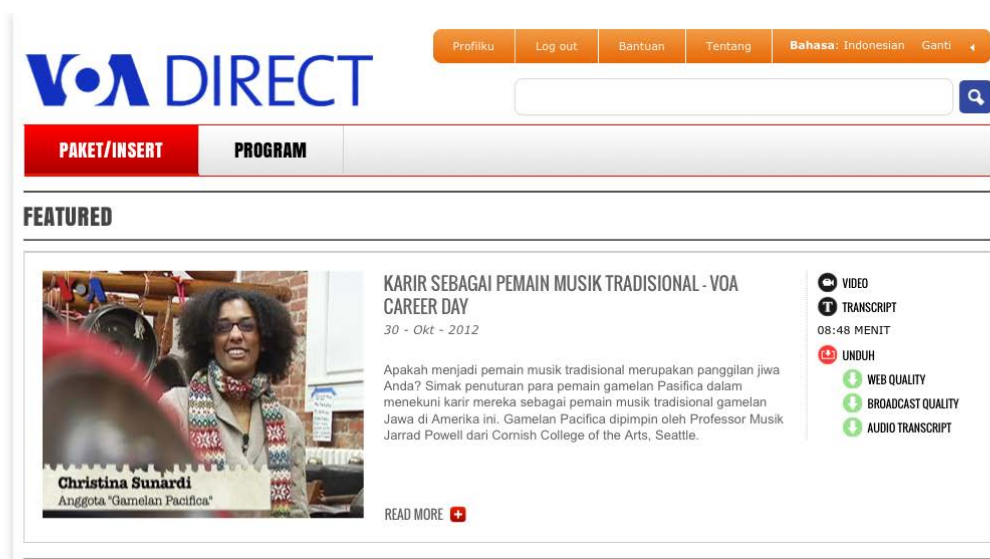
IBB Information Technology (IT): The agency has developed a new IT security awareness training presentation. Over 90% of agency employees and contractors have been trained, a dramatic improvement over the 30% rate in prior years.

IBB Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities: The IAC Team finished configuration and testing of 20 small, commercially available Hughes satellite terminals intended to provide Internet access for end users in Cuba. All of the terminals have been shipped to OCB for distribution in Cuba. These satellite terminals will provide users with Internet access that is completely independent of the Cuban telecommunications infrastructure.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION

Online Audio/Video Platform: ODDI is working with the entities to launch Kaltura, an open-sourced audio/video platform that also provides services to HBO, NBA, Siemens, and the World Bank. For the Pangea organizations (all but RFA) this will be an "invisible" part of the Pangea system. We are working with RFA to integrate the service into their own content management system. This platform should be operational in December, with full integration early by February 2013.

USIM Direct Launch: ODDI launched a new service, called Direct, that enables VOA and other entities to transfer broadcast quality content to their affiliates using lower cost Internet services, versus satellite transmission. ODDI has rebuilt this service from what was an external vendor contract, saving the government over \$300,000 in contract costs per year. In the past, this service was only available to VOA, but the new version will allow all entities are to utilize the platform if they expand their affiliate programs.



Mozilla Festival: ODDI is partnering with the Mozilla Foundation to present a two day “hackathon” at the MozFest, a festival of technologists from around the world. This event will spend 48 hours building “Our Block,” an online service that will enable stringers, affiliates and other local based organizations to recreate community radio online, focusing on social media and user generated content. We are readying this service for deployment in early 2013.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Opera Deal: OSD is finalizing contract negotiations for a deal with Opera Software that could open USIB products up to an audience of as many as 250,000,000 active users of all Opera products, in particular Opera Mini Browser. The initial stage will be a pilot with just a few languages so that BBG and Opera can learn how best to cooperate on this promising new platform.

Russian Internet Week: OSD’s Adam Gartner teamed with VOA’s Elez Biberaj, Elena Kovalevskaya, and Irina Van Dusen October 15-17 in Moscow at the Russian Internet Week trade show, meeting with key digital media players and making progress on several significant new deals for VOA.

Grani.ru Deal: VOA Russian signed an agreement with Grani that allows them to take all VOA Russian service text and video content. VOA will produce, at least three times per month, a summary of a key US news topics with a summary of U.S. media reaction to the topic, context,

opinions and viewpoints from U.S. officials. Grani.ru has 900,000 visitors every week. The site is focused on contextualizing and analyzing, rather than breaking, news

Other Russia Deals in Progress: Several other significant deals in Russia are in the works, though not yet complete:

- Russian Business Channel (RBC) is ready to air VOA Russian content three times a day Monday through Friday. They would like to take live reports from the VOA position at the NYSE at the opening bell, closing bell, and during the 7:00am Moscow morning show (11:00pm Washington time), where VOA would summarize news from Washington just before the work day begins in Moscow. Not only do reports of this nature not currently exist on RBC or its competitors, the cooperation gives VOA the valuable opportunity to diversify its assets in the Russian media market, making VOA less vulnerable to the Putin administration. The latest audience figures from RBC claim 18 million viewers per month on television and 20 million users per month on internet. The draft contract is being translated and will be delivered to IBB General Council in Washington for their input.
- REN TV, a terrestrial channel that currently has an “infotainment” focus, is very interested in getting breaking news and investigative reporting from VOA.
- The next phase of VOA’s partnership with prominent portal Rambler.ru will be RSS feeds of video. The portal is ready to take VOA’s Russian video offerings in the form of an RSS feed as soon as an addendum to the current agreement can be signed.

Moldova Media Training: OSD and RFE/RL staff led a successful journalism training program on judicial issues in Chisinau, Moldova, October 18-20. USAID funded the program. The US Embassy there is interested in extending the partnership into FY14 and is considering sponsoring a fellowship position. The embassy also provisionally supports installing a kiosk for 24/7 streaming of RFE/RL and VOA programs in the American Corner in Chisinau.

Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU): OSD marketed VOA and RFA programs at the ABU’s General Assembly and Associated Meetings in Seoul, which were attended by some 500 delegates representing major private- and public-sector media from across Asia. The event identified scores of promising leads for affiliations. Separately, Bruce Sherman conducted several meetings in preparation for the DG-5 meeting in December.



New African Affiliations and Partnerships:

- VOA signed an agreement with a popular affiliate in Kano, the commercial center of norther Nigeria and an area considered a hotbed of Nigerian Islamic fundamentalism. Freedom Radio will broadcast several Hausa and English programs weekly.
- The U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa gave VOA \$49,200 to continue the very successful 100 Citizen Journalists program.
- VOA English and Learning English programming will be available on five new affiliates in South Sudan.
- OSD is finalizing details for an Africom agreement for Somalia that will bring \$150,000 in broadcast funds. Under this agreement, VOA will provide, and have final editorial control over, programming related to Countering Violent Extremism. The programming will reach audiences in Somaliland and Puntland, as well as provide for town hall meetings in Nairobi, Dadaab and inside Somalia.
- OSD is working a possible partnership between Sony and VOA that would bring information on health issues to thousands of people in Africa. Sony indicated that they would be very happy to cooperate with the Africa Division's new Africa Health Network by providing Sony Tablets for users in low communication access areas in Africa. The DRC, northern Nigeria, Mozambique, Tanzania and Somali are areas under discussion.

Marketing VOA Spanish in the Southern Cone: OSD and VOA are working on improving VOA presence in Southern Cone countries. OSD staff attended the Jornadas Internacionales tradeshow in Buenos Aires and the Chile Media Show. There was substantial interest in VOA international-news content from major players such as Canal 13 and TVN, as well as the Cooperativa and Bío-Bío radio networks.

Data Sales: To date, BBG has sold \$118,300 worth of research data to other international broadcasters. We expect to sell another \$80,000 worth by mid-November.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: In October, BBG staff continued to work with key stakeholders in the House and Senate, as well as the State Department, regarding the Smith-Mundt Modernization Act championed by Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX) and co-sponsored by Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA), which had passed the House as part of the National Defense Authorization Act. It was dropped during the Senate markup process of the NDAA, but there is interest in the Senate in including the measure. As of November 6, the possibility remained that the Senate would take up the NDAA during the Lame Duck session.

Working with the State Department and several BBG broadcast entities, we coordinated review and clearance of BBG-related information for mandatory reports to Congress on North Korea and efforts to expand freedom of information in Iran.

In the last days of October and the first days of November, we received these letters from members of Congress: Reps. G.K. Butterfield (D-NC) and Walter B. Jones (R-NC) on BBG hiring practices and plans for the Edward R. Murrow Transmitting Station, and Rep. Bill Posey

(R-FL) requesting a one-page report of BBG activities. Work began with VOA and BBG staff on responses to these letters.

In close coordination with RFE/RL, the BBG congressional team continued outreach to key congressional staff to provide updates regarding RFE/RL's Russian Service. We also arranged for Steve Korn to meet with the main foreign policy staffer for Senator Coburn.

The BBG oversaw and took part in the preparation of a briefing for interested Senate staff regarding VOA's Persian Service. This was a follow-on to a similar briefing held in October; staffers for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senator Coburn who were unable to attend the previous briefing expressed their gratitude for this second opportunity to hear from David Ensor, Steve Redisch and a well-known Persian Service anchor about what's new and what's on the horizon for audiences in Iran.

Work continued with the White House Office of Confirmations and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to complete and submit the required nomination paperwork for Jeff Shell. Additionally, two days of internal briefings for Mr. Shell with IBB and BBG senior managers and others were arranged through this office, which attended most of these meetings and tracked follow-up requests. Future briefings and congressional courtesy visits will be scheduled based on the nominee's availability.

Working with the BBG congressional team, Voice of America organized a visit to the Cohen Building for nine Hill staffers. The program for the bipartisan group of House and Senate staff included a building tour, attendance at the Friday editorial meeting, and a half-hour meeting with David Ensor.

We flagged several articles and news releases of interest for key congressional staffers, including BBG and DG-5 releases on satellite jamming, BBG and VOA response to a *U.S. News and World Report* article, and OCB's Emmy nominations.

Media: Through news releases, contact with media freedom organizations and sustained contact with the State Department, the public affairs staff for the BBG and MBN continued working closely together to spread the word about two Alhurra journalists who went missing in Syria on August 20 and were reportedly in the custody of Syrian government forces.

The Washington Post published a front-page story on U.S. government Internet anti-censorship efforts that prominently featured the BBG, including quotes from André Mendes and Michael Meehan, as well as information about RFA's efforts; this was the product of several weeks of collaboration between BBG Public Affairs, Governor Meehan and RFA.

Working with VOA, we helped David Ensor prepare for a lengthy "Federal Coach" interview; these features on leadership, organized by the Partnership for Public Service, appear periodically in *The Washington Post*; this one was expected to be published in November or December.

Together with VOA, BBG Public Affairs crafted several responses to an error-ridden *U.S. News and World Report* story on VOA that included observations about its relationship to the Board,

and about the Board itself. The resulting corrections, online comment and letter to the editor from Governor Lynton were added to the record of the original story.

Working with RFE/RL, we assisted in response to U.S.-based media reports concerning Radio Svoboda, while RFE/RL in Prague and Moscow continued to lead response to Russian media.

BBG Public Affairs produced timely news releases on the repeated jamming of satellite signals, first by Iran and then by Syria, that had caused serious disruptions of radio and TV programming across several regions. Global wire services and other news outlets cited these releases; we also worked with the State Department to elevate the visibility of this issue, and coordinated a joint release with other members of the DG-5.

We began strategizing with all the broadcast entities to lay the groundwork for the annual release of the Performance Accountability Report, along with the global audience estimate.

BBG Public Affairs prepared new posts for Director Lobo's blog, ViewPoint, on employee efforts during Hurricane Sandy, an in-house meeting with Chief Technology Officer Todd Park and the recent Agency awards ceremony.

As web postings and information has increased, traffic to the bbg.gov website has climbed to approximately 19,700 unique visitors per month, up from 17,300 in August.

Graphics: In addition to the customary production of banners, posters and logos to support agency-wide communications efforts, as well as providing photography and graphics assistance for routine events and special occasions such as employee swearing-in ceremonies, the Graphics Department in October completed the design, layout and publication of the VOA 2013 calendar. This year's theme is U.S. national parks; stunning stock photography, combined with descriptive write-ups of the featured scenes, make this one of the more attractive calendars in memory. New this year: Greetings from each of VOA's language services in their mother tongue.

Internal Communications: The entire Office of Communications and External Affairs hosted an agency-wide networking event in the Cohen Building main corridor as part of the BBG's monthly series to facilitate employee interaction and help improve morale. More than 150 people turned out to enjoy one another's company and autumn-themed snacks, including cider and pumpkin-flavored baked goods.

BBG Public Affairs produced, provided staff support and online publication of extensive information for a very well-received BBG Medal Award ceremony that took place on Oct. 10.

We continued to post creative features with attractive graphics on the agency employee blog, *Tune In*, to highlight individuals and historic and contemporary events and to share information of interest to employees. The blog has been building audience and now has hundreds of visitors each month.

BBG Public Affairs supported the agency's efforts with the Partnership for Public Service, including messaging to encourage participation in a series of workshops, and we formulated and

carried out the internal and external communications strategy for release of initial results of OPM's Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey.

Other Outreach:

The BBG and Gallup held another in the series of monthly research briefings, facilitated by BBG Public Affairs. October's topic, Indonesians' media usage, drew a comparatively large crowd of foreign and U.S. government and NGO representatives, academics and others interested in Indonesia – more than 60 people. Results from the study were relayed through U.S. embassy to reporters in Indonesia. Work began on the next event in the series, to be focused on Zimbabwe.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Indonesia Research Presentation at Gallup: IBB Research Director Bill Bell presented findings from the 2012 national survey of Indonesia as part of the ongoing series of public forums hosted by Gallup and the BBG on results of the BBG research program. Bill focused on the dramatic way in which new media are re-shaping Indonesians' media consumption and information sharing patterns. Weekly Internet use has now reached more than 20% of Indonesian adults and the vast majority of those users are on Facebook.

Russian Review, September 20, 2012: A June-July 2012 survey of 5,000 adults (15 and older) across the Russian Federation shows that, while television still dominates the way Russians get their news (96% use TV at least weekly to follow current events), half of them say they use Internet at least once a week to get news – more than use either print media (47%) or radio (43%). Internet continues to grow in penetration, bandwidth, and as a mobile platform, but for most major domestic and international news providers it remains a highly competitive market. U.S. international broadcasters reach 0.4% online in any language. Recommendations from the program review include pursuit of TV placement strategies on VOA Direct, Opera mini mobile browser, and broadcast outlets in Russia such as channel Dozhd; and review of VOA Russian content offerings and stringer network in line with the social and political changes occurring in Russia, and the media environment.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Buyout Opportunity: On October 16, 2012, the agency announced an opportunity for employees to apply for a Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment, or Buyout. Under this program, employees who resign or retire by December 31, 2012, may receive up to \$25,000 as a separation incentive. Employees have until November 9, 2012, to apply for a buyout. To date, the agency has received 16 buyout applications from employees throughout the agency. Buyouts are a vital tool in assisting the agency in reducing the impact of a potential Reduction in Force in conjunction with the FY 2013 budget and allows the agency to replace incumbents with outdated skills with individuals having the skills needed in today's workplace.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

National Disability Employment Awareness Month: During the month of October, OCR hosted a discussion regarding what federal employees can do to encourage an inclusive and strong workforce. The discussion was led by the owner and founder of Disability Dynamics, Ms. Deidre Davis, Esq. We were pleased to have Natalie Illum, a disabled employee from the CFO's office, MC the event.



November 7, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for November

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

Police Detain VOA Reporter in Addis Ababa

VOA Director Ensor has condemned the harassment of a VOA reporter who was forced to erase recordings she made during a protest rally in Addis Ababa early in October. Marthe van der Wolf was briefly detained by Ethiopian police as she gathered information about a demonstration against alleged government interference in the election of an Islamic Council. While she was under detention, Van der Wolf says she was forced to erase the recordings she made of the rally. "Reporters must be allowed to do their work without fear of being harassed or intimidated by authorities," Ensor said in a statement. "The latest incident appears to be part of a pattern of behavior designed to prevent journalists from doing their jobs. Such harassment will not stop news from being reported."

Phnom Penh Government Gives Coverage 'Suggestions' to VOA Khmer

Cambodia's general elections aren't until July of next year, but the government is already preparing for them. On October 12, government information officials summoned reporters for VOA and RFA to a closed-door meeting. The meeting lasted more than two hours and was clearly intended to intimidate the reporters. They were warned to stop broadcasting material critical of Prime Minister Hun Sen and not to focus attention on such issues as corruption, illegal logging, and the government crackdown on rights activists. Failure to heed this warning, the officials told them, could lead to legal action against them. The presence of a senior official from the justice ministry emphasized the seriousness of the warning. Though local journalists were not at the meeting, they soon learned of it, and some acknowledged to VOA Khmer reporters that it had a chilling effect on them. Some even said they already censor what they report because of concerns for their own safety. VOA Khmer reporters, however, were not intimidated. They invited an official who had been at the meeting to appear on a VOA Khmer talk show to explain why it was called and to allow listeners to voice their concern. Throughout

the interview, the official insisted that no intimidation was intended and maintained that the government wanted the meeting so officials could get a better understanding of the missions of VOA and RFA. However, he was contradicted by another guest on the show, a member of an independent media group, who said that if the government had been only interested in VOA Khmer's mission, all it had to do was simply check the VOA charter, which, he noted, is available online.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES



USA Votes 2012: VOA Delivers

From its beginning to its rousing ending, every one of VOA's 43 language services went to extraordinary lengths to tell the story of this most extraordinary race and Barack Obama's re-election.

Here are some highlights from VOA programming in the final days of the race:

- The Mandarin Service produced a two-hour special on election night that featured live feeds from reporters from Boston and Chicago. It also prepared more than a dozen short features for the show, including profiles of Obama and Romney as well as stories about voting rights and the Electoral College. In addition, Mandarin Service chief Sasha Gong took part in a live question-and-answer session on QQ, one of the most popular micro-blogs in China. She also uploaded VOA Mandarin election stories and videos on QQ. Within two days, she had 3,000 fans and more than 10,000 registered for her report the morning after the election.
- The day before the election, the Urdu Service produced a live pre-election TV special for the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, which aired it four times on Pakistan state television. The program was streamed on the Internet and simulcast by a network of 70 radio stations. PBC Director General Murtaza Solangi said the broadcast was available to "every inch of Pakistan." On election night, the service produced a special 30-minute broadcast for affiliate Express TV.
- The Spanish Service delivered more than 100 live reports for TV and radio affiliate stations across Latin America on Election Day. Between Monday and Wednesday of election week the service had over 220 live interactives and feeds into TV and radio stations throughout the region. These included major radio and television networks in Latin America, including Andina de Television (Peru's leading television network) and Radio Programas del Peru (Peru's leading radio network), as well as Globovision (leading television network in Venezuela), Radio Caracas Radio and KysFM (leading

radio stations in Venezuela), Radio Formula (one of Mexico's leading radio stations), Teleamazonas (Ecuador's leading television station) Radio Panamericana (a leading bolivian television station) as well as Colombian radio and television stations (Cablenoticias, El Tiempo, Noticias24, RCN radio and RCTV) had live shots or live reports from Spanish Service journalists. One major TV network told the service that they attributed the big increase in their ratings to the reports they carried from VOA Spanish correspondents in New York, Washington, Boston, Miami and Chicago, and many others have thanked VOA for its contributions to their coverage. Voanoticias.com had 43,000 unique visits on election day.

- As part of the Africa Division's special election coverage, every service broadcasting to the continent arranged live question-and-answer sessions between VOA reporters in Washington and affiliate stations on the continent, including the three largest FM stations in Kenya and Tanzania. Burundi state radio aired four hours of VOA's election coverage. And although Nigerian law prohibits domestic stations from carrying news reports from international broadcasters, state radios in Kano and Lafia must have found a loophole. They carried Hausa Service live coverage of the election. Africa Division services also set up a system to feed election updates to mobile devices throughout the continent. (How popular is Barack Obama in Africa? The Africa Division conducted an informal election poll and found that Mr. Obama had the support of 97 percent of those polled.)
- The Persian Service produced a three-hour Election Night special, through the declaration of a winner. The special report aired from 7 AM to 10 AM in Iran, and included high-profile guests in Washington and California with reporters at each of the candidates' election night headquarters as well in the Los Angeles Iranian-American community.
- The Russian Service had a special two-hour UStreamed web program with three guests and reporters participating from Chicago and Boston. All Eurasia Division Services produced live blogs, interviews with experts and standups from polling stations and reports from ethnic communities from around the US. The Balkan and Ukrainian services provided at least 20 reports for affiliate stations."
- The Turkish Service doubled its daily live TV show on Election Day to TGRT, its affiliate network in Turkey and provided hourly updates via Skype throughout the evening. When other Turkish stations saw what the service was doing with TGRT, they called to ask if it would help them too, which it did. The service also interviewed members of a Turkish delegation that came to the United States to observe the elections.
- The U.S. Election stirred considerable interest in Indonesia, where President Obama spent part of his childhood, and affiliates of the Indonesia Service took full advantage of their U.S. connection. On election night the service had 23 live hits via satellite and Skype with seven TV stations -- RCTI, SCTV, Indosiar, ANTV, Metro TV, TVOne, and Kompas TV. They are all national, free-to-air stations, except for Kompas TV, which is a network that airs on many major local/regional stations. The service also did a Skype Interactive with the Jakarta U.S. Embassy's Election Watch Event, attended by about 800 people consisting of Indonesian government and business leaders, analysts and scholars. In addition to the live reports, the service sent almost 20 election-related packages, from backgrounders explaining the Electoral College to hard news reports on U.S. foreign policy. The response was overwhelmingly positive both from affiliates and audience.

- The Thai Service reports that the executive editor of one of its major affiliates, TNN 24, sent an email thanking VOA Thai for its coverage election night. He said that the joint VOA Thai and TNN 24 programming on November 6th ranked #1, beating every competitor in Thailand.
- The Armenian Service provided continuous coverage Election Day, including live reporting from a polling station and interviews with two Armenian monitors, to the service's affiliate, Armenia TV.
- Bangla radio broadcast an election special for affiliate Radio Today from 10:00 to 10:30 on election night. This is in addition to Bangla's regular 30-minute morning broadcast.
- The English Division added SW frequencies, broadcasting an election night special from 9 PM to 1:30 AM EST. The first two hours were radio-only, followed by a simulcast of an English television special report. The programs featured correspondents in Washington, Chicago, Boston, Texas, New York, and LA, as well as reaction from correspondents in Beijing, Seoul, Johannesburg, Moscow, Cairo, and Kabul.
- The Creole Service participated in live interactives with its affiliates, which enabled it to bring the announcement of President Obama's victory live to most of Haiti.
- Central News, in cooperation with VOA language services, produced an ambitious 10-part election issues series. The series looked at the views of President Obama and Governor Romney on a range of subjects from global foreign policy and security to immigration and the global economy. Central shared all its original video and election materials with BBG sister entities.

Hurricane Sandy

For several days during the end of October everyone was talking not about the election, but about the weather, specifically Hurricane Sandy. Central News reporters in Washington and New York filed radio and TV reports on the impact the storm was having even before it struck the Mid-Atlantic region. Selah Hennessey in London filed a radio report on the toll the Sandy was having on air traffic, with passengers stranded across Europe and Asia. When Sandy did strike the East Coast, its pounding rain and 80-mile-an-hour winds shut down U.S. government offices and public transportation in Washington for two days. But it did not stop VOA journalists, technicians and support personnel from delivering the news. Every show aired on schedule. The Spanish Branch did more than 50 live shots to affiliates in Latin America, including updates from reporter Celia Mendoza on the New Jersey shore. The Russian Service was on with their affiliate, and the Indonesian Service filed for 20 radio and TV affiliates. While VOA journalists were hunkered down in Washington, VOA videographer Daniela Schrier in New York managed to capture something that nobody else had, footage of flood waters rushing through the streets of Lower Manhattan the night Sandy hit. Trapped in her apartment in New York's East Village, Schrier managed to upload the video to Washington just before she lost power. Back in Washington, Jeff Swicord produced a TV package looking at the economic impact of the storm, and National Correspondent Jim Malone filed a radio report telling how Sandy injected one more element of uncertainty into what already was a close race for the White House. During the storm and in the aftermath, the Central News web desk produced a photo gallery, fact boxes, and a graphic that compared hurricanes throughout U.S. history. Much of VOA's storm coverage was used by other BBG entities.

VOA Gets One-on-One with Burma's President

In an interview with VOA Burmese, the president of Burma, Thein Sein, said that his government is working together with opposition leader Aung San suu Kyi toward the “rule of law” in the country. He said his government is also considering measures to fight corruption, measures that would include preventing businesses from having too much influence in politics. The interview, conducted by VOA Burmese chief Than Lwin Htun, took place the end of September in New York City. President Thein Sein was in New York to attend the 67th annual meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. In his speech to the General Assembly, the president praised Aung San suu Kyi, something he had never done before, and congratulated her for receiving the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal. During his stay in the United States, the Burmese leader gave interviews to only two news organizations, BBC and VOA.



President Thein Sein (right) talks with Burmese Service Chief Than Lwin Htun

Testing New Ties in Burma

Acting Associate Director for Language Programming Rebecca McMenamin traveled to Burma and South Korea in mid-October. Her first stop was Rangoon, where she and OMPP's Doug Boynton and VOA Burmese broadcaster Thein Htike Oo were given a tour of Myanmar Radio and TV by its director of broadcasting, Win Aung. While in Rangoon, she also stopped in on a training session VOA's Bart Childs was giving to 40 radio and television journalists and visited an apartment in the central part of the city that will be used as both a reporting facility and housing for visiting VOA reporters doing three-month rotations. After Rangoon, McMenamin, joined by Thein Htike Oo, traveled to the Burmese capital, Naypyidaw, to meet with Deputy Minister of Information Ye Htut, and try to learn, among other things, whether the government's recent openness would continue. He assured her the government would not change from its current path and expressed an interest in greater cooperation with VOA that would include carrying VOA programs on MRTV. From Burma, she traveled on to Seoul for the 49th General Assembly meeting of the the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union.

Busy Times at the Horn of Africa Service

Ethiopian government censors are becoming more sophisticated. The Horn of Africa Service reports that while the censors continue to regularly jam its shortwave broadcasts on all frequencies, they only choose those portions of programming that deal with topics the government considers sensitive. And in spite of the jamming, the service still manages to reach a

large segment of opinion makers through VOA24, the audio channel on Arabsat that has a visual slate that includes news headlines via RSS feeds. It launched in 2010, during the last big government jamming campaign. Many listeners continue to send emails of thanks for the Arabsat channel, as it has thus far been free of interference and provides an excellent signal for listeners hungry for reliable and accurate news of events that affect them. In October, the service aired an exclusive half-hour interview with newly named Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. The interview, the first he granted to a non-Ethiopian government news agency, covered many topics and was picked up by virtually every Ethiopian news website. It was also the front-page story on the main state-run newspapers, which ran all or large chunks of the interview. In the interview, Prime Minister Hailemariam stressed he would continue the policies of his predecessor, the late Meles Zenawi, which have elicited sharp criticism from Western governments and human rights organizations. Other Horn stories of note in October included an interview with a member of the central committee of one branch of Ethiopia's ruling party. He broke the rule of secrecy within the party to tell VOA that since the death of Prime Minister Meles, factional disputes have been threatening party unity. Nervous that his identity would be discovered, the interviewee, in addition to asking that his name not be disclosed, said the service could only broadcast the interview if it altered his voice. The contents of the interview were subsequently reported by several Ethiopian diaspora websites with credit to VOA, and the government eventually responded to the allegations. Amid all this news, the Horn of Africa Service also found time to celebrate its 30th anniversary in October with an on-air tribute that included interviews with original Horn staffers, including Ashenafi Abedje, Hillet Mathias, Negussie Mengesha, Yeheyese Wuhib (all of whom, though no longer with the service, still work at VOA) and Work Kebede (now retired). The only member of the original staff who is still an active Amharic service broadcaster is Adanech Fessehayee.

PNN Team Goes News-Gathering to the Mideast

VOA Persian sent a team of journalists to Israel and other countries in the Middle East in October to gain perspective on how people in the region, ordinary citizens to political leaders, view developments in Iran and Syria. Among those interviewed: Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon, former Israeli Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat and Palestinian stateswoman Hannan Ashwari. PNN's Setareh Sieg, NECA Executive Producer Susan Shand and Urdu photojournalist Ilyas Khan worked together, delivering live shots from Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Amman and Istanbul and packages in Farsi and English. Content will be repackaged for use by PNN and other services, including a half-hour program.

Large Audiences for VOA Coverage of King Sihanouk's Death

VOA Khmer devoted extensive coverage on all its platforms to the death of Norodom Sihanouk, the former king of Cambodia whose career in international politics dated back to the late 1940s. Though illness prevented him from playing a major role in Cambodia's politics in recent years, he remained a revered figure in the country, and the service's coverage of his death and funeral is credited with vastly increasing traffic to its social media sites, especially Facebook. Sihanouk died in mid-October, which is when audience engagement on the service's Facebook page more than tripled and daily Facebook referral traffic to VOA Khmer websites increased to around 20 percent (from a monthly traffic referral from Facebook of around 7 percent). The service's

Facebook page became a prominent audience interaction platform during this period and was cited in a TV news report in Cambodia about social media reaction.

Anniversary of Murder of VOA Reporter

October 24 marked the fifth anniversary of the killing of Alisher Saipov, a reporter for VOA Uzbek. Saipov, who was shot to death in front of his office in Osh, Kyrgyzstan, was known for his coverage of politically sensitive issues, such as religious persecution, human rights violations and corruption in Kyrgyzstan and neighboring Uzbekistan. He also founded and ran an Uzbek-language independent newspaper called *Siyosat* (Politics), which focused on repression in Uzbekistan. In 2008, a Kyrgyz court found a man guilty of Saipov's murder and he is now serving 20 years in prison. But Saipov's family and colleagues have never believed the man was the actual killer, and the Kyrgyz government has opened two new investigations. Saipov's supporters believe that his murder was a contract killing involving both the Uzbek and Kyrgyz security services. In a VOA Uzbek special commemorating Saipov's work and legacy, his brother said that the family is launching a foundation that will support independent media and young journalists in Central Asia. Saipov was 26-years-old.

VOA Joins Calm Discussion in Prague

Africa Division Director Gwen Dillard was one of more than 120 delegates from around the world at the Forum 2000 Conference, held in Prague from October 21 thru 23. The focus of this year's Forum, the 16th, was on media and democracy, and Dillard participated in a panel that examined the relationship between media, poverty and democracy in African countries. Begun in 1996, the founding principle of Forum 2000 is, in the words of co-founder Vaclav Havel, that "it would be good if intelligent people, not only from the various ends of the earth, different continents, different cultures, from civilization's religious circles, but also from different disciplines of human knowledge could come together somewhere in calm discussion."

Getting Down to Business in Bujumbura

At the end of October the Central Africa Service ran a two-day meeting in Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi, as part of the service's *Tujahe* (*Too-djah-hay*) entrepreneurship project. Part of the meeting was devoted to a journalist training session on economic and business issues that was open to all media in the capital. There was also a brief town hall on business and job creation, followed by a news conference. Much of the discussion over the two days focused on opportunities and challenges for Burundi's business communities in the wake of the country's integration into the East African Community. Ms. Joan Mower, BBG's Development Director, represented the BBG at the event. Guests and panelists included representatives of Burundi's Finance and East African Community Affairs Ministries. The Central Africa Service, helped by a grant from the State Department, launched *Tujahe* in March.

Getting Juba Ready for VOA 24/7

English to Africa Service Chief Sonya Laurence Green traveled to Juba, South Sudan, in mid-October to help coordinate the final stages of the VOA 24/7 FM station installation, and to plan for the station's official launch on January 18, 2013. Green held meetings with representatives from the U.S. Embassy, the South Sudan government, VOA affiliates, and a variety of local advertising agencies.

AIB Award for OMG



For a while it looked as if a monthly report would go by without mention of Jessica Beinecke and her hit English-language learning program *OMG! Meiyu*, but at the last minute news came that the Association for International Broadcasting (AIB) had named Beinecke the winner of the AIB Founders' Award. In honoring the *OMG* host, the AIB said her “impressive enthusiasm and digital expertise has ensured rapid viral success for [her] highly innovative teaching program.” The AIB Awards are unique in broadcasting because of their independence from commercial interests. AIB winners are selected by an international panel of judges from the broadcasting and wider media industries. The awards were announced at the AIB’s annual global media excellence dinner in London. Though Beinecke was unable to attend, she was there virtually, as special guest “in conversation.” Beinecke was not the only VOA staffer to attract the attention of the AIB. Steve Ember of the VOA Learning English team was among the nominees in two categories: International Radio Personality of the year and Best Creative Feature / Radio. And the Central Newsroom’s Carolyn Presutti, Mike Kornely and Michael Burke were nominated in the category of Best Short Report or Documentary / TV.

Learning English Makes Inroads in Senegal

Learning English’s Avi Arditti visited Dakar Oct. 14-18 to promote a 30-episode instructional English radio program developed for the State Department with Senegalese voices and contexts. French affiliates Top FM in Dakar and Radio Al Fayda in Kaolack, Al Madina (a new station in Dakar), Mbour FM all agreed to air the series.

‘Second Meeting’ of US Bomber Pilot and Head of Serbian Defense Unit

Dozens of web portals, TV stations and news agencies in Serbia and other parts of the former Yugoslavia carried a VOA Serbian report on the Washington screening of a Serbian documentary called *Second Meeting*. The film tells the story of former U.S. pilot Dale Zelko, whose F-117 Stealth Bomber was shot down over Serbia during the NATO air campaign in 1999, and Zoltan Dani, then-commander of the Serbian air-defense unit that downed Zelko’s plane. Zelko and Dani met after the conflict and the film shows how that meeting led to a friendship between the two men and their families.

VOA Uzbek Has Its Eyes on Texas

VOA Uzbek’s weekly TV show *Amerika Manzaralari* (Exploring America) spotlighted Texas in October. One of the highlights was a program on the Silk Road Festival that took place the beginning of the month in Stafford, Texas. Put on by Uzbek immigrants and Uzbek students, the multicultural festival showcased dancers, musicians, artists, and cooks from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, countries traversed by the ancient trade route. In previous months the *Amerika Manzaralari* team has reported from Washington, Illinois, New York, Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania, each of which has large Uzbek communities. The Uzbek Service reports the shows have drawn many favorable comments from viewers in Uzbekistan, who express their delight at seeing their customs and culture celebrated in far-off America.

National Cathedral Honors Mother Teresa

In an exclusive report for the target area, VOA's Albanian Service covered the dedication of a carving of Mother Teresa at the Washington National Cathedral. The carving is located in the cathedral's human rights porch, which honors those who have taken significant and life-changing actions in the fight for human rights and social justice. The Reverend Samuel T. Lloyd III, former dean of the Cathedral, paid tribute to the Albanian nun saying: "This strong-minded nun, fled from public attention as she immersed herself, we could almost say, lost herself in serving some of the most vulnerable, poor people on earth." Only three other people are honored in this section of the Cathedral: Eleanor Roosevelt, former Cathedral Dean and Bishop of Washington John T. Walker and Archbishop Oscar Romero, the archbishop of San Salvador who was assassinated in 1980.

Taylor Swift on Music Branch

The Music Branch's get of the month was music superstar Taylor Swift, who released her fourth studio album, *Red*, on October 22nd. She talked about her upcoming tour, her transition from the darling of country music to record-setting pop superstar, and the inspiration for the album – the good, the bad and the ugly of past romances.

Notable Interviews

- Somali government forces and African Union troops scored a major victory against al-Shabaab forces the end of September, knocking them out of the port town of Kismayo, which had served as the militant group's operational and financial hub. Shortly after the victory the Somali Service interviewed the spokesman for the African Union Mission in Somalia, Colonel Ali Aden, Kenya military spokesman Cyrus Oguna and Somali government commander Ismail Sahardid.
- Leading up to the October 28 elections in Ukraine, VOA's Ukrainian Service interviewed key candidates from the major political parties, including Deputy Prime Minister Serhiy Tihipko, Party of Regions, Anatoliy Hrytsenko, Tymoshenko's Fatherland Party, Valentyn Nalyvaychenko, UDAR Party, Ihor Miroshnychenko, Svoboda Party, and Ihor Alekseyev, Communist Party.
- Nobel peace laureate Shirin Ebadi led a powerful guest lineup for PNN's *Ofogh* (*Horizon*) program on October 25th. Ms. Ebadi was joined by Mohammad Taghi Karoubi, the son of a jailed Iranian opposition leader, Mehdi Karroubi and Faraz Sanei from Human Rights Watch to discuss human rights and the plight of Iranian parliament members under arrest.
- PNN's *Shabahang* (*Late Edition*) interviewed Till Schauder, director of the movie "The Iran Job." The movie tells the story of an African-American basketball player who accepted a job playing professional basketball in Iran.
- VOA Korean aired an interview with Stephen Bosworth, former top nuclear envoy for the U.S., on the current standoff over North Korea's nuclear development. Bosworth said that the United States needs to take account of the North's enriched uranium program.
- Thomas Melia, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, talked with the Georgian Service about the October 1 parliamentary elections in Georgia. The elections resulted in a peaceful transition of power, and Melia praised the way they were conducted. However, he warned that the US

should watch carefully how events unfold between now and next year's presidential elections in Georgia.

- The Kurdish Service interviewed three members of Iraqi parliament about Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's recent visit to Moscow, where he signed a five billion dollar contract for the purchase of Russian arms.
- VOA Urdu interviewed Robert Naiman of the organization Just Foreign Policy. Naiman was part of a private U.S. peace delegation that went to Pakistan to protest drone strikes on Pakistan.
- The Azerbaijani Service conducted an audio interview with Majid Khoshakhtar, a former political prisoner now living in exile in Turkey. Mr. Khoshakhtar spoke about his detention and imprisonment in Iran over the charges of speaking out against the supreme religious leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and engaging in "propaganda against Iranian national security."

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

Russia Internet Week Opens New Opportunities for VOA

In mid-October, a VOA delegation travelled to Moscow to attend Russia Internet Week. Led by Eurasia Division chief Elez Biberaj and VOA Russian Service Managing Editor



Left: VOA's booth at the Russia Internet Week was transformed into an improvised TV set. Right: IBB and VOA delegation at the *Dozhd TV*, with Director Marina Sindeyeva and Deputy Editor In Chief Maria Makeeva.

Irina Van Dusen, the delegation discovered that, for VOA at least, Russia is a land of opportunity for media placement:

- The Russian Service signed an agreement with the Internet portal Grani.ru to provide analysis and videos of U.S. news stories.
- RBC, the Russian Business Channel, a top TV business channel, expressed interest in airing VOA Russian reports from the NYSE and from Washington three times daily.
- The popular Russian TV channel REN began discussions about an affiliate relationship with VOA Russian.
- The Russian TV portal Galargo.tv expressed interest in presenting VOA Russian video content to its monthly audience of three million.

- Major Russian news aggregators Rambler and Yandex discussed the possibility of taking VOA Russian multimedia RSS feeds.

While in Moscow, the VOA delegation also visited a station that is already affiliated with VOA, Dozhd TV. Dozhd, one of the few independent media outlets left in Russia, uses VOA Russian as its Washington Bureau for breaking news content.

PNN Host Can Host and Tweet

In addition to broadcasting, live in English, all three presidential debates, PNN also tweeted highlights in Farsi. Negar Mortazavi, co-host of PNN's *Rooykhat (Straight Talk)* social media/interactive program, had 45 different interactions with prominent Twitter users during the final debate.

First for PNN Farsi

PNN's website was the first Farsi-language news site to report word from Western diplomats that Iran was installing more centrifuges at its underground nuclear plants.

VOANews.com Web and Mobile Traffic October 2012

Language Service	Visits			Pageviews			Quality Metrics (October 2012)		Mobile Website Visits		
	October 2012	September 2012	% change	October 2012	September 2012	% change	Pv visit	time on site	October 2012	September 2012	% change
All VOA	14,176,237	13,777,671	0%	38,258,315	42,713,572	-13%	2.7	5:34	4,185,888	3,600,434	13%
English	3,315,629	3,018,754	6%	6,144,473	6,856,423	-13%	1.85	3:19	1,706,141	1,333,785	24%
Persian	2,397,827	1,817,492	28%	6,520,131	5,913,960	7%	2.72	10:11	129,011	93,397	34%
Vietnamese	2,365,577	2,382,793	-4%	7,964,586	8,935,349	-14%	3.37	7:04	292,219	282,311	0%
Special English	1,070,211	981,710	5%	3,837,559	4,254,739	-13%	3.59	9:30	154,919	216,649	-31%
Chinese	971,163	937,493	0%	2,985,556	3,292,749	-12%	3.07	10:58	675	984	-34%
Russian	960,018	981,508	-5%	2,260,696	2,557,573	-14%	2.35	4:43	86,232	85,146	-2%
Burmese	656,217	661,716	-4%	1,842,874	2,175,937	-18%	2.81	10:07	126,962	124,365	-1%
Somali	443,511	618,540	-31%	1,017,744	1,715,548	-43%	2.29	8:39	153,566	202,377	-27%
Amharic	385,760	495,676	-25%	1,002,837	1,753,945	-45%	2.6	13:17	289,302	281,749	-1%
Tigrigna	179,626	54,902	217%	525,872	189,816	168%	2.93	13:08			
Urdu	176,270	162,620	5%	474,986	440,414	4%	2.69	6:46	54,869	56,309	-6%
Spanish	170,488	172,965	-5%	299,301	293,851	-1%	1.76	2:55	575,707	374,848	49%
Khmer	129,172	92,509	35%	357,833	293,529	18%	2.77	8:41	35,014	24,196	40%
Ukrainian	121,291	131,851	-11%	180,368	199,134	-12%	1.49	2:15	10,985	11,605	-8%
Albanian	95,277	74,359	24%	248,296	225,116	7%	2.61	5:50	9,166	6,379	39%
Tibetan	75,084	62,658	16%	257,777	227,481	10%	3.43	16:42	10,496	7,718	32%
Korean	72,331	53,676	30%	184,398	165,403	8%	2.55	6:55	68,794	54,402	22%
Hausa	69,689	67,746	0%	154,488	175,046	-15%	2.22	7:12	244,950	246,241	-4%
Portuguese	61,520	75,694	-21%	169,552	246,382	-33%	2.76	9:53	12,558	16,943	-28%
Pashto	46,462	42,122	7%	135,425	129,036	2%	2.91	15:24	8,817	6,027	42%
Dari	45,802	43,501	2%	123,130	139,188	-14%	2.69	8:32	6,036	650	799%
Lao	43,490	39,764	6%	190,825	182,885	1%	4.39	10:58	1,072	-	
Tibetan - English	43,018	32,286	29%	112,264	91,187	19%	2.61	15:27	4,708	3,137	45%
Khmer - English	38,373	29,872	24%	99,896	83,434	16%	2.6	6:40	13,077	9,434	34%
Afaan Oromoo	36,495	33,113	7%	82,374	80,339	-1%	2.26	7:41			
Turkish	36,166	29,551	18%	74,285	69,588	3%	2.05	2:44	14,989	3,021	380%
Serbian	32,619	23,994	32%	70,052	60,279	12%	2.15	4:41	1,768	994	72%
Thai	26,031	26,695	-6%	50,159	51,665	-6%	1.93	3:11	4,082	3,193	24%
Central Africa	24,650	21,779	10%	62,746	63,103	-4%	2.55	22:55	803	-	
Azerbaijani	21,307	16,789	23%	48,530	41,655	13%	2.28	5:26	2,142	1,662	25%

French to Africa	20,775	18,812	7%	45,346	48,987	-10%	2.18	5:23	5,110	5,224	-5%
Cantonese	18,205	22,481	-22%	37,649	46,479	-22%	2.07	3:55	747	-	
Georgian	17,774	14,168	21%	36,202	34,555	1%	2.04	2:41	503	399	22%
Zimbabwe - English	17,769	15,162	13%	33,779	30,604	7%	1.9	4:27	9,921	15,546	-38%
Macedonian	16,610	21,760	-26%	25,301	43,303	-43%	1.52	1:53	1,483	1,250	15%
Uzbek	15,857	14,938	3%	45,887	49,860	-11%	2.89	8:41	14,154	12,087	13%
Kurdish	14,466	13,904	1%	37,121	37,048	-3%	2.57	5:51	2,432	2,875	-18%
Bosnian	13,298	11,727	10%	29,039	28,841	-3%	2.18	11:10	574	493	13%
Deewa	11,966	7,616	52%	35,672	25,858	34%	2.98	11:19	3,589	2,691	29%
Bangla	11,606	10,683	5%	29,344	30,629	-7%	2.53	7:36	3,373	3,150	4%
Greek	10,947	6,214	70%	18,805	12,216	49%	1.72	1:20	3	-	
Armenian	10,499	10,265	-1%	24,775	32,062	-25%	2.36	5:54	454	442	-1%
Indonesian	9,181	8,803	1%	21,228	25,083	-18%	2.31	2:47	110,295	103,333	3%
Swahili	8,730	7,747	9%	24,230	26,269	-11%	2.78	14:08	6,157	5,422	10%
Creole	7,853	6,761	12%	25,513	25,405	-3%	3.25	11:05			
Kurdi	3,516	3,606	-6%	8,770	9,380	-10%	2.49	5:44			
Shona	2,665	1,475	75%	4,952	2,990	60%	1.86	5:39	7,206	-	
Ndebele	1,066	630	64%	2,064	1,105	81%	1.94	5:01	827	-	

VOA Social Media Report September 16, 2012 – October 15, 2012						
	Youtube	Twitter	Facebook			
	Video Views	Followers	Engaged unique users in the last month	Number of times someone clicked on page content (consumptions + stories)	Total Number of Fans (sum of all account fans)	Total Number of Fan Pages
Albanian	119,785	2,412	3,622	9,660	35,579	1
Armenian	6,812	47	49	109	451	1
Azerbaijani	11,792	1,877	74	186	382	1
Bangla	30,561	915	1,443	5,690	3,387	1
Bosnian	10,896	151				
Burmese	371,558	2,420				
Cantonese	16,685	369				
Central Africa	1,198	79	159	415	1,011	1
Chinese	489,779	17,243	822	3,203	5,477	1
Creole	2,112		25	63	297	1
Dari/Pashto	14,340	2,045	82,288	458,652	142,934	3
Deewa	6,496	813	1,236	4,545	5,026	2
English	703,678	91,205	30,663	87,159	123,134	10
French	1,246	746	1,039	4,248	6,484	2
Georgian	3,276	307	1,669	4,956	3,396	1
Greek	3,163	1,245				
Hausa	3,355	6,518	24,745	55,367	56,935	2
Horn	3,162	902	28,394	73,014	47,209	4
Indonesian	182,654	33,545	53,901	228,106	1,085,654	2
Khmer	298,543	6,529	13,949	51,760	34,970	1
Korean	3,808	78				
Kurdish	4,331	3,533	791	2,097	7,354	2
Lao	1,929		428	3,589	848	1
Macedonian	998	228	821	1,625	9,012	1
Persian	523,513	17,384	130,712	628,806	1,134,651	11
Portuguese	341	379	1,175	7,519	5,907	1
Russian	207,633	50,980	2,038	13,708	7,961	3
Serbian	85,764	393	617	1,421	9,892	1
Somali	12,926	2,676	3,924	17,110	16,474	1
Spanish	3,062	11,062	285	578	2,823	1
Special English	843,341	43,434	21,034	107,026	196,197	1

Swahili	6,302	506	302	654	3,461	1
Thai	11,345		2,826	21,564	2,910	1
Tibetan	76,366	2,152	4,983	35,097	9,668	1
Turkish	20,519	3,672	603	2,701	2,569	2
Ukrainian	20,026	7,664	1,445	6,452	7,500	1
Urdu	152,932	3,675	173	280	2,000	2
Uzbek	95,945	835	42	62	505	1
Vietnamese	1,590,432	2,019	6,046	42,456	19,861	1
Zimbabwe	735	623	543	1,801	1,625	1
Congo Story	2,947	946				

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Media and Outreach

- On Election Day, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems brought 40 election observers from around the world to VOA. They are participants in IFES' "U.S. Election Program" that is "designed for senior management representing national and regional electoral authorities and professional associations, parliamentarians, diplomats, and representatives of the international development community." The four-day program gives participants an opportunity to observe the U.S. election process first-hand. While at VOA, Acting Associate Director for Language Programming Rebecca McMenamin talked to the group about VOA's election coverage and programming in general. Some participants in the group met individually with representatives from VOA's Hausa, Mandarin, Portuguese to Africa, and Spanish services.
- VOA Public Relations responded to the article "Voice of America, 70 Years Later, Faces Bureaucratic Troubles" by Elizabeth Flock that appeared in U.S. News and World Report on October 19, 2012. As noted in the response, Ms. Flock misstated "basic facts, from the number of broadcast entities, to VOA's role in Africa, to confusing VOA's overarching mission." The article can be found at: <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/10/19/voice-of-america-70-years-later-faces-bureaucratic-troubles>. The PR response can be found in the Comments section at: <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/10/19/voice-of-america-70-years-later-faces-bureaucratic-troubles?page=4>.
- Our office worked with Facilities, audio tech support, and the Office of Training on arrangements before and during the VOA Game Jam on October 11. Scot Osterwell, Creative Director of the MIT Education Arcade and research director in the MIT Comparative Media Studies Program, and Alex Chisolm, Executive Director and founding member of the Learning Games Network, worked with VOA broadcasters to develop apps and other Internet outreach to promote VOA around the world.

Press Releases

- OMG! Meiyu host Jessica Beinecke Wins the AIB Founders' Award – November 8
- VOA Election Coverage in High Demand – November 7
- VOA Provides Election Coverage to Global Audience – November 5
- Hurricane Sandy Fails to Stop VOA Broadcasts – October 30
- OMG! Meiyu host Jessica Beinecke Heads to China – October 19
- Statement: VOA Condemns Harassment of Reporter in Ethiopia – October 5

VOA Studio Tour

- Representatives from Public Relations, Language Programs, and Operations took Ms. Julie Smolyansky, CEO of Lifeway Foods, and Mr. Tim Hannegan of HLP Advocacy, two friends of BBG Governor Meehan, on a special tour of VOA studios. – October 16
- The Global Learning Center sent classes studying Korean (October 19) and Pashto (October 23) to VOA. Korean Service senior editor Gookhan Yoon met with the group on the 19th and acting Afghanistan Service Chief Michael Collins and managing editor of Pashto Ashna Radio spoke to the group on the 23rd.
- Seven journalists from South and Central Asia visited VOA as part of a State Department International Visitors Program on Journalism and U.S. Foreign Policy. Participants came from Afghanistan, India, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Pakistan. They met with Acting Afghanistan Service Chief Michael Collins, Deewa Radio Chief Nafees Takar, Urdu Service Chief Faiz Rehman, and Persian Service Executive Editor Kaveh Basmenji. – October 25
- Forty Anglophone and Francophone journalists from Africa who are participants in the State Departments Edward R. Murrow Fellows program met with representatives from language services in VOA's Africa Division. – October 30
- Three Missouri School of Journalism students, who are interning with Washington, D.C. news and media organizations, and the coordinator for their program, Barbara Cochran, met with VOA Director David Ensor, Chinese Branch Director Sasha Gong, and head of VOA's English to Asia programming, Terry Wing. The students are from China and the United States. – November 2

DATE: November 13, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for September / October 2013

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

BBG Hosts CIBAR: The BBG hosted the 2013 Conference of International Broadcasters' Audience Research Services (CIBAR) November 3-6 in Washington, DC. The conference sought to promote a deeper understanding among international broadcasters of the practices and value of audience research. Among the topics covered at the conference were the importance of research to guide and evaluate strategy, the role of digital analytics data to assess performance, developments in methodology, and the cultural value and impact of public service international broadcasters.



BBG Governor Michael Meehan (L) and Office of Strategy and Development Director Bruce Sherman listen to presentations at CIBAR conference in Washington.

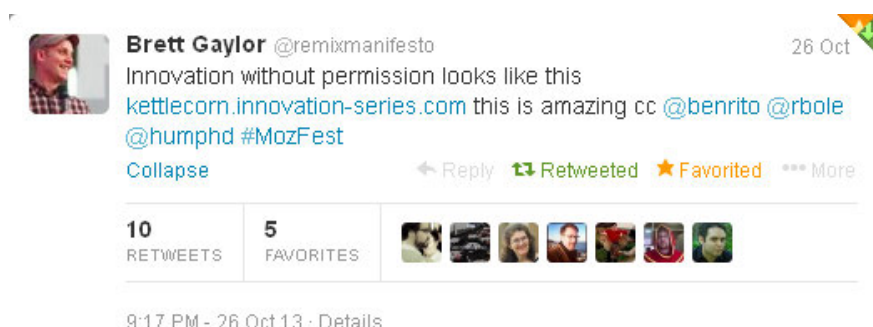
Speakers and attendees included individuals across the BBG's research departments, research directors from international broadcasters including BBC, Deutsche Welle, Radio France International, and Radio Netherlands Worldwide, as well as many of the broadcasters' key research partners. The meeting was held at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Washington office and in cooperation with Radio Free Asia.

Paul Marszalek and Karen Larson from the Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) offered a presentation titled, *Getting Everyone on the Same Page*, during which they discussed strategy formulation versus execution. They also showcased the BBG Strategic Management and Research Tool – SMART – a cloud-based portal that puts

research, strategy, and affiliate information in the hands of all employees and departments. After the presentation, several delegates asked for more information on the SMART system.

Rebecca Shakespeare of the Office of Digital & Design Innovation (ODDI) discussed web analytics and measuring digital engagement; Radio Free Asia Research Director Betsy Henderson presented information on social media apps and the Internet in Southeast Asia; and Office of Performance Review Bill Bell and Jinling Elliot talked about experiments with mobile-based surveys. OSD Director Bruce Sherman and Theresa Beatty told the delegates about developing an impact framework to measure the effectiveness (impact) of international broadcast content.

ODDI Rolls Out New Digital Video Tool at MozFest 2013: At a gathering of over 1,700 digital journalists and technologists, ODDI unveiled its latest platform, Kettlecorn, designed to assist journalists with creating easy, fast and compelling interactive video.



Kettlecorn adapted Mozilla's Popcorn Maker specifically for journalists by quickly and efficiently allowing the user add context to raw video in the form of links, maps, images, lower thirds, or translations.

A short video that does an excellent job at explaining the project is at: <http://youtu.be/GnoOq-IXwpY>. The ODDI leads for this project were Brian Williamson, Adam Martin, Joe Flowers and Lisa Backer.

BBG at ABU: The Office of Strategy and Development led a significant BBG delegation to Hanoi for the 50th Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) General Assembly and Associated Meetings in Hanoi last month.



L-R, Rob Bole, ODDI; Bruce Sherman, OSD; Rafiqul Haque, VOA Bangla Affiliate Radio Today, and OSD's Birgit Berg at ABU 50th meeting in Hanoi

Some 600 ABU delegates descended on Hanoi from more than 255 member broadcasters large and small spread across the region's 63 countries. The ABU promotes the collective interests of television and radio broadcasters and encourages regional and international co-operation between broadcasters.

BBG had two booths at ABU – one to display VOA and RFA content to potential affiliates and another to showcase the innovation of the agency pioneered by ODDI.

While attending ABU, OSD Director Bruce Sherman signed an agreement on behalf of BBG with Radio Netherlands Worldwide, which expands on the two global media organizations' already longstanding partnership. The agreement aims to implement a cooperative training program, to build indigenous journalistic capacity and support sustainable

independent media, and shared distribution efforts aimed at improving reach to key audiences, particularly young adults.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: The Korean Communications Commission (KCC) is currently processing the station license application, and the U.S. Embassy is being engaged to assist in tracking the status.

Impact of Typhoon Haiyan: On October 12, a severe typhoon with winds exceeding 180 kilometers per hour caused significant damage to roofs, antennas, and supporting structures at the BBG Tinang Transmitting Station in the Philippines. Station staff made immediate repairs to restore operations, but longer term refurbishment efforts will also be required.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

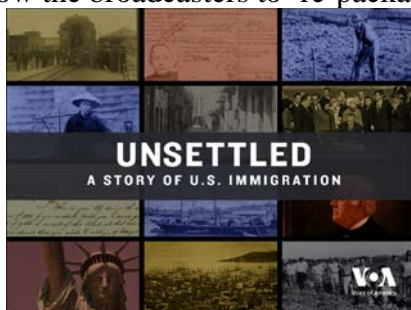
- A new 20 kW FM transmitter and other installation material have been ordered to restore service from the critical BBG FM facility in **Ajloun, Jordan**, which has been off-air because of acts of vandalism and theft. With the assistance of our local contractor, we are exploring the feasibility of relocating to another site because of security and other operational issues at the current site.
- Additional parts were sent to finish the installation of a new five kW FM transmitter for a VOA affiliate in **Kano, Nigeria**. The contractor completed the installation on September 26. The station is on the air with the new five kW transmitter, and the old two kW transmitter will be used as a back-up.

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities:

- The IAC team took delivery of 20 additional satellite Internet terminals for distribution to end users in Cuba by OCB, building on the extremely successful satellite Internet program started last year. These will be configured and tested by IAC before shipping them to OCB.
- The IAC team met with the RFA Open Technology Fund (OTF) team to learn about OTF's new and recently funded projects and to discuss opportunities for further collaboration.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION (ODDI)

Journalism Can Be Beautiful: eBooks & Digital Syndication: Based on the success of U.S. international media's first interactive eBook, ODDI assisted RFA with a new book, *Wild Pigeon: A Uyghur Tale of Longing for Lost Freedom* and VOA with *Unsettled: A Story of U.S. Immigration*. These are new distribution channels that build on our long-form reporting, but also allow the broadcasters to 're-package' and 're-sell' existing content for new markets.



Both books are in English and the *Wild Pigeon* is also published in Uygher. The books can be downloaded onto a USB drive or transported via a laptop or tablet into closed or low-bandwidth

countries. The ODDI leads for this project were Brian Williamson and Steve Fuchs.



Note: All of the Wild Pigeon illustrations are original by our very talented designer, Brian Williamson.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT (OSD)

BBG FM Licenses in Africa: The ongoing BBG FM license applications in Africa continue with steady progress. OSD Johannesburg signed a full license agreement with the Minister of Media, Lambert Mende, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, enabling us to apply for FM frequencies in cities around the DRC.

OSD's Joyce Ngoh visited Senegal's License Commission headquarters to follow up on the BBG FM application for Dakar. Frequencies are currently unavailable, though the Commission is working to resolve that issue to avoid interferences. Joyce also resumed discussion with 2STV in Senegal to secure a 24/7 hosting agreement; the new draft is with the General Counsel's office and Office of Contracts for review and concurrence.

A final copy of the convention (agreement and other paperwork) has been approved by Chad's High Council of Communication for BBG's license in N'Djamena and sent OSD as part of the process of securing the 24/7 FM license. The launch date of the BBG FM was moved from October 28 due to the U.S. government shutdown. OSD Accra is now waiting for the U.S. Embassy in Ndjamena to confirm a new launch date that has been proposed.

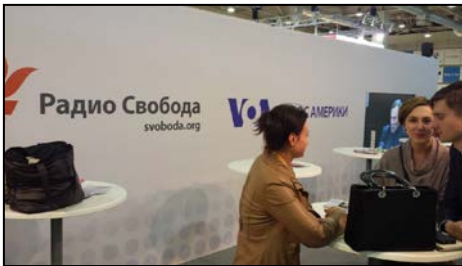
Indian Cable Operator Carries Additional BBG Tibetan Programming: OSD Bangkok has signed an agreement with Bhagsu cable in Dharmasala to add a VOA channel to its Tibetan language channel line-up. The station currently carries an RFA audio channel, and tunes in to the VOA Kunleng video program when it airs, then switches back to RFA. Now, the cable operator has one channel for RFA audio and one channel for VOA audio and video, in Tibetan language.

OSD Partners with Thailand's Largest Mobile Operator: OSD Bangkok has signed an agreement with Thailand's largest mobile operator, AIS (which has 50 million subscribers), to offer VOA Thai and VOA English web materials on the NewsLoop application. AIS is cooperating with Singapore's SingTel to offer the app to AIS customers in Thailand.

Power 99FM in Pakistan Signs Co-Production Deal with VOA: Power 99FM in Pakistan signed an Annex to its current contract that adds a weekly, Thursday, 9PM, hour long show in three cities. Power 99FM also is taking live, 5-minute news at 7 and 8 PM Monday through Friday at no cost. Power 99FM is Islamabad's third ranked FM and claims a daily combined audience of three million in Islamabad, Abbottabad and Vehari.

RL Russian Meetings in Moscow and Russian Internet Week: OSD's Adam Gartner and RFE/RL Chief Editor, Nenad Pejic, traveled to Moscow to uncover opportunities for local placement on media outlets in Russia. The team came home with firm offers from RBK, Nostalgia TV and Top Secret TV. The team is now in the process of firming up programming details and capabilities to meet the proposals. Top Secret TV has a copy of the affiliation agreement and is ready to sign as soon as co-production details are finalized.

Several weeks later, a joint OSD-VOA-RFE/RL delegation attended Russian Internet Week. OSD Prague mustered its resources to display a newly emergent *Golos Ameriki* and a rebooted *Radio Svoboda* in a way that showcased the talent and attributes of both shows in one booth that featured live interactives, stand-ups, and interviews with newsmakers in the Russian Internet sphere.



RFE/RL and VOA logos adorn BBG booth at Russia Internet Week show in Moscow.

While in Moscow, VOA Russian Service Chief Irina Van Dusen and OSD Prague's Adam Gartner met the Russian Business Channel (RBC), REN TV, Dohzd, and Top Secret. Ideas for affiliation and expanded coverage on current partners were discussed and will continue.

Media Training in September and October: OSD's Office of Business Development is finishing up its training sessions for 2013, using funding from BBG, U.S. Department of State,

USAID, the National Endowment for Democracy, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

- OSD Bangkok and Senior Media Strategist Paul Marszalek conducted a 2-day media leadership training seminar with channel directors from BBG television affiliate Sky Net in Burma, which airs three hours of BBG programming, including VOA Burmese news, each night on its Global TV direct-to-home satellite channel. In addition, OSD organized a five day training by VOA's Susan Jackson in Burma for VOA affiliates and VOA local staff focusing on equipment operation, shooting and editing, as well as journalistic ethics, writing and production.
- Development Officer Inna Dubinsky and VOA's Rohit Kulkarni spent a week in Moscow last month training the staff of TV Dozhdon TV production techniques.
- In Burundi, OSD arranged for the U.S. Embassy to support a VOA staffer to train more than 36 Citizen Journalists in early October.

Media and Judiciary Conference in Moldova: BBG and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) presented a conference, "The Media and the Judiciary in Moldova: Building Mutual Trust, Promoting Accountability and Engaging Citizens," in Chisinau, Moldova, October 17. The conference brought together more than 70 international and national law experts, Moldovan government officials, judiciary and law enforcement officials,

and representatives of civil society and media to discuss judiciary reforms, and ways to connect the judiciary system with the media for enhanced coverage, particularly on corruption issues.



Inna Dubinsky, second from right at Moldova Conference

Three speakers represented BBG at the conference: Jim Brooke, the VOA Moscow Bureau Chief Correspondent; Oana Serafim, the RFE/RL Moldovan Service Director; and Inna Dubinsky, OSD Development Officer.

The conference was part of the OSCE Mission in Moldova Project. The Project included journalism training seminars held by the BBG/IBB and the Independent Journalism Center in Moldova. It was supported by the U.S. Department of State and USAID.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: This office has provided strategic and other support for agency reform discussions on Capitol Hill in coordination with the Executive Director, who has been arranging regular meetings between a bipartisan, bicameral group of staff on our authorizing committees and members of the BBG Board, along with follow-up meetings with agency senior managers. Additionally, we met in early November with State Department and National Security Staff to follow up on discussions that began at the behest of the White House earlier this year regarding legislative priorities for the BBG; this was the third such meeting to discuss these priorities, move the ball forward and ensure a unified approach.

Responses to letters from Rep. Dana Rohrabacher and Rep. Walter Jones – the former regarding the IBB Office of Policy and the latter a staffing matter at the Edward R. Murrow Transmitting Station – were drafted and sent out in September and November.

On the behest of this office, CFO Leslie Hyland met in September with Janet Stormes of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs. This was a get-acquainted meeting that we had requested with the Hill staffer who follows U.S. international media most closely, and who had previously served as this agency's CFO.

The agency submitted and received approval for a request to reprogram funds for RFE/RL to support web content and mobile news applications under the Pangea system, and for RFA to conduct research in China.

Congressman Brad Sherman briefed Jeff Trimble and David Ensor regarding the latest developments in his proposal for a VOA Sindhi service, which included a conversation with Pakistan's prime minister during a state visit in late October. This proposal dates to 2011, when Congressman Sherman worked with the House Foreign Affairs Committee to insert into a foreign affairs authorization bill a provision requiring VOA to devote \$1.5 million to a Sindhi broadcast. The legislation passed the House, but did not receive Senate consideration. During

the briefing with Trimble and Ensor, a number of proposals short of creating such a service were discussed.

Participants in the Congressional Partners Program of the Partnership for a Secure America visited the BBG in early November to learn about the agency's role in international affairs; members of other congressional fellowships – including the State Department's Pearson program and Stennis Center for Public Service program for senior Hill staff – also attended. IBB senior managers and David Ensor briefed the group. We have started discussions with Stennis leadership, other Pearson fellows, and the American Political Science Association's congressional fellowship program about future visits.

The agency fulfilled its obligation under the North Korea Human Rights Reauthorization Act of 2012 to submit to the Congress “a report that describes the status and content of current United States broadcasting to North Korea and the extent to which the BBG has achieved the goal of 12 hour-per-day broadcasting to North Korea.”

Media: There has been additional interest in the subject of Aero Martí in the wake of the *Washington Post* article in September. Carlos García-Perez was interviewed in Washington by ABC in late October for the Nightly News, which also dispatched a crew to Georgia to film the plane and to Miami for b-roll. As of this writing, an airdate had not yet been chosen. Producers for Cox Media also phoned with questions and expressed interest in doing a story.

Molly Seder, Voice of Russia (American Edition), revisited the subject of Martí coverage of the case of the Cuban Five on [the 15th anniversary of their arrest](#).

Carlos gave two CNN Español interviews in late September, including an [extended interview with popular anchor Maria Elvira Salazar](#). The program highlighted Radio and TV Martí use of the Internet to keep Cubans informed about current events, but also touched on the government shutdown. BBG PA provided substantial support for this interview.

André Mendes was the subject of [a flattering portrait in Hispanic Executive magazine](#).

BBG PA worked with communications colleagues at MBN, VOA and RFE/RL to highlight their coverage of events in Syria amid the civil war, which resulted in pickups by several media.

BBG PA coordinated social media outreach with ODDI to garner attention for the Kettlecorn project, which resulted in an article in Journalism.co.uk and other online pickups of the rollout at the Mozilla conference.

We worked with VOA PR to pull together info for a news release on VOA's same-day reporting of the shopping mall siege in Kenya and its follow-up coverage from the region, along with names of correspondents/editors who might be available to talk with U.S. media.

An agency news release about how BBG networks continued to bring news and information programs to audiences around the world amid the federal government shutdown was picked up by several media and the website of the Poynter Institute, a bastion of journalism education.

We were in touch with the editorial page editor of *The Washington Post* to propose a meeting of BBG Board members with the paper's editorial board.

Web and Social Media: BBG PA has focused efforts on improving the navigability and accessibility of our online posting of material regarding board meetings, including past meetings. A redesigned "Events" post now uses tabs to make finding videos, news releases and relevant documents easier to find. An online avenue for the public to submit written comments is being built into the new event navigation.

In addition, special attention has been paid to improving the "About" section (especially the landing page for the section, The Board and Senior Management), with improved content and navigation, links to relevant content, and better search engine optimization.

U.S. international media coverage and development office sponsored programs on World Polio Day were showcased across BBG media.

Influential Tweeters who have written about us, or who have retweeted one of our tweets: Mozilla (with 23,365 followers) about KettleCorn and Rotary International (with 215,270 followers) about World Polio Day.

BBG PA developed and implemented an improved timeline feature to highlight threats to BBG journalists. <http://www.bbg.gov/broadcasters/threats-to-journalism/>. It is a very fresh and compelling presentation of these significant incidents.

The Oct 23 BBG Board meeting had 173 views during the live webcast and 72 "on-demand" views on YouTube (the Feb 2013 meeting is the closest in reach with 128 views).

Internal Communication Support: The office was actively involved in assisting with planning and implementing internal communications related to the partial shutdown of agency operations given a lapse in funding, including Q-and-A sessions, posting of the shutdown plan and FAQs on the agency intranet and website, house announcements, posters and fliers. This work continued throughout the shutdown with only one manager present and the rest of the team out on furlough, and it included providing materials to keep the Board informed.

BBG PA and the Board Operations team were actively involved in preparations for the all-hands meeting on November 18 featuring Chairman Shell and other members of the Board. This included blocking out the staging, making recommendations about the program based on experience with previous all-hands meetings, drafting remarks and directional notes for the Chairman, and conferring repeatedly with technical teams to ensure a smooth production.

Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey results for the agency were released in early November in close coordination with IBB and VOA front-office lead staff, including a roll-out involving employees, the Hill, and media.

The office provided talking points to Governor Armstrong on his request before his visit to RFE/RL in late October/early November.

The Health and Wellness Action Group held a briefing open to all staff to highlight the agency's accomplishments and future plans for this popular workplace engagement program. A seminar on nutrition is planned for November 20 and a successful kickball season came to an end after two final games.

The Graphics Department supported internal communications campaigns with posters on activities for Hispanic Heritage Month, VOA guest appearances, I Am VOA, the mentoring program, the BBG Community Outreach Program, Veterans Day, National Disabilities Month and the Combined Federal Campaign.

Outreach: We provided text for a letter of condolence from Chairman Shell on the Board's behalf to the leadership of RFI in France after two RFI correspondents were killed in Mali in early November.

Planning and preparations for the October 2 BBG Gallup Research briefing on Mali and Somalia were completed, and then put on hold on October 1 with the government shutdown. This event took place on Thursday, November 14.

At the invitation of Governor Armstrong, BBG PA hosted a briefing for a class of active military and civilian students from the National Intelligence University in late September. The discussion centered on the role of U.S. international media in USG Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication efforts. OSD Director Bruce Sherman and VOA Mandarin Service Chief Ming Zhang participated in the panel/Q&A session.

Lynne Weil participated in a late September evening class for American and international graduate students of Syracuse University to discuss the impact of digital media on U.S. international media operations and U.S. foreign policy. She also spoke in late October with a journalism class at West Virginia University about public affairs in government.

Governor Armstrong spoke to undergraduate students at Lake Forest University on Tuesday, November 12. BBG PA provided remarks and presentation materials in preparation for this event.

BBG COM staff coordinated with OSD to prepare for the 2013 CIBAR conference and assisted with event logistics.

Indiana University professor Emily Metzgar interviewed Tish King in late October for an audio podcast introduction to the agency and the impact of the changes to Smith-Mundt.

Following outreach to the Public Diplomacy Council, the November 12 Public Diplomacy Fall Forum will include David Ensor as keynote speaker, Lynne Weil addressing matters involving Congress on a plenary session panel and Rob Bole moderating a breakout panel on technology.

Graphics: The Graphics Department supported agency marketing, advertising and promotion with these initiatives:

- Production & shipment of collateral materials and booth for trade show in Argentina
- Two ads for Argentina trade show
- Exhibit design for co-branded trade show booth (VOA & RFE/RL) for Russian Internet Week, and for a trade show booth (VOA & RFA) & show book ad for Asian Broadcasting Union general assembly in Hanoi, Vietnam
- Exhibit design for trade show booth and the design, production & shipment of collateral materials for DISCOP trade show in Johannesburg, South Africa, along with magazine ad
- Billboard and web banner campaign for VOA Ashna in Afghanistan
- VOA Calendar design work completed
- Promotional postcard for VOA Bangla
- Billboard campaign for South Sudan In Focus in South Sudan
- Ad for Ghana Immigration Form (VOA)

The team worked with VOA to update signage for its South and Central Asia Division and to highlight the new times for the Studio Tour.

Designed certificates and a banner design for journalist training in Costa Rica.

Photographic services included refreshing the display of portraits of former Board members in the IBB office suite and selecting portraits of the new Board members for public outreach.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW (OPR)

RESEARCH & PROGRAM REVIEWS

VOA Persian Review, September 5, 2013: OPR analysts found Persian content from VOA, highly relevant in providing global and regional news and information, US policy as it relates to Iran, and a window into American lifestyles and culture. Going forward, OPR recommended VOA Persian place greater strategic focus on contemporary issues that appeal to a younger demographic. Research on the target audience in Iran will be forthcoming in early 2014.

VOA Burmese Review, September 19, 2013: In light of expanding placement opportunities in Burma, the VOA Burmese Service will work in tandem with OSD Marketing/Placement staff in developing more material of interest to Burmese television audiences, for which placement opportunities exist.

VOA Hausa Review, September 24, 2013: OPR analysts found VOA Hausa was providing unique and highly relevant news and feature programming to its target audience in Nigeria and other Hausa-speaking areas. However, the analysts raised concerns about editorial direction for two programs about religion, in particular. The Service, under the direction of the division, is making adjustments in response to OPR's recommendations, to focus the programs more on specific news-related issues as they relate to religion.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL (OIG) ACTIVITIES

OIG Semiannual Report to the Congress for the period April 1, 2013 – September 30, 2013:

The OIG notified OPR that due to the government shutdown, they require additional time to issue this report, but expect to deliver it electronically to the agency by November 18, 2013. The agency response, if any, would possibly still be due by November 30, 2013.

OIG FY 2013 Management and Performance Challenges, Broadcasting Board of Governors:

OPR received the OIG Report on FY 2013 BBG Management and Performance Challenges on October 1, 2013; this report will be published in the annual *Performance and Accountability Report* (PAR), along with an agency response. Due to the government shutdown, the revised deadline for PAR submission by the agency is December 1, 2013. The *Reports Consolidation Act of 2000* requires that the Broadcasting Board of Governor's PAR include a statement by the Inspector General that summarizes our most serious management and performance challenges and briefly assesses the progress in addressing them. The OIG considers the most serious management and performance challenges for BBG to be in the following areas:

- Establishing a Chief Executive Officer
- Managing Contracts
- Broadcasting with Fewer Resources
- Information Technology and Security
- Financial Management
- Contract and Procurement

OIG Audit of the Broadcasting Board of Governors Administration and Oversight of Acquisition Functions:

Senior IBB managers were briefed on the preliminary findings of the OIG audit team in September 2013, followed by the OIG issuing its "*Outline for Action: Management Attention Needed to Improve Broadcasting Board of Governors Acquisition Functions*" on September 26, 2013. The BBG submitted its response to the OIG on October 28, 2013 and continues to address the serious Contracts issues raised by the OIG in the report. The draft report likely will not be issued by the OIG Audit team until early 2014.

OIG Audit of the BBG Information Security Program: OPR received the OIG Final Report on this annual audit, FISMA on October 30, 2013. The BBG response addressing the critical issues raised in the report is due to the OIG by November 29, 2013. OPR is coordinating the BBG response with TSI to meet this deadline.

OIG Inspection of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting: The on-site inspection in Miami began on November 4 as planned, but will likely continue through November 20, 2013. The OIG Inspection team plans to debrief OCB management orally on possible issues and/or recommendations on their last day in Miami, and a formal exit conference is expected to take place sometime within the first two weeks of December, 2013. The draft inspection report will be available then, as well, with agency comments due to the OIG after the holidays most likely.

OIG Inspection of IBB Botswana Transmitting Station: OPR submitted the BBG's response to the OIG on September 20, 2013, in which TSI addressed the two open recommendations.

OIG Review of BBG Operations in Kyiv, Ukraine in conjunction with the OIG Inspection of Embassy Kyiv, Ukraine: OPR received the OIG Final Memorandum Report on this inspection on September 24, 2013. There were no recommendations in the report for the BBG.

OIG Review of BBG Operations in Minsk, Belarus in conjunction with the OIG Inspection of Embassy Minsk, Belarus: OPR received the OIG Final Report on this inspection on September 25, 2013. There were no recommendations in the report for the BBG.

OIG Inspection of U.S. International Broadcasting to Russia: OPR received the OIG Final Report on this inspection on September 26, 2013. The BBG coordinated response identifying actions taken to address the recommendations – 11 formal, five informal – is due to the OIG by November 15, 2013.

OIG Inspection of VOA Latin America Division: OPR received the OIG Final Report on this inspection on September 26, 2013. The BBG coordinated response identifying actions taken to address the recommendations – four formal, four informal – is due to the OIG by November 15, 2013.

OIG Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors: The BBG compliance response addressing the seven open recommendations is due to the OIG no later than November 15, 2013. OPR is active in coordinating the BBG response to meet this strict deadline.

Upcoming OIG Post Inspections: OPR received cable notification on November 5, 2013 of OIG post inspections scheduled to take place in February-March 2014. Planned inspections include: Embassy Lima; Embassy LaPaz; Embassy Kabul; Embassy Kampala; Embassy Bujumbura; Embassy Asmara. OIG will also review Broadcasting Board of Governors operations in each country in conjunction with the post inspection.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Voluntary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment Authority requested from the Office of Personnel Management: The Office of Human Resources has obtained renewed authority from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments (VSIP or buyouts). These authorities are intended to assist the agency in updating the skills of its workforce and responding to possible reductions. Early Out Retirement enables employees to retire earlier than otherwise would be possible. Buyouts enable employees who voluntarily resign or retire to receive an incentive payment of up to \$25,000. The agency's VERA/VSIP authorities are effective through September 30, 2015.



November 13, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for November

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

All Hands Meeting

On November 6th, VOA Director David Ensor held his second quarterly "All Hands" meeting. Ensor began the meeting by thanking one and all for their patience and professionalism during the shutdown. He also thanked outgoing IBB Director Dick Lobo for his leadership with class and good humor in times of change. VOA Chief of Staff Barbara Brady gave an update on the budget; Program Manager Nancy Coviello discussed workplace engagement issues; IBB Programming Policy Analyst Ina Katherine Buckley highlighted some of the early results from the employee survey; VOA Executive Editor Steve Redisch talked about VOA documentaries on Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and President John F. Kennedy; Associate Director for Operations Mark Prahl updated the status of HDTV conversion and new equipment acquisitions; Andre Mendes, Director of the Office of Technology, Services and Innovation briefed on 4th floor space issues; and VOA's Congressional Liaison Stephen McGinley provided an update on Congressional outreach. (To view the meeting in its entirety: <http://www.voanews.com/mp4/voa/special-events/ALL-HANDS-110613.mp4>.)

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

Shutdown

A reduced crew of Washington-based reporters in VOA's newsroom and language services kept up with the day-to-day, hour-to-hour developments during the 16-day government shutdown, explaining the issues at stake for the United States and how the shutdown impacted our audiences. Despite a decrease in resources because of furloughs, the newsroom filed daily wraps and produced a number of enterprise stories, including the shutdown's impact on U.S. military

operations, refugee resettlement, scientific research and relations with key nations; profiles of the House Speaker, Treasury Secretary and the Tea Party; and reaction from various foreign countries such as China, Israel and India. Many VOA services found the shutdown was big news for their audiences. On the day it began, October 1, the Spanish Service added 12 television live shots and 35 live radio live shots to the normal coverage it usually provides to its affiliates in Latin America. VOA Ukrainian was able to increase its visibility by fulfilling requests from non-affiliates channels. The first day of the shutdown it did two live interactives for the two major news shows of the leading 1+1 channel (TSN) and one for the 2+2 business news show. The 1+1 news shows on October 1 garnered a very high audience share – 21.7 percent for the 7:30 p.m. show and 20.3 percent for the 11:00 p.m. show. VOA Ukrainian has fielded several requests from 1+1 since the shutdown.



VOA Ukrainian's Tatiana Koprowicz in an interactive with Ukraine's 1+1

Mass Murder in Nairobi

Central News, English to Africa, the Swahili and Somali Services provided extensive live coverage of the terror attack at Nairobi's Westgate Mall in which more than 60 people died. Swahili, which broadcasts to east Africa, immediately preempted its regular programming to give blanket coverage to a story that riveted its region. It had a reporter at the mall who interviewed eyewitnesses, government officials, security analysts, police and hospital officials. The Somali Service, meanwhile, talked with its sources on al-Shabab, and they confirmed that the group was responsible. Central's Nairobi correspondent, Gabe Joselow, set up camp across the street from the mall, as close to the action as police would permit, and over the next several days worked many hours filing radio and TV spots, VELs of interviews with eyewitnesses and audio of Kenyan leaders, the al-Shabab spokesman and terrorism experts. Among his most powerful pieces was a TV interview with attack survivor Charles Oswago, who described his ordeal and said he is still living in fear. Throughout, the newsroom received crucial coverage help from the Somali Service, which, among other things, provided speedy assessments of al-Shabab's Twitter comments. And when reports surfaced that Americans may have been involved in the attack, Central and the Somali Service teamed up to send a reporting team to Minnesota for interviews with the Somali community there.

UNGA Coverage

VOA Language Services and Central News delivered robust coverage of the opening session of the United Nations General Assembly. Highlights of the opening day were speeches by

President Obama and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, both of which were streamed and broadcast by satellite around the world with simultaneous translation by multiple VOA language services. Mr. Obama's speech was also broadcast live on an English language TV special. Coverage by VOA Spanish included 25 daily live shots for radio stations and 12 daily television live shots for leading television stations across Latin America. The Persian Service devoted nine hours of live coverage and analysis to the UNGA's opening day, which included audience participation from inside Iran, interviews with leading experts, and correspondent reports and reaction from around the world. VOA Persian also inaugurated the newly renovated New York City bureau, producing a 60-minute daily live program from the new studio's spectacular views of the Manhattan skyline.



Siamak Dehghanpour at VOA's New York studio interviewing Dr. Kourosh Parsa (left), and Saeed Ghasseminejad (right) during a special broadcast of the Persian Service program "Horizon."

VOA Role in Iran Negotiations

On November 10, Iranian and Western negotiators concluded three days of talks in Geneva without an agreement to curb Iran's nuclear program and ease economic sanctions on the country. In the days leading up to the talks, there was speculation that a breakthrough was near, part of which was fueled by an exclusive VOA interview. On October 25, the top U.S. negotiator on the Iran nuclear issue, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, spoke with VOA Persian at the State Department. In the interview, Sherman said it may be "time for a pause" before Congress imposes any new sanctions on Tehran. Speaking of her Iranian counterparts, Sherman said, "We are beginning to understand each other, to see each other's needs, and the aspirations of the people of each of our countries." The [interview](#) with Under Secretary Sherman was broadcast to Iran on direct-to-home satellite TV and on VOA's Internet platforms. It also came to the attention of audience's outside Iran, including Britain's *Guardian*, which wrote that "the public nature of Sherman's statement was seen as a significant gesture to Tehran."

FMs in Myanmar Begin Airing VOA Teaching Programs

A popular VOA radio program, *American Idioms English*, can now be heard on FM stations across Myanmar following an agreement between the VOA Burmese Service and its affiliate

network Shwe FM. *American Idioms English* introduces one popular expression in each episode, and explains the meaning in Burmese. Expanded episodes air each Friday morning on shortwave and medium wave radio, and introduce a series of thematically related idioms. In addition to Shwe FM, audiences can also listen to *American Idioms English* on the VOA Burmese [website](#) and on shortwave and AM frequencies. VOA Burmese is the most popular international broadcaster in Myanmar, reaching its audience on radio, TV, the Internet and mobile. A Gallup audience survey conducted in 2012 indicates one in five adults listen to or watch a VOA Burmese program each week. Shwe FM plans to broadcast the lessons on their network of 10 FM stations around the country.

New Hong Kong Pro-Democracy Radio Is Very Pro VOA

A new Internet radio station, D100, began broadcasting in Hong Kong in July, and soon afterward started carrying the VOA Cantonese news and current affairs program one day a week. But the station's CEO and host, Albert Cheng, soon found that once a week is not enough when it comes to VOA programming. At the beginning of November, D100 began carrying VOA Cantonese programs six days a week. What's more, Cheng says that in the near future he hopes to start rebroadcasting VOA Mandarin programs.

VOA and RFE/RL Team Up Internet for Week in Russia



The Two Irinas: VOA's Irina Van Dusen (left) and RL's Irina Lagunina

VOA Russian and Radio Liberty jointly showcased their talents at Russia's Internet Week in Moscow in mid-October. On October 17, the first day that U.S. federal workers returned to work after the government shutdown, Irina Lagunina, chief of RL's Russian Service, and Irina Van Dusen, managing editor of VOA's Russian Service, co-hosted an hour-long live show that was streamed on Radio Liberty's website and posted on VOA Russian's website. The show featured live interactives, standups and interviews with newsmakers in the Russian Internet sphere. The two Irinas also spoke about VOA and RL brands, products and the role of the two stations in the Russian-language media market. Cooperation and cross-promotion between VOA and RFE/RL also continue to move forward among the Eurasia Division's other services. On September 10, following President Obama's White House speech on the crisis in Syria, VOA Georgian provided a live phoner on the speech to RFE/RL Georgian's morning radio show. On September 19, RFE/RL Georgian spoke live from Prague into VOA Georgian's radio show, discussing a critical meeting between Russia's deputy foreign minister and the Georgian prime minister's representative on Russian issues.

From VOA Russian to Russia: A Look at New York's Race for Mayor

The recent race for mayor in New York City was never expected to be close, but it still attracted a lot of attention, primarily because the highly favored Democratic candidate didn't fit the usual mold. Bill de Blasio was running as a public advocate, not a typical politician, and his family is a diversity director's dream. De Blasio is white and his wife, a former lesbian, is black. Not only did the race get noticed in the United States, it captured attention even as far away as Russia. At the request of REN TV, one of the largest private channels in Russia, VOA Russian put together a three-minute package that focused on de Blasio and what the election said about New York. On the day after the race (which de Blasio won in a landslide -73 percent to 24 percent), REN broadcast the VOA Russian feature several times, including on its 7 p.m. prime time newscast. The Russian Service hopes this is the first of many packages it provides REN. In the Gallup June 2012 national survey, REN-TV had a past week reach of 54 percent of adults nationwide. While this is well below the weekly reaches of NTV (78 percent) and 1st Channel (85 percent), it is significantly more than those for the two networks that are now the primary broadcasters of VOA Russian material, RBC-TV (11 percent weekly) or Dozhd (1.7 percent weekly).

Illinois Congressman Has High Hopes Immigration Reform

Appearing on VOA's Spanish language program *Foro Interamericano*, Congressman Luis Gutierrez discussed prospects for immigration reform from the perspective of his experiences as a young boy whose parents came to Chicago from Puerto Rico in the 1950s. "All the newspapers, magazines and in television, the comments about Puerto Ricans when they arrived in the 50s was that they had tropical illnesses, that they came to bring crime, and that they lived from welfare and that they were lazy." But, the Illinois Democrat said, that was not the way his parents were, that was not reality. Gutierrez said he finds the language used to describe immigrants today sometimes similar to the language of the 50s. The congressman says he plans to stay in Congress and push for immigration reform until a bill is approved and signed into law by President Obama. Once that happens, he says, he wants to "go back to the communities and the barrios" to help them take advantage of the new law.

Studio 7 Makes Headlines in Zimbabwe

Since the July 31 elections that saw Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe reelected and his Zanu-PF party win a large majority of seats in parliament, the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) under Morgan Tsvangirai has been in turmoil. Many rank-and-file party members, and even some mid-level officials, have hinted or stated openly that it may be time for a change in party leadership. Until recently, senior MDC officials have remained silent on the issue, but on October 28, Tendai Biti, MDC secretary general and former finance minister during the previous unity government, gave an exclusive interview to VOA's Zimbabwe Service (popularly known in Zimbabwe as Studio 7) in which he said that he would not support a change in leadership and that all discussions on the subject should take place at the 2016 party congress. Biti's announcement to Studio 7 captured headlines in several newspapers in Zimbabwe, including NewsdzeZimbabwe (<http://www.newsdzezimbabwe.co.uk/2013/10/bit-i-not-plotting-to-topple.html>) and the Daily News.

Terrorists Down

In early November, VOA Urdu was one of the first broadcast outlets in Pakistan to break the news of the killing of the Pakistani Taliban leader Hakimullah Mehsud in a U.S. drone strike. In

addition to its straight news reports, the service broadened its coverage with reactions from top defense analysts in Pakistan as well as a detailed report from the White House about the significance of the death. Urdu made all its coverage available to its radio and TV affiliates in Pakistan. A few weeks earlier, VOA's Somali Service was the first to tell its audience of a U.S. Navy raid that resulted in the death of a senior al-Shabab leader. Virtually all media outlets in Somalia carried the Somali Service report.

Fire in the Land of Snow in the Baltics

The VOA documentary film *Fire in the Land of Snow: Self-Immolations in Tibet* was one of the main attractions at a recent human rights film festival in Vilnius, Lithuania. Tibetan Service Chief Losang Gyatso introduced the film at the festival and also participated in a panel discussion about the situation in Tibet at Vilnius University. Lithuanians are particularly interested in what is happening in Tibet, as 14 of them self-immolated in 1972 to protest Soviet rule.



Rapt audience for *Fire in the Land of Snow*

A Hit on Air and in Person: VOA Indonesian

VOA's Indonesian Service had the most popular booth at the recent AJI [Alliance of Independent Journalists] Media Festival in the city of Yogyakarta on the island of Java. The festival lasted two days and in that time 150 people took the service's "Presenter Challenge." To do this, they had to test their broadcasting skills in front of a camera in the mini-studio the service had set up in the booth.



VOA crew at media festival

Greek Euro-parliamentarians on NSA Surveillance

Two Greek Euro-parliamentarians, Marilena Koppa, from the governing New Democracy Party, and Georgios Papanikolaou of the socialist PASOK gave interviews to VOA Greek on their

meetings with U.S. officials regarding NSA surveillance and the issue of spying. The two men visited Washington as part of a group of 23 members of the European Parliament. The interviews were picked up by the Athens News Agency, the biggest news agency in Greece, as well as a large number of web outlets. VOA Greek also was the first station to give Greek audiences the White House and State Department reactions to allegations that the U.S. Embassy in Athens housed the NSA Surveillance Center for the whole region.

Former Russian Finance Official Compares Obama, Putin on Economy



VOA Russian conducted an extensive on-camera interview with Sergei Aleksashenko, former deputy minister of finance of the Russian Federation and former deputy governor of Russia's central bank. Aleksashenko discussed the rules of interaction between multinational corporations and national governments, the current state of U.S.-Russia trade and the future of the U.S. dollar and Russia's ruble. Talking about the results of President Obama's and President Putin's economic reforms, he said, "History will judge President Obama as a U.S.

leader who successfully led the country in times of the unprecedented economic crisis. And I would say that President Putin's policies have ruined the biggest economic opportunities for Russia." Aleksashenko also was a guest in the studio during VOA Russian's October 30 live social media-driven talk show *Podelis*.

Mother of American Held in North Korea Talks to VOA

On October 29, the VOA Korean Service aired an exclusive interview with the mother of American Kenneth Bae, who is being detained in North Korea. Myunghee Bae told VOA she traveled to Pyongyang in mid-October and was able to visit her son. Mr. Bae is reportedly suffering from several ailments, including diabetes and back pain, but his mother said his health had improved following two months of medical treatment. Her "worst fear" now that he is feeling better, she said, is that the prison authorities will send him back to the labor camp. Kenneth Bae, a tour operator and Christian missionary, was arrested in North Korea in November of last year and sentenced to 15 years hard labor last May.

Other Notable Interviews

- VOA's Creole Service spoke with U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, about his recent three-day visit in Haiti.
- The Deewa Service did an on-camera interview with one of the most famous young women in the world, Malala Yousafzai. The Pakistani teenager was the target of a Taliban assassination attempt last year because of her efforts to promote the education of women in Pakistan. The video clips of the interview were used throughout VOA by

several services and were shared with the RFE/RL's Mashaal Radio.

- English-to-Africa reporter Peter Clotey interviewed Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan, who called for international cooperation in combatting and defeating terrorism.
- VOA Russian conducted an in-depth interview with Senator John McCain on September 30. McCain shared his views on Syria, criticizing President Obama for his lack of action: "I think dictators all over the world, from Pyongyang to Iran, are paying close attention."
- The French-to-Africa Service interviewed Sister Angélique Namaika, recently honored by the UNHCR as this year's winner of its Nansen Refugee Award for her work with survivors of displacement and abuse by the Lord's Resistance Army. Sister Angélique, through her Center for Reintegration and Development, has helped more than 2,000 women and girls who were forced from their homes.
- Albanian Finance Minister Shkëlqim Cani told VOA Albanian that one of the top priorities of his government is to clean up the books by paying private companies the money owed them by the previous administration. He put that amount at more than half a billion dollars. It was his first interview since the new socialist government came to power in Albania in early September.
- In an interview with VOA Bosnian in Brussels, European Union Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Füle stressed that the future is very bleak for Bosnia if the country's political parties do not find enough common ground to bring about necessary changes in the country's constitution.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

2013 Looks Like a Very Good Year

Latest Internet research: As of the end of October, VOA is 58 percent above where it was this time last year. At the current rate, it should break three-quarters of a billion pageviews by the end of the year. Supported by huge surge in mobile traffic.

Government Pressure Blamed for Plunge in Vietnamese Website Numbers

Though it is one of the top websites at VOA in terms of audience visits, the Vietnamese Service website saw a big drop in visits in October, down to 1.46 million from 2.3 million in August. According to research by the service, the drop is due to a steep decline in visits from within Vietnam, which it attributes to a determined effort by the Hanoi government to block access to sites it deems dangerous. The Vietnamese Service is countering the government campaign by, among things, sending out proxies and information to link users to access VOA satellite TV programs and YouTube videos. The government campaign comes as no surprise. Freedom House, in its Freedom on the Net report for 2013, spoke of a "worsening cycle of repression" in the country, noting that the number of bloggers detained for posting content critical of the government has increased "dramatically" over the past two years.

Straight Talk Africa Ups Its Facebook Numbers

The fan base for Straight Talk Africa's *Facebook* page continues to grow – reaching nearly 134-thousand fans as of the end of October. A recent question on the page, "Why are so many Africans risking their lives to migrate to Europe and other regions of the globe?", drew 475 responses and had 45,000 views.

The Global Reach of Learning English

The American Corner in Pristina, Kosovo, joined our Talk2US conversational practice session via Skype on Tuesday, November 5, 2013. From Saudi Arabia, to Syria, to Azerbaijan, to Afghanistan audience members get a chance on Tuesdays and Fridays each week to practice their conversational skills with VOA Learning English's "Talk2US."

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

OUTREACH

- VOA Somali's exclusive interview with American-born terrorist – just six days before he was killed – was picked up by major U.S. media outlets, including ABC News, the Wall Street Journal, and Huffington Post.
- Detroit-based station WJR Radio has been turning to VOA correspondents in the Middle East this fall, with on-air Q&As with Elizabeth Arrott and Heather Murdock. Morning host Warren Pierce has been interviewing Arrott and Murdock about the latest developments in Egypt and Syria.
- Excerpts from VOA Persian's Oct. 25 interview with Undersecretary of State Wendy Sherman on the Iran nuclear issue was picked up extensively by domestic media, including the U.S. News & World Report, the Los Angeles Times, Huffington Post, and Democracy Now.

REQUESTS TO USE VOA MATERIAL

VOA Public Relations processed 34 requests to use VOA material between September 9 and November 12, 2013

PRESS RELEASES

- *VOA Exclusive: State Department says "Time for a Pause" on Iran Sanctions* – October 25
- *FM Stations in Myanmar Begin Airing VOA Teaching Programs* – October 15
- *Congressman Luis Gutierrez Discusses Growing Up as an Immigrant in Chicago* – October 9
- *VOA Covers US, Iran Presidents at U.N.* – September 24
- *VOA Boosts Coverage in Wake of Kenya Attack* – September 23

INSIDEVOA.COM

- *VOA Director Moderates Panel Discussion on Social Media* – October 31
- *Jessie Ware Talks to Larry London* – September 10
- *VOA Drought Documentary Keeps Winning Awards* – September 9

VOA STUDIO TOUR

- Participants in ICFJ program, U.S.-Pakistan Professional Partnership in Journalism, met with Urdu Service. – November 7
- Officials from Chinese National Railway Association met with Mandarin Service. – November 6
- Three separate groups of Murrow Fellows from Anglophone and Francophone Africa, South Asia, and East Asia met with respective language services. – October 29

- Students learning Urdu through the Chenega Corporation met with Urdu Service. – October 25
- Eight AFS exchange students met with English to Africa and English News Programs. – October 18
- Ukrainian Service hosted journalists participating in Arlington/Ivano-Frankivsk Sister Cities program. – September 26
- Twelve Colombian journalists met with Spanish Service. – September 25
- State Department International Visitors from Trans Saharan Africa met with French to Africa Service. – September 24
- Francophone journalists met with French to Africa Service – September 20
- Moroccan journalists met with French to Africa Service. – September 13
- State Department International Visitors from Bangladesh met with Bangla Service. – September 12

F. PERSONNEL

Jack Payton, RIP

Jack Payton, executive editor of VOA's principal English-language website, died in early October at the age of 69. He had served with the website since 2012 after a 45-year career in print and broadcasting that took him around the world and included many of the biggest stories of his time. He had held a number of senior positions since joining VOA's news division in 1999. His death brought messages from many VOA reporters and editors who said they will remember him as a mentor whose advice and guidance helped shape their careers. "Jack was an old fashioned newsman in the classic sense," said VOA National Correspondent Jim Malone. "He had that perpetual curiosity and an appreciation for a good story. As an editor, Jack made all of us better writers. He was one of those people who brought out the best in his co-workers." VOA Director David Ensor lamented his passing as a huge loss for VOA and his many friends in the agency. "He has left behind a legacy of young people who learned their trade at his side and will carry forward his high standards of journalism." A memorial event for Jack Payton will be held on December 2nd in the VOA Briefing Room.

South Sudan Trip

Service Chief Sonya Laurence Green traveled to Juba October 2 for the annual end-of-year check on the South Sudan Project. She paid a courtesy call to the new PAO there, contacted a new affiliate station, and held talks with Target Media to kick off an ad campaign in several towns hosting VOA affiliates. She was accompanied by Editor Carol Falk, who stayed in Juba for an additional week to work one-on-one with new stringers. Upon her return, Green passed through Nairobi where she visited the VOA regional bureau, met with NGOs, UN agencies and other sources.

DATE: November 14, 2014
MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim Management Team
SUBJECT: IBB Monthly Report for October 2014

Global Strategy:

- The Office of Research and Assessment (ORA) gave four presentations at the Conference of International Broadcasters' Audience Research (CIBAR) in Paris from Nov 2-5. Networking efforts at the conference led to potential increased sales of survey data to other international broadcasters and media development organizations.
- A series of briefings on the results of the China survey is planned for the week of November 17.
- Office of Digital & Design Innovation – Kick-off meeting with [Hub Accra](#) leadership team to discuss our joint partnership to launch BBG's first mobile journalism + technology 'innovation lab' in West Africa. First 'info session' for program participants was held on November 10.
- Mobile version 3.0+ of the 'umbrella' news applications for VOA is now available in the iTunes and Google Play stores. This version offers compatibility with the latest operating systems from Apple and Google, a new design for larger phones and tablets with enhanced images and multimedia along with improved analytics for deeper audience insights.
- Our agency-wide digital analytics services continue to make improvements to the ways USIM digital audience is measured across all our major digital platforms. The Social Media Dashboard (<http://smdata.bbg.gov>) released in August, also continues to receive improvements with historical data for many more USIM social media accounts being added to the system. This data provides research analysts and entity digital/social media producers greater insights into aggregate audience reach and impact.
- On October 30, Policy Office editorial writer/producer Winston Wood met with the DOS Ebola Communication Coordination Team to coordinate U.S. Government messaging on the Ebola Crisis. Top down guidance is coming from the National Security Council.

Global Operations:

- Unrest in Iraq continues to stop transmissions from BBG FM and TV sites in Mosul and Tikrit. Our contractor is working to repair equipment where he can or to relocate equipment to more secure locations. In Al Hillah, the Government of Iraq has forced us to lower the power of the BBG FM transmitter that carries Radio Sawa because of operational issues and to turn off the transmitter carrying VOA and Radio Free Iraq because of license issues. With the help of the Office of General Counsel and local counsel, we are filing new license applications for a number of transmitters and querying the regulatory commission about operational issues.
- The Office of Inspector General (OIG) has completed the annual Federal Information System Management Act (FISMA) audit of the agency for FY 2014 and has sent their final report. OIG plans an informational briefing for the Governors.



November 13, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for November

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- The Chinese Embassy in Washington failed to grant two Washington-based VOA reporters accreditation to cover the APEC Summit in Beijing. A VOA Mandarin and a VOA Indonesian correspondent were scheduled to depart for Beijing November 7, but neither received accreditation. On November 6, the Indonesian reporter was told that her visa would be approved, but by that time it was after her reservation had been cancelled for the next morning's flight and too late to reschedule and to arrange satellite feeds with affiliates in Indonesia.
- The VOA Portuguese call-in show *Angola Fala Só* (AFS) went on the road in July visiting two provinces, Huila and Namibe. Five shows were recorded with the local population and local guests. AFS is broadcast on Fridays nationwide through shortwave radio and online and, as emphasized on a State Department cable, "is considered one of the few outlets where civil society can voice its ideas and concerns freely." However, the cable went on to say, the radio show is "not popular with officials of the ruling MPLA [People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola], who are wary of freedom of expression and an unfettered press.... MPLA hostility and fear of the influence of VOA is not uncommon. Today, VOA is still often the listeners' only source of news on certain sensitive topics. Efforts to find local radio stations in Angola willing to be broadcast partners have been unsuccessful, presumably because the ruling party and government continue to pressure radio stations not to cooperate with VOA."
- Three members of the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI) made VOA a priority stop during their brief visit to Washington in mid-October. In addition to gaining a deeper understanding of the mission of VOA and the operation of the Indonesian Service, the KPI members were particularly interested in discussing the issue of political influence on the news and general content produced by broadcasters. They wanted to know how VOA maintains editorial independence and high journalistic standards in spite of being a government broadcaster. They also wanted to understand the degree to which the political agenda of owners of commercial media in the U.S. influenced broadcast news and general content, and how this may be regulated in the U.S. Indonesia has just completed an election cycle in which major national broadcast media clearly favored specific political parties and candidates at the direction of owners who were party leaders and/or political candidates.
- The office director of the VOA Indonesian bureau in Jakarta, Frans Demon, has received an invitation from the Student Press and Publishing Agency at a university in Yogyakarta (UPN Veteran Yogyakarta) to speak at a national youth seminar the group is organizing. The invitation came, the agency said, because of its awareness of the "the enthusiasm of youth in Yogyakarta for VOA Indonesia."

DATE: October 20, 2014
MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim Management Team
SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for September 2014

Global Strategy:

- The Office of Research and Assessment (ORA) was officially founded upon approval of a Congressional Notification at the end of September.
- ORA recently released new research reports on Tibet, North Korea, Cambodia, and China audience reach. The eagerly awaited China data shows a reach increase for VOA on the Internet and television.
- All BBG entity Research Directors are currently verifying FY 2014 reach and impact data. The new global tally will be ready at the end of October.
- The Office of Digital & Design Innovation, with support from IBB Regional Director for West & Central Africa Joyce Ngoh and IBB Office of Contracts, signed our first grant agreement between BBG and Hub Accra for a mobile journalism technology ‘innovation lab’ and training center in Accra Ghana as part of the Africa Investment.
- Mobile Version 3.0+ of the ‘umbrella’ news applications for MBN and OCB are now available in the iTunes and Google Play stores.
- Digital Services / Digital Affiliates: The BBG Direct Content Exchange (<https://bbgdirect.com/english>) added its 1000th registered affiliate to the site in September. The BBG Direct service provides hi-quality digital downloads of video and audio content from all five USIM entities to affiliates and digital syndication partners around the world.
- The Office of Performance Review (OPR) led a joint VOA-RFE/RL discussion of Ukrainian strategy based on OPR observations and spot checks with finding that all targets for FY 2015 goals had already been met.

Global Operations:

- Unrest in Iraq continues to stop transmissions from BBG FM and TV sites in Mosul and Tikrit. Our contractor is working to repair equipment where he can or to relocate the equipment to more secure locations.
- The new U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait, Douglas A. Silliman, and the new Deputy Chief of Mission, Joey R. Hood, visited the Kuwait Transmitting Station on August 28. The Ambassador’s visit came only a week after he had arrived at his new post.
- On Tuesday, September 23, 2014, the Office of Civil Rights announced this year’s Mentoring Program seeking participation from employees and managers. This is one of the agency’s most influential programs for career development.
- OPM Engagement: OPM is winding up the review of IBB office functions and workloads and is currently consolidating data from employee surveys and supervisory interviews. The final report is being written and is expected to be delivered within the next two weeks.
- BAM Update: The Agency finalized an updated telework policy, which expands employees’ opportunities to telework and eliminates unnecessary formalities from Agency telework applications. Also finalized was an updated policy on safeguarding personally identifiable information (PII), which both establishes employee responsibilities for protecting sensitive information and supports broader telework participation by allowing remote access to IT systems that contain PII.



October 15, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for October

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- VOA Mandarin viewers of VOA Weishi satellite TV channel continue to complain about Telstar-18's week signal. The complaints were corroborated by the VOA Mandarin Beijing correspondent. The weak signal rendered VOA Weishi difficult or impossible to watch on many days when other Chinese-language programming on PRC or Taiwan channels on the same satellite had normal picture quality. The VOA Weishi signal quality was much improved after TSI reported that the vendor had boosted signal output on October 1. However the signal again deteriorated a few days later. VOA's Beijing correspondent reported that even after the October 1 signal boost, VOA Weishi signal quality was at 27 percent (viewable) while China's CCTV was at 47 percent and Taiwan's ETTV was at 46 percent.
- On October 12 and 13, VOA Weishi's viewer toll-free hotline in China was not operational while the hotline for Taiwan callers worked fine. The hotline returned to normal on October 14. It is unclear if this was a technical problem or some type of interference.
- Despite continued PRC government jamming of radio broadcasts and blocking of VOA's Chinese websites, VOA Chinese Internet and satellite TV audiences have soared since the last survey in 2009. VOA Director David Ensor visited VOA Mandarin October 9 to congratulate the service on earning VOA a 0.16 percent weekly audience share and 2.25 percent total annual audience share, according to the 2014 IBB China survey's preliminary results. The results are still being reviewed and are for internal distribution only; 2.25 percent is an annual audience of 24.3 million, according to IBB Research. VOA Mandarin's weekly TV viewership quadrupled and Mandarin weekly Internet/social media audiences more than quintupled. The most popular program was VOA Mandarin TV's "Walk into America" with a 0.94 percent annual audience share. Considering there are more than one billion adults in China, that is an impressive number.
- Spirits were high as over 120 radio, TV and digital affiliates from all across Indonesia gathered in Bandung September 29 to October 1 for an affiliates' conference hosted by VOA's Indonesian Service. The theme of this year's conference was Audience Engagement in the 21st Century. Experts in social media, marketing and broadcasting shared their knowledge and experience in the ways audience engagement has changed since the advent of

digital communications. The conference also included two sessions for a business meeting that provided an opportunity for VOA to alert affiliates to programming changes, promote programs and the online content distribution site, BBG Direct, and to receive feedback and suggestions from affiliates. The Bandung conference, the latest in a series of affiliate conferences run by the Indonesian Service, was organized by the VOA Jakarta Office. VOA Indonesian Service Chief Norm Goodman and Digital Media Manager Ade Astuti traveled from Washington to participate in the event.

- From October 3 to October 5, 2014 VOA and OSD held an affiliate conference in Costa Rica with leading partners from Central America, Mexico and the Dominican Republic. The networks view VOA as their “Bureau in the United States” and expressed appreciation for the added value that VOA is giving their stations. They also urged VOA to increase its presence in the region to counter the growing presence of media from Russia and China.
- Swahili Service chief Mwamoyo Hamza travelled to Kenya to find a secure site for a reporting center in Mombasa. Once operational the center will be a vital location in generating local content for a soon-to-be launched 30-minute radio show under the Africa Investment Fund. Hamza also participated in the official launching of new affiliate relationship with Equator FM in Kisumu. While in Kenya, Hamza also paid courtesy visits to stations that are already affiliated with the Swahili Service: Citizen Radio in Nairobi, Radio Kaya in Kwale, Mombasa and Sayare Radio/TV in Eldoret.
- Two new affiliates have joined the Creole Service, Radio Guinen and Radio TeleCaraibes, one of the most popular stations in the country. The agreement was finalized while BBG and VOA staffers were in Port-au-Prince conducting training sessions for 14 journalists from affiliate partners.
- VOA’s Serbian Service has signed an affiliation agreement with a new regional partner – RTV Mag in Obrenovac, Serbia. RTV Mag is a local/regional broadcaster in western Serbia, just 30 kilometers from Belgrade. It began to rebroadcast VOA Serbian’s TV program *Open Studio* on September 29.

DATE: September 13, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for August 2013

AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

Kettlecorn is Better than Popcorn: The Office of Digital and Design Innovation is working closely with the Mozilla Foundation to adapt their opensource ‘webmaker’ platform to allow our journalist to make video more engaging and interactive. The original product, Popcorn Maker, allows just about anybody to to add various interactive ‘layers’ on top of a video, such as a map, a pop-out, a lower third, a Wikipedia article or other web elements. Our goal is to ensure that any journalist can quickly and efficiently take a raw video and turn it into something more informative by adding compelling context in the form of links, maps, images, etc. And we are building the tool to support sophisticated machine translation to give language services a head start in using that video for their own use.

Africa FM Initiative: Consistent with BBG and USG strategic priorities, the Office of Strategy and Development has continued to build FM radio capacity and new affiliations across the Sahel and other parts of Africa. New FMs are scheduled to launch officially in N’jamena, Chad (tests are already underway there) in October and Nouakchott, Mauritania in December. They will integrate, to varying degrees, Radio Sawa (Arabic) and VOA French to Africa in a novel bilingual format. They join recent FMs stood up in Mali, the Central Africa Republic, and South Sudan as well as legacy stations in Cote d’Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Kenya, and other places. N’jamena and Nouakchott will support USG efforts to counter violent extremism by engaging youth with news, interactive features, music, cultural programming, English learning, and eventually PSAs that together convey a forward-leaning alternative to extremist outlets.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: Ambassador King traveled to South Korea late last month. He learned that the application for the station is currently being processed by the Korean Communications Commission (KCC), and the embassy is being engaged to assist in tracking the status.

Enhanced Shortwave Capability from Kuwait Transmitting Station: We have begun a project to enhance the shortwave transmission capability from the BBG Kuwait Transmitting Station. Kuwait is well located to serve target areas where shortwave will be important for a number of years, and this station has the lowest operating costs in the global BBG network. It will be very cost-effective to reschedule mission-critical shortwave transmissions to Kuwait from other higher cost alternatives wherever possible. We are planning to relocate surplus equipment from other locations in the network to accomplish this project quickly and economically.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

- A contractor will install a power generator on-site at VOA affiliate FM Liberté in **N'Djamena, Chad** to enable reliable 24/7 operations.
- An agreement to establish a new BBG FM facility in **Nouakchott, Mauritania**, is currently with U.S. Department of State Legal for their review. We anticipate that this agreement will be executed before the end of FY 2013. In the meantime, we have started to plan the details of the installation and have begun to identify the equipment to be pulled from stock.
- TSI engineer Ken Claerbout conducted a site survey in mid-August to explore the establishment of a BBG FM facility in **Dakar, Senegal**. Two hosting options exist. We are assisting the Office of Strategy and Development in putting together an agreement. During this trip, Ken also visited **Bujumbura, Burundi**, to explore the technical feasibility of establishing a BBG 24/7 FM facility there. We are considering an arrangement in which the government broadcaster Radio Télévision Nationale du Burundi (RTNB) would host the facility for us.

IBB Information Technology (IT):

- The Dalet 5.1e radio production system (Radio Suite HD) upgrade for VOA continues to make good progress, adding several VOA Africa division services to the system in August and September.
- IT has completed installation of new switch equipment in parts of the Cohen Building to move several offices to the new Nexus network core, as well as to speed up end-user bandwidth. IT is beginning to install a Virtual Desktop Interface (VDI) in the Cohen Building. This will move individual desktop configurations to a central server, allowing users to work virtually from configured computers on our network.
- The IT Directorate continues to develop a continuous monitoring program to scan all devices connected to the agency's infrastructure in order to identify system and application vulnerabilities. The IT Directorate also plans to improve its cybersecurity defenses by participating in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation (CDM) Program, which will procure and implement, at DHS's expense, additional cybersecurity vulnerability assessment tools and reporting capabilities. BBG is a member of the CDM Early Engagement Group (EEG).
- The annual Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) audit certification and accreditation (C&A) has been completed for relevant agency information systems, and Authorities to Operate (ATOs) have been issued by the Chief Information Officer. A FISMA C&A has also been conducted for the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, and an interim ATO has been issued. In addition, the OIG conducted their annual FISMA audit for the agency, and we expect a draft report in mid-September.
- August 2013 availability statistics for various IT services and functions:
 - Network Functions: 100%
 - Filing Services: 100%
 - Internet Access: 100%
 - Email: 100%
 - Remote Access: 100%
 - Application: 100%
 - Dalet Services: 99.94%

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities: The IAC team extended its contract with Oliver + Coady for a year of maintenance support for the Android mobile application they developed for VOA PNN and Radio Farda.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION (ODDI)

Direct 2.0: Improving Services to Broadcast Affiliates: In 2012, ODDI made the decision to develop internally a platform for delivering broadcast quality video and audio content to our affiliates. The growth of reliable and affordable cloud-based infrastructure meant we could save hundreds of thousands of dollars we were sending to vendors for a menial task and redirect those monies to growth areas, such as mobile. We launched the new system earlier this year and, in August, have begun working with OSD and VOA to add new services (e.g. Russian, Uzbeks and Turkish), as well as bringing on our first new network, Office of Cuba Broadcasting. As of this writing, we launched those services last week. Early in the new year, we are planning a major overhaul of Direct (3.0) that will leverage the full Pangea digital publishing platform so that we can move Direct into a true digital storefront for all of our content, both broadcast quality and digital.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT (OSD)

OSD incorporates agency research, strategy, marketing/program placement, development, and international media and journalism training as well as USG inter-agency coordination and liaison with Western broadcasting partners and international agencies.

Strategy:

OSD is collaborating with the Africa (AF) Bureau at State Department to factor embassy country plans into the agency's new Strategic Management and Audience Research Tool (SMART). SMART houses some 100 BBG strategy profiles by country, including broadcasters' roles and priorities, as well as related marketing and development initiatives; it's purpose is to connect strategy to policy.

Research:

- Important new focus group research is in from China and Russia. The China study addressed how Chinese audiences receive and share sensitive information and from what sources – RFA, New York Times, BBC, and CNN. The Russia study looked at RFE/RL Russian's website and online prospects pointing to action steps the service could take to become competitive.
- BBG and Gallup will reinitiate the joint public research briefing series on October 2 at Gallup's headquarters with a look at recent research in from Mali and Somalia. The briefings serve to engage key constituencies on the strategic context of the countries we serve. Previous briefings have been very well attended.
- More than 30 research projects, including Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Burma, and Nigeria, are in the pipeline and due for completion in the next 4-6 months. All 2011-2013 research projects are available for Board review.

Marketing: Recent marketing deals include:

- VOA launched on three important community radio stations in the civil war-plagued eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a BBG priority country, offering potential reach to an additional 800,000.
- Beijing company Global TV has signed on to broadcast (unbranded – generally the only way to get content carried on domestic outlets in China) several VOA Mandarin programs, including Popular American, Words and Idioms, How to Say It in American English, Cultural Odyssey, Walk into America, and Trendy USA.
- Super Channel Eurasia has agreed to take VOA Russian and English programs and now also seeks RFE/RL content. A web TV channel, Super Channel Eurasia has placed VOA Russian and VOA English on its online video stream. Just one week into the deal, the channel also asked to be licensed to take RFE/RL Russian web video programming.
- Radio Agricultura de Chile has come on board as the largest VOA affiliate in the Southern Cone, doing daily live segments with the VOA Latin American service as its Washington Bureau, airing in the station's premier morning show, "La Gran Mañana Interactiva." With the Syria crisis, this segment has expanded from the originally discussed two-three minutes to as long as 15 minutes. Affiliates in many regions of the world have expressed a great deal of interest in reports and updates on both the situation in Syria and the U.S. response. VOA in particular is playing an important role in explaining the U.S. political process and the domestic debate on whether or not to intervene in the Syrian conflict.

Development: BBG has major development initiatives in play with current and potential funders across the world. In Nigeria, USAID has just agreed to provide \$290K to the agency for VOA Hausa health reporting in 2014 and also asked for a proposal to continue programming on education. With funding from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), VOA covers polio in the region, also broadcasting public service announcements on the topic. CDC is pleased with the initiative and will continue to fund roundtables, training, and programming for the rest of 2013 and into 2014. Also for Nigeria, DoD's Africa Command has solicited a BBG proposal for a Hausa TV/Radio Program on countering violent extremism in conjunction with the Islamic Education Trust.

Training: BBG journalism training builds capacity for and fosters independent media in BBG broadcast markets as well as supports BBG affiliates in their professional staff development. Recent and upcoming training programs include:

- **Georgia:** With local partners Ilia State University and the Georgia National Center for Disease Control and Public Health, among others, OSD led a seminar in August for 34 Georgian journalists and journalism educators on Avian Influenza, other pandemic diseases, and disaster preparedness.
- **Mauritania:** In support of BBG's expansion into Mauritania, BBG will start an initiative beginning with radio station management training.
- **Moldova:** In October, BBG will complete year-long training assistance in support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The training focused on anti-corruption efforts in the country, engaging journalists, the judiciary, law enforcement, and civil society.
- **Russia:** VOA and OSD will partner in October to train staff of VOA affiliate Dozhd TV on digital TV production and video editing.

- **Haiti:** VOA affiliate stations (for Creole broadcasting) will receive technical training in the use of FM transmitters, studio equipment, and satellite feed equipment – part of long-term disaster assistance following the devastating 2010 earthquake.
- **Central America:** In an effort coordinated with regional U.S. embassies and VOA affiliate TV Channel 9 in Costa Rica, OSD will offer basic journalism training for Nicaraguan, Costa Rican, and Panamanian reporters.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: On August 1, the Senate confirmed Chairman Jeff Shell and Nominees Matt Armstrong and Ryan Crocker. Work continued on the papers required for the confirmation process of Kenneth Weinstein; they were delivered to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on August 23.

The agency hosted Senate Foreign Relations Committee minority staff member John Zadrozny, recently assigned to the public diplomacy portfolio, for a tour of the Cohen Building and meetings with BBG senior management and provided follow-up information on his request.

Work continued to answer questions from Senate and House appropriations committee staffers on the FY 2014 budget proposal, along with questions on the agency's program plan that had been pending since its submission to Congress last spring.

Plans for an August House Foreign Affairs Committee staff delegation to BBG sites overseas, including regional IBB offices in three countries and RFE/RL headquarters, were scaled back to a possible visit to Prague and Lampertheim during the September 23-27 recess.

This office coordinated with RFE/RL on a mid-August meeting between Kevin Klose and HFAC majority staffer Tom Hill, and with VOA on a September 11 meeting between David Ensor and HFAC Chairman Ed Royce.

Carlos García-Pérez met in mid-August with Senate Appropriations Committee staffers Janet Stormes and Tim Rieser regarding OCB's "hot box" anti-censorship efforts. Work continued in early September to address questions that the staffers had raised.

Media: There were pickups in industry and DC-based media of our news releases, amplified by agency social media, on the confirmation and swearing-in of the Board's three new members.

We fielded questions from a reporter for Bloomberg and BusinessWeek on the proposed cuts to broadcasting to RFE/RL Balkans broadcasting in the FY 2014 budget request.

We also fielded Smith-Mundt questions from academics as follow-ups to last month's coverage by blogs and traditional media. The Wilson Quarterly is expecting to run an item in November.

The team worked with OCB and various stakeholders in Congress and elsewhere to provide information to David Farenthold of The Washington Post for a story about AeroMarti. Briefings

in Washington and Miami highlighted the Board's efforts over three years to end use of AeroMartí and to devote more resources to successful projects involving digital media.

BBG PA worked in cooperation with MBN to amplify word of the Bashar Fahmi anniversary and with OCB on the relaunch of *Avanza Cuba*.

We showcased coverage by VOA, RFE/RL, MBN and the Martí's of the anniversary of the March on Washington. And we coordinated with MBN, VOA and RFE/RL highlight the work of their journalists covering Syria amid global response to the use of chemical weapons there.

After a careful usage analysis, we designed and tested a new format for the Media Highlights. Analysis of subscriber response to the test version, along with the amount staff resources devoted to producing the new format on a daily basis, is under way.

Web and Social Media: BBG website average visit duration increased 4.88% in August, the number of pages per visit increased 1.65% and for the first time this year, the bounce rate fell slightly. All this means our content is more compelling, people are finding what they came for and they are sticking around.

Photos posted to Facebook continue to be the driver for online engagement, particularly with users in Southeast Asia.

Twitter followers now top 2,150; we've been listed 35 times, and our Klout score is steady at 53.

Internal Communication Support: Workplace Engagement efforts included organizing a highly popular post-work kickball game. Leadership on workplace engagement efforts included organizing several successful health and wellness events, including fielding a team in the National Press Club 5k that earned three medals and some first-time runners; initiating a smoking-cessation seminar with the Employee Assistance Counselor; and adding a free class in off-peak hours taught by a volunteer instructor.

We worked with OGC, LER and the IBB and VOA front offices to prepare a memo and points for Governor Armstrong's meeting with AFGE Local 1812 president Tim Shamble, scheduled for September 24.

Outreach: Professor Emily Metzgar of Indiana University spent much of August 7 in consultations at the BBG as a follow up to her ongoing interest in Smith-Mundt.

Gary Semmel, executive director of the Partnership for a Secure America, toured the Cohen Building and met with us to discuss a visit by the PSA congressional fellows in October.

Graphics: The Graphics Department supported agency marketing, advertising and promotion with an e-mail campaign for VOA programming on the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington, a preshow campaign for the TEPAL trade show in Panama, a billboard campaign in several Pakistani cities supporting VOA Urdu, a billboard and newspaper campaign for Deewa Radio and TV, and an ad design for VOA Mandarin at the Taipei TV Festival.

Production work continued for the OSD Marketing Program Catalog and the VOA Calendar.

Branding efforts included a logo design for the new 24/7 FM station in N'Djamena.

Graphics support provided for a town hall meeting in Somalia and journalist training in Georgia.

The team designed a plaque to dedicate Studio 23 in honor of Leo Sarkisian and a newsletter for the Workplace Engagement initiative.

Photographic services included a fresh, more modern portrait style for new Board members. Photos were taken before and during the Board's August meeting.

Personnel: The Graphics Department hired a contractor on a short-term basis to help improve work flow, take up some of the stepped-up workload anticipated in the fall and offset the temporary shortfall of personnel in the department due to the retirement of its previous leader.

A posting for the Congressional Coordinator position garnered more than 500 applicants from within and outside the federal government. As of this writing, the agency's Human Resources department was sorting through the applications to choose a slate of qualified candidates.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW (OPR)

RESEARCH & PROGRAM REVIEWS

VOA Vietnamese Review, August 1, 2013: OPR analysts reviewed the VOA Vietnamese Service and found it delivers timely, accurate news across all its media platforms, presenting challenging stories with a range of perspectives. The Service also connects effectively with its audience across social media and offers an impressive array of English learning products well-adapted for the Vietnamese audience. **Audience survey research** conducted in Vietnam November 2012 – February 2013 estimates BBC with a reach of 3.1% weekly (any language, any medium), and total U.S. International Broadcasting with a 1.9% weekly reach (VOA weekly reach is estimated at 1.5%, and RFA at 0.6%). VOA audience reach was higher among men, youth age 15-24, those with post-high school education, and those in urban areas; VOA audience in Vietnam appreciate the news and information on VOA that they cannot get from other sources.

VOA Portuguese to Africa Review, August 8, 2013: OPR analysts found that Portuguese to Africa maintains high journalistic standards, providing a variety of viewpoints and American perspectives on regional issues relevant to Lusophone African countries, including Angola and Mozambique. The Service's biggest challenge is sustaining effective programming and developing new features to grow audience with minimal resources, particularly in the absence of any Gallup survey research in its target markets.

Operational Efficiency Review of Dalet Plus, August 2013: OPR completed a review of the Dalet Plus content management system operations and presented it to senior management and technical offices that currently share responsibility for the system. The report recommends that

responsibility for the system be centralized in the Office of Technology, Services and Innovation, rather than being split between two VOA divisions and TSI, and warned that outdated hardware attached to the system puts VOA broadcasts at risk.

OIG-GAO ACTIVITIES

GAO Engagements on Budget Justification Review of President’s FY 2014 Budget Request for International Affairs (Function 150) and on Grantee Reporting on USASpending: BBG has responded to all major questions on these two engagements looking into a budget anomaly in unobligated balances, and tracking agency reporting of grantee funding on the government website “USASpending.” However, OPR is still working with OCFO to ensure appropriate follow-up to additional questions posed by GAO. We expect these engagements to be closed in short order.

OIG Audit of BBG Financial Statements FY 2012/FY 2013: OPR requested and received together with members of the OCFO a status update on the OIG/Kearney audit of BBG financial statements for FY 2012 and FY 2013 on September 5, 2013.

OIG Audit of the Broadcasting Board of Governors Administration and Oversight of Acquisition Functions: The OIG audit team continues to conduct interviews with the Office of Contracts and their representatives regarding a sample of contracts from FY 2011 and FY 2012. OPR requested and received a status report/update on the audit in late August, 2013. OPR has briefed several senior IBB managers on matters raised at the status update meeting by the OIG audit team.

OIG Inspection of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting: BBG was notified on August 2, 2013 that the OIG has scheduled an inspection of OCB for September-November, 2013. This inspection will focus primarily on OCB operations, but will also inspect the procedures and support that the IBB offices provide to OCB. A significant amount of briefing materials were requested by the OIG and submitted by OPR on September 6, 2013 in addition to separate security-related materials provided directly by IBB Security to the OIG team/security inspector. The OIG entrance conference with IBB Director/staff and OCB Director/managers was held on September 11, 2013. The on-site inspection in Miami will take place November 4-15, 2013, with an on-site security inspection by the security inspector earlier on October 2-4, 2013.

OIG Inspection of BBG Operations in the United Arab Emirates (UAE): OPR coordinated the collection, organization and submission of briefing materials from MBN, RFE/RL and VOA on operations in UAE, including budget, resources, personnel, challenges/issues, successes, activities supporting the BBG’s strategic plan goals, transmission, digital and traditional platforms, audience research and key points of contact. All materials were submitted to the OIG on August 30, 2013.

OIG Inspection of IBB Botswana Transmitting Station, Report Number ISP-IB-11-52: OPR received another review by the OIG of the BBG’s compliance response submitted on April 16, 2013, and two recommendations remain open. OIG requests confirmation by BBG/TSI that Microsoft System Center control application has been deployed at the Botswana

Transmitting Station, and an update by BBG/TSI on efforts to create an IT contingency plan specific to the Botswana Transmitting Station and a timeline for completion. OPR needs to submit BBG's response to the OIG by September 20, 2013.

OIG Inspection of the IBB Germany Transmitting Station, Report Number ISP-IB-C-13-20: OPR received notification from the OIG on August 20, 2013 that the compliance follow-up review of the IBB's Germany Transmitting Station indicates that the final two open recommendations are closed, and, with that, the entire report is closed.

OIG Inspection of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Report Number ISP-IB-12-43: OPR received notification from the OIG on August 20, 2013 that the compliance review of the inspection of RFE/RL indicates that the final open recommendation has been closed and, with that, the entire report is closed.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Voluntary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment Authority requested from the Office of Personnel Management: The Office of Human Resources submitted a request to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for renewed authority for Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments (VSIP or buyouts). These authorities are intended to assist the agency in updating the skills of its workforce and responding to possible reductions. Early Out Retirement enables employees to retire earlier than otherwise would be possible. Buyouts enable employees who voluntarily resign or retire to receive an incentive payment of up to \$25,000. If approved by OPM, the agency could utilize these authorities through September 30, 2016.

Implementation of the Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act of 2012: On September 6, 2013, the Office of Management and Budget issued guidelines to agencies designed to establish and maintain safeguards and internal controls for purchase cards, travel cards, integrated cards, and centrally billed accounts. The Act requires that the agency have appropriate policies and procedures in place by September 30, 2013, to prevent individuals from being reimbursed for bills already paid, to prevent the Government from spending money on unused travel tickets, and to deter credit card misuse by employees by implementing penalties for violations, including removal from Federal service, as appropriate.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS (OCR)

Partnership in Education Discussion: On August 13, 2013, the Office of Civil Rights met with the new Dean (Dr. Gracie Lawson-Borders) of the Howard University School of Communications on the Partnership in Education to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Howard University. OCR intends to coordinate a Panel Discussion with BBG employees on Broadcasting, Social Media and Innovation. In addition, we would like to invite the professors to provide forums on today's challenges with diversity and communication skills as appropriate.

Women's Equality Day: On August 21, the Office of Civil Rights in collaboration with the Office of Performance Review conducted a Women's Equality Day Event. The focus session discussed the challenges women face in the workforce, and recommendations from the workforce on how to better promote equal employment opportunity and career advancement for women at BBG.

Upcoming Events (announcements will be distributed):

September/October – Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration Event (9/18 and 10/8)

October – Disability Awareness Month

November 1-30 – National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month

November 11 – Veterans Day



September 13, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for September

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

There are no challenges/issues to report.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

Syria

Reports began appearing August 21 about what appeared to be a chemical weapons attack against civilians in a Damascus suburb. Before the end of the day, VOA's newsroom had issued packages on the story from London, Cairo, the White House and the United Nations. In the weeks since then, the newsroom has kept the focus on Syria, including full coverage of President Obama's September 10th address to the nation in which he announced that he was giving diplomacy a chance. VOA English produced a 30-minute special report that led with Obama's address to the nation and featured analyses by VOA reporters in Washington and at the UN. The special was simulcast on TV, radio and web. All told, the newsroom has issued almost 300 radio and television packages related to Syria, including stories from domestic correspondents about how Americans are reacting to the crisis. Chicago-based Kane Farabaugh covered a town hall meeting held by Congresswoman Susan Brooks in Greentown, Indiana, reporting on her interaction on the issue with voters in her constituency. VOA's language services have supplemented the newsroom's Syria reporting with commentary and reports from their target areas. In addition, the language services have been providing special reports on Syria to their affiliates. Eurasia Division language services delivered live television remotes in the newscasts of major affiliate stations in Russia, Ukraine and the Balkans. VOA Bosnian's report for its major affiliate, *BHT1*, Bosnian Public Television, included a standup in front of the White House and aired on the station's prime-time news program. *BHT1* has the highest ratings in the country and its reach stretches all across Bosnia, including the Republic of Srpska.

50th Anniversary of ‘I Have a Dream’

On a summer afternoon in 1963 13-year-old Michael Scott had no idea he would be part of history when he walked from his Washington DC neighborhood to the National Mall to join in a rally for jobs and civil rights led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Standing on that same spot 50 years later, Scott told VOA reporter Henok Fente he was amazed at how much life for black Americans had changed in half a century: “I am reaping the benefits of Martin Luther King’s work.” Scott’s story was just one of many captured by the Horn of Africa Service reporter in the days surrounding the 50th anniversary of Dr. King’s march. Traveling by foot and by bicycle (to get to all the events on the Mall as speedily as he could), Henok interviewed many people and gave his audiences an unforgettable portrait of the anniversary celebration and the enduring legacy of Dr. King. On the day of the anniversary, Henok provided live coverage from the Mall for Amharic’s *Lifeline* program, and then previewed President Obama’s speech with several interviews from participants such as 20-year old Demond Nicholson, who said that he came to the Mall so someday he could tell his kids that he, too, had been part of history. While much of Henok’s reporting was carried by other services in Africa Division, they also provided many hours of their own coverage of the anniversary. Africa Division services, as well as all other VOA services, also had an abundant supply of material from the central newsroom and the English Division. VOA Central News issued an eight-part series of stories on the march that featured interviews with Bernice King, daughter of Dr. King, Peggy Wallace Kennedy, daughter of former Alabama Gov. George Wallace, NAACP President Ben Jealous, and many “foot soldiers” of the early civil rights movement. Perhaps the highlight of the English Division’s anniversary coverage was a special 30-minute television broadcast that looked at the civil rights movement through the eyes of those who took part in the March on Washington. [*The King Legacy, Marching Forward*](#) had interviews with many of the young activists who helped



organize the event, including Congressional Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Ambassador Andrew Young. The film, said English Division Executive Producer Jerry Brown, “acknowledges the connection between the U.S. civil rights movement and the struggle for human rights around the world.” *The King Legacy, Marching Forward* was made available on demand, as well as on VOA’s satellite streams.

Days after Interview with Somali Service US-born Jihadist Reported Dead

Early in September, an American-born jihadist named Omar Hammami contacted VOA’s Somali Service through an intermediary and said he wanted to give an interview. Hammami’s name was familiar to the service. He left the United States in 2006 and traveled to Somalia with the intent to join al-Shabab and eventually became a leader of the group. But during the interview, Hammami said that he is no longer a member of al-Shabab and accused the group’s leader, Moktar Abu Zubayr, of seeking power at all costs. But he also stressed that he remained a terrorist, though he was now in hiding from his former comrades. A little more than a week after the interview, the Somali Service received a call from former militants in Somalia saying that Hammami was killed when al-Shabab fighters attacked his hideout near the village of Shongoleh in Somalia’s Gedo region. Shortly after the news broke in the United States, a TV station in Alabama, where Hammami was from, called VOA to ask for access to the interview he gave to

the Somali Service. Soon other stations were contacting VOA, including ABC and NPR. In the days before the Smith-Mundt regulations were changed, VOA would not have been able to share this story with any U.S. networks. But now, thanks to the change in the regulations, American news stations and audiences are able to hear the stories that VOA gets.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/omar-hammami-american-rapping-jihadist-killed-somalia/story?id=20234254>

VOA Zimbabwe: 100% Credible

A new report by the Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe (MMPZ), has rated VOA's *Studio 7*, as the Zimbabwe Service is known in Zimbabwe, as one of only three news organizations with a 100% credibility rating. MMPZ is an independent monitoring organization that works to promote responsible journalism in Zimbabwe. It gave *Studio 7* and another station, Zi FM, the highest credibility rating of the electronic media in Zimbabwe. The Media Monitoring Project's Credibility Index examined stories between April and June 15th, from 11 media outlets, including newspapers, radio and television stations, and rated them for accuracy, fairness, and balance. "*Studio 7* journalists," says VOA Zimbabwe Service Chief Jeremy Groce, "work hard to provide our audience accurate and balanced information, in spite of big challenges. This MMPZ report validates our efforts to go the extra mile to check facts and listen to views from all sides."

New Urdu Show Explores Pakistani Culture in America

Audiences in Pakistan are giving a "thumbs up" to the new VOA Urdu language TV show *Kahani Pakistani*, which premiered the beginning of September on Pakistan's Aaj news channel. The 30-minute show, which airs Thursdays and Fridays, is hosted by Ayesha Gilani, a Pakistani-American model. [*Kahani Pakistani*](#) (*Pakistani Story*) explores the intersection between American life and Pakistani culture by reporting on events like the Muslim Food Fest in Baltimore and a recent Pakistani music concert in D.C. "When I travel to events like these," Gilani says, "I meet Pakistanis and other South Asians who have life stories that would be interesting to our audiences. They help explain to our audiences the different facets of living in



America." Gilani's stories from the road are supplemented by reports from the Urdu Service's reporters in L.A. as well as inside Pakistan. "Ultimately what I hope audiences gain from the show is that no matter what country you grow up in, your story and your roots stay with you," Gilani said. Aaj TV, which airs the show, is a 24-hour news channel available on satellite and cable in Pakistan. The show is also available on the [VOA Urdu](#) webpage, on [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#).

A Crash Just Waiting to Happen

Carolyn Presutti, a VOA reporter based in Washington, began hearing from her sources in the aviation industry shortly after an Asiana Airlines plane crashed into a seawall in San Francisco on July 6, leaving three people dead and almost 200 injured. These sources – including veteran airline pilots and crash investigators – told Presutti that this was a crash waiting to happen. They said Asiana pilots were not adequately trained for visual-rules landings like the one attempted in San Francisco, and that previous investigations had identified a deeply ingrained culture of deference to authority in Korea as a contributing factor. Presutti, assisted by interns and

production staff, spent another six weeks digging out previous regulatory documents concerning Asiana and another Korean airline, KAL, to back up her story. The final package included on-camera interviews with two former Asiana pilots, one of whom had served as a pilot trainer there, and a former chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board. Seoul correspondent Daniel Schearf assisted by interviewing officials from the Air Line Pilots Association of Korea and the South Korean Transport Ministry. The final product was one of the most comprehensive and compelling examples of investigative journalism to come out of Central News in several years.

VOA China Has a Best Seller

History buffs and scholars in Hong Kong and Taiwan are snapping up copies of a new VOA book focused on taboo subjects that have long been banned in Communist China. The book, *State Secrets*, based on a popular VOA Mandarin-language television segment called *History's Mysteries*, includes politically sensitive material about the Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the early days of the Communist Party, and the late Zhao Ziyang, the former Party Secretary who was placed under house arrest in 1989. "Due to heavy censorship, many people in Mainland China are unaware of these topics, or only know the official versions of them provided by the government," said Robert Su Li, the producer and host of *History's Mysteries*. "Our job is to tell them the truth." *State Secrets* went on sale in July, just in time for the Hong Kong Book Fair, and is now in its second printing. In an interview with the *South China Morning Post*, which profiled the book, VOA China Branch Chief Sasha Gong said, the Chinese people suffered great pain and have paid a huge price, "but the way mainlanders forget is very scary. I



VOA China's *State Secrets*

I felt an urgent need to record history." *State Secrets* is the first in a planned series of books featuring scripts from *History's Mysteries* and potentially other VOA shows as well. *History's Mysteries* debuted in June of last year and its episodes have been viewed more than 1.1 million times on [YouTube](#) and the [VOA Chinese website](#). Both websites are blocked in China, but are accessible to Chinese audiences via proxy servers and other circumvention technology.

VOA Spanish: New Affiliate, New Program, Record Numbers

Whatever the platform – radio, TV or online – VOA Spanish just keeps expanding. The service recently welcomed a new affiliate in Chile, Radio Agricultura, one of the top three radio stations in the country. The Spanish Service now broadcasts a live shot every morning on the station's leading news broadcast. The first day of the live shot, VOA's coverage on Syria led the ratings for the station. Spanish television, meanwhile, has launched a weekly economic segment from Wall Street. The two-minute report airs on Venezuela's Globovision as well as other television networks in Latin America. Finally, the service's mobile site had a record number of visits in August, 1,814,929.

Popular Georgian TV Station Seeks Partnership with VOA

A major Georgian television station, Imedi TV, has expressed interest in carrying VOA Georgian's exclusive TV content and is ready to enter an affiliation agreement with the service. In August, Imedi aired several TV packages and exclusive interviews that the Georgian Service conducted with key U.S. experts and former officials. The service's coverage of visits to

Washington by Georgia's top officials, including foreign and defense ministers as well as Georgia's chief prosecutor, were also aired by Imedi. According to a 2012 Gallup National Survey, Imedi TV reaches more than 60 percent of all adults in Georgia.

New Affiliates, Better Promotion for VOA Macedonian

In Macedonia, two more affiliates, Skopje-based Skynet and Amazon TV stations, have begun carrying VOA Macedonian's *Newsflash* show as well as its *U.S. News in One Minute* video feature. Both stations broadcast in the area of Skopje, the capital, which accounts for roughly two-thirds of Macedonia's TV market. VOA Macedonian already has a significant presence in the area with three other affiliates. As of August 1, the service resumed its promotional campaign on the *Time.mk* portal, which showcases the service's latest website headlines and the *U.S. News in One Minute* video feature. *Time.mk* is a news aggregating website, similar to Google news, and one of the most popular visited sites in Macedonia.

***Podelis* Host discusses Social Media at Stanford University**



Yulia Savchenko speaking at Stanford

Yulia Savchenko, host of VOA Russian's TV webcast *Podelis* (Share in English) lived up to the show's name at Stanford University by sharing secrets to success in navigating Russia's restrictive media environment. Savchenko spoke as a returning alumna at this year's Draper Hills Summer Fellows Program, part of Stanford's Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law. A 2005

fellow of the program, Savchenko discussed the obstacles of working in heavily censored media environments, as well as VOA's social media triumphs with *Podelis*. She also told the audience how the *Podelis* team influences social media conversations in Russia and explained methods VOA reporters use to encourage increased audience participation on digital platforms. Before joining VOA in 2009, Savchenko worked at the BBC, where she served as an anchor and participated in creating multimedia projects for the BBC's Russian language website.

VOA Urdu Comes to Rescue of Young Cancer Victim

A four-year-old Pakistani boy named Hussain Baloch has a new lease on life, thanks in part to the [VOA Urdu](#) program *Meri Kahani* (My Story). For most of his life, Hussain has been confined to a hospital bed battling a rare blood disorder called thalassemia. His family, which lives in a poor village of Baluchistan, has struggled to find funds to pay for his medication, which costs three times the family's monthly income. Out of desperation, Hussain's father sent *Meri Kahani* host Shahnaz Aziz a letter describing the family's efforts to keep the young boy alive. Touched by the letter, Shahnaz decided to try to help. He located Dr. Asim Qidwai, founder of the Children's Cancer Hospital in Karachi and CEO of the Afzaal Memorial Thalassemia Foundation. Dr. Qidwai promised cost-free treatment for Hussain, including regular checkups as well as accommodations for the family. Listeners to the show were also touched by Hussain's case. Soon after the interview with Dr. Qidwai, *Meri Kahani* began receiving calls from people wanting to help the young boy. One caller wanted to donate blood, while another offered to pay for Hussain's tickets to travel to Dr. Qidwai's hospital. Shahnaz recently spoke with Hussain to

learn how he is doing. The young boy said he is back home in Baluchistan after receiving his first blood transfusion at the cancer hospital in Karachi. He also said he has a supply of medication provided by Dr. Qidwai. He told Shahnaz: “I only heard about angels, but I have met a real angel -- Dr. Qidwai. Thanks to Meri Kahani.”



Dr. Qidwai (left) with young cancer patient Hussain Baloch and his father Haneef

Greek Prime Minister Meets President Obama

The prime minister of Greece, Antonis Samaras, recently made a trip to Washington, which included an Oval Office meeting with President Obama. The level of interest back in Greece in the prime minister’s trip is indicated by the fact that the main affiliate of the VOA’s Greek Service, SKAI in Athens, carried more than 20 live radio and TV interactives with Greek Service reporters, including a live remote from the front lawn of the White House during the affiliate’s very popular evening newscast.

No Olympic Downhills in North Korea

On September 3, VOA Korean aired an exclusive interview with North Korea’s International Olympic Committee member Chang Ung. During the interview, Chang suggested that a North Korean ski resort could be used for events at the 2018 Winter Olympics that South Korea will be hosting. The Masik ski resort, now under construction, is known to be one of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s favorite projects. “When construction is complete, it can be used in an international event and possibly in the Olympic Games,” Chang told VOA. The offer comes as Pyongyang is trying to reach out to Washington and Seoul after issuing a series of threats in protest against international sanctions. The VOA interview drew keen attention from media organizations in South Korea, and the Associated Press, Reuters, and AFP picked up the story. It also drew a response from the organizing committee for the 2018 Winter Games. It rejected the North’s offer, saying it was “unrealistic.”

More Awards for VOA Documentary

A Dry Season, a VOA documentary about last year’s drought in the Midwest, has been named runner-up for the prestigious Star Prize in Broadcasting at the recent International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) Congress in Buenos Aires. *A Dry Season* provides a comprehensive look at the far-ranging effects of the drought by weaving together reports from the Midwest by Correspondent Kane Farabaugh and Food, Agriculture Nutrition Correspondent Steve Baragona. Judges for the Star Prize described the 30-minute production as “well-filmed and well-told by a team of professional broadcasters... It was objective and balanced and a first-class example of the fine work of Voice of America.” The IFAJ award is *Dry Season*’s fourth major recognition in as many months. On August 6th, it placed first in the Multimedia Production category at the American Agricultural Editors Association awards banquet in Buffalo, New York. The Association of Women in Communication has awarded the VOA team the International Clarion Award, which will be presented at a ceremony on October 18th in Springfield, Illinois. *A Dry Season* was also honored earlier this summer at the regional AP Awards banquet, taking the top prize for “Outstanding Documentary/In-Depth Reporting.”

VOA Bangla and USAID Host Town Hall Meeting in Dhaka

The first USAID-funded Health Reporter’s Training and Town Hall Meeting took place in Bangladesh in late August. VOA Bangla’s Sarkar Kabiruddin moderated the two-day workshop

with Paul Sabatine, Deputy Mission Director, USAID. Both the workshop and the meeting were covered by local media outlets who praised the event with full attribution to VOA and USAID. Kabiruddin also visited Bangla TV affiliates NTV and DESH while in Dhaka.



VOA Bangla's Kabiruddin Sarkar (black vest) helps celebrate the success of a two-day VOA-USAID workshop and Town Hall Meeting in Dhaka

Other Notable Interviews

- Just hours before the new president of Pakistan, Mamnoon Hussain was sworn in, he was interviewed by the Urdu Service. The new president discussed his constitutional responsibilities and his approach to discharging his duties as the symbol of the federation. Mr. Hussain replaces Asif Ali Zardari, Pakistan's first democratically elected president to complete a full term.
- Two editors of Ukrainian websites devoted to reporting on corruption were guests on the VOA Ukrainian *Chas-Time* TV program. Oleksiy Shalaysky of *Our Money* and Mykola Vorobyov of *Euro-Patrol* described how their corruption stories go viral on the web and lead to action by authorities.
- Wayne Merry, senior fellow for Europe and Eurasia at the American Foreign Policy Council in Washington, talked with VOA Armenian about the current state of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the U.S. role in the peace talks, and Russia's recent \$1-billion arms sale to Azerbaijan and its possible implications for regional security.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Afghan Service Gains New Facebook Fans after Soccer Coverage

VOA Dari got thousands of Facebook "Likes" for its coverage of a soccer match between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The match, which took place in Kabul August 20, was the first between the two countries in 35 years, and VOA Dari covered it on radio, web and Facebook. A sellout crowd of 6,000 watched Afghanistan win 3-0.



Mandarin Website Is Go-to Source for News about Trial of Former Top Party Official

Visits to the VOA Mandarin website soared during August, 926,174 compared to 765,715 in July. The website's coverage of the corruption trial of Bo Xilai, a former rising star in the Communist Party, is believed responsible for much of that increase. From August 18 to 24, the week of the trial, visits to the Mandarin website more than doubled to over 50 thousand a day. Total page views in August reached 3,151,339, and these also spiked during the trial, reaching a high of 198,071 on August 22. Of the 10 most viewed pages on the Mandarin site, the top three were reports and analyses of the trial. Chinese Branch Chief Sasha Gong's own social media pages got 2.5 million views during the week of the Bo trial. A (guilty) verdict is expected soon.

VOA Zimbabwe Website Is Big Winner in July Elections

The Zimbabwe Service has seen its mobile website traffic grow significantly since its exceptional coverage of Zimbabwe's national elections on July 31. Zimbabwe's English language mobile site saw a 37% increase from July to August in pageviews on its mobile site. Growth of the Service's Shona and Ndebele mobile sites' pageviews are even more impressive. Shona mobile pageviews were up nearly 105% in August over the previous month, while Ndebele mobile pageviews grew 79%.

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

OUTREACH

- VOA Director David Ensor sat down with show host Nicholas Kralev on Sept 12th for a half hour on-camera interview about the critical role international broadcasting and the Voice of America play in public diplomacy. "Conversations with Nicholas Kralev" is a weekly program on diplomacy and global affairs that looks at the people and institutions that practice diplomacy and how effective they are. Guests include senior U.S. and foreign government officials, diplomats, foreign policy experts, journalists, business leaders and artists. David explained in detail how VOA goes beyond its role as a provider of accurate and objective information, serving as a model for journalists in closed media markets, and connecting directly with people in so-called "denied areas" where traditional diplomacy is constrained by the lack of formal relations. <http://nicholaskralev.com/tvshow/>
- During a recent visit to Ukraine, VOA Ukrainian Service Chief Adrian Karmazyn was interviewed by the popular daily newspaper/website *Den (The Day)*. Karmazyn discussed VOA's mission, the challenges of producing programs for a Ukrainian audience that is seven time zones away, and the vibrant and free media environment in the United States in which VOA operates. "It's the duty of media," he told *Den*, "to pose tough questions to the authorities and business, and to pursue information."

PRESS RELEASES

- *VOA Studio Tours Now Offered at New Time* – September 11
- *VOA TV Show Explores Pakistani Culture in America* – September 5
- *VOA TV Special: "The King Legacy, Marching Forward"* -- August 27
- *VOA Book "National Secrets" Reveals Hidden Chinese History* -- August 19
- *VOA Rolls Out Mobile App with News in 43 Languages* -- August 8

INSIDEVOA.COM

- *Pakistani Boy Receives Gift of Life* – September 15
- *British Pop Star Discusses New Album on Border Crossings* – September 10
- *VOA Gets Top Credibility Rating in Zimbabwe* – September 3
- *Podelis Host Yulia Savchenko Shares Social Media Secrets* – August 29
- *Twice the American Idol Fun on Border Crossings* -- August 28

VOA STUDIO TOUR

- *Jakarta Post* reporter Proditia Sabarini met with the Indonesian Service. -- August 29
- Pakistani journalists met with the Urdu Service. -- August 27
- Nine trade union specialists from Belarus met with the Russian Service. – August 22
- Ms. Anasthasie Tudieshe, editor and host of France's Africa No. 1 Radio, met with the VOA French to Africa Service. -- August 16
- Journalism and media professors in the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism program were briefed on VOA operations and met with VOA language services. – August 13
- Students from English Now Program met with a representative of Learning English. -- August 9
- Nine Ukrainian journalists met with the Ukrainian Service; two were interviewed live on *Chas Time*. – August 8
- Students from the Kuumba Learning Center visited VOA. -- August 2
- Students from the DC Arts Commission met with the Persian Service. – August 1

REQUESTS TO USE VOA MATERIAL

- VOA Public Relations processed 29 requests to use VOA material between July 31 and September 6, 2013.

F. PERSONNEL

Clara Dominguez has been selected to be the new Director of VOA's Latin America Division. Ms. Dominguez has been Acting Director of the Latin America Division since March. Prior to that, she was Managing Editor and Acting Chief of the Spanish Service. During her tenure, she was responsible for development and implementation of a new strategy to reach mass audiences in Latin America through the Washington Bureau model for the Spanish Service. Under her leadership, VOA's Spanish Service revamped the content and production values of its TV shows. Before joining VOA in 2010, she served five years as News Director at the Office of Cuba Broadcasting. She has published on numerous topics, including the role of Hispanics in U.S. elections and social media in Latin America. Ms. Dominguez has a Master of Arts degree from George Washington University and a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Miami. She is a native of Havana, Cuba.

DATE: September 17, 2014
MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim Management Team
SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for August 2014

Global Strategy:

- The IBB Office of Research and Assessment (ORA) held its semi-annual meeting of all entity Research Directors on September 16 and 17. One part of the discussion included the discontinuation of qualitative research projects under the IARP contract with Gallup, who has provided poor qualitative work at high cost.
- ODDI completed an update for iOS versions of Al Hurra and Marti News Applications. Updates on the Android platform are scheduled for release in September along with updates for VOA, RFERL, and RFA.
- ODDI released a new Social Media Dashboard, <http://smdata.bbg.gov>, allows users to view individual and aggregated, 'Engagement Actions' on Facebook and Twitter by account, or for an entire target country, region or language by day, week, month and quarter.

Global Operations:

- The Agency is finalizing the evaluation of offers to provide staffing and management services for VOA's contractors in order to offer an award before the end of fiscal year 14.
- Unrest in Iraq continues to stop transmissions from BBG FM and TV sites in Mosul and Tikrit. Technical problems have also interrupted transmissions from BBG sites in Basra (TV), and Ramadi (FM). Our contractor is working to repair equipment where he can or to relocate equipment to more secure locations.
- TSI assisted RFE/RL in quickly putting into place a new contract to provide leased medium wave radio transmissions beginning August 18 for RFE/RL broadcasts directed toward Russia and Belarus.
- Reported reception problems from BBG's Telstar 18 service to China resulted from reduced uplink power to the satellite. TSI is working with the vendor to ensure that he maintains contracted power levels.
- The agency experienced the following cyber-security incidents of note:
 - US-CERT (United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team) observed suspicious communication between an Internet site potentially associated with a foreign actor and an agency workstation. Analysis confirmed the reported network communication and significant activity on the workstation. The suspicious site was sink-holed, the workstation was rebuilt, and the user was reminded of how to avoid passively allowing access to the agency network.
 - TSI has ordered new equipment to upgrade the network switches routing MBN internet traffic through the BBG's main internet connection following observations by US-CERT of suspicious communication.
- OHR has received authorization from the Department of State to participate in the Exchange Visitor Program. This program falls under a category of the J-1 Visa that the agency has not previously used, allowing VOA to bring foreign journalists to the U.S. to observe first-hand how agency journalists provide accurate and balanced news to the restrictive media markets.
- OPM is finalizing the data collection portion of the initiative to review IBB workload and business processes. Several focus groups took place last week with employees from a number of IBB offices. Groups were led by OPM staff to expand on data collected in employee surveys conducted during the first week in September. One-on-one interviews with each IBB Office Director will occur next week. Final reports with findings and recommendations are expected in mid-October.



September 18, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for September

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- *Cold War?*, the ground-breaking co-production between VOA Russian and the Russian Business Channel that RBC broadcast throughout Russia, has been suspended. In a letter Wednesday, RBC informed VOA's Russian Service that the program, in its current format, "would not be aired for the next two weeks." The letter gave two reasons for RBC's decision. The network was introducing a new broadcast schedule "from scratch" and, speaking in particular about *Cold War?*, it wasn't satisfied with the program format. The RBC decision has no effect on other areas of collaboration between RBC and the Russian Service. For the past two years, the service has been providing daily 5- to 10-minutes interactives from the New York Stock Exchange that air live on RBC's evening business news show. These will continue.
- Latin America Division Chief Clara Dominguez, joined by the division's marketing director, Oscar Barcelo, and OSD Director Bruce Sherman, traveled to Colombia the end of August for an affiliate conference that paid high dividends, perhaps the biggest being an affiliation agreement the trio negotiated with Colombia's leading online newspaper, *El Tiempo*. Dominguez reported that all the affiliates she spoke with wanted to strengthen ties with VOA because it added value to their stations. Many also said they viewed VOA as an important counter to Telesur, the terrestrial and satellite television network headquartered in Caracas, Venezuela, as well as efforts by China and Russia to make further inroads in Latin America.

DATE: April 11, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for March, 2012

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

Pangea Content Management System: Pangea is BBG's enterprise website content management system (CMS). It is being hosted in a facility operated by RFE/RL in Prague. Representatives from RFE/RL were at the BBG to conduct primary user training for OCB, MBN, ODDI, several VOA language divisions, and RFA. In late March and early April, OCB, VOA Indonesian, VOA Spanish, and VOA Creole launched sites managed in Pangea.

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: Two technicians from the IBB Thailand Transmitting station completed installation of a satellite program feed at the new Far East Broadcasting Corporation (FEBC) Headquarters building in March for this project. The final version of the overall system design report is nearing completion. We are also working diligently to resolve technical questions raised by the Korean Communications Commission (KCC) about the station's license application in order to keep the project on schedule.

Crisis Planning for Syria and Yemen: OSD is working with various elements of the State Department and the Department of Defense on plans for possible surge funding and other support to enhance broadcasting to Syria and Yemen. For Syria, we are seeking funds to augment Alhurra and Sawa newsgathering and production capacity. We are also in discussions with DOD on the possible use of Commando Solo for enhanced FM transmission capability. To better reach audiences in Yemen, we are working with the State Department on a variety of options for local FM transmission of Sawa programs.

IBB Coordinating Committee: The IBB Coordinating Committee met and discussed expanding and improving collaboration on digital media platforms and services across USIM. The Committee agreed to set up a working group to establish a range of digital media standards, make recommendations to the Board and to IBB and entity management on shared digital media infrastructure, and discuss future investments into digital media technology. Efforts will focus on creating unified a web analytics system, online video and audio distribution system, and set of standards for mobile delivery.

OFFICE OF THE IBB DIRECTOR

Partnership for Public Service: Senior staff met with representatives from the Partnership for Public Service to discuss employee morale and the Agency's results from the 2011 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. The Partnership provided focused data from our survey and best practices from Agencies that have made significant improvements. This meeting is part of an ongoing collaboration, and the Director's office is now evaluating input from senior staff on quick steps that can be taken to improve morale.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

Jamming of BBG Satellite Transmissions to Iran: VOA PNN was returned to the Eutelsat Hot Bird (HB) on February 29 in a third party provider's system. BBC Persian was returned to the HB on or about February 27. Both remain clear of uplink jamming since their return. However, Iran most likely continues its downlink jamming of satellite signals in local areas within country.

Energy Saving Transmissions: IBB engineer Daniel Maxwell has submitted an invited article on energy saving transmission techniques used by IBB to *Radio World* magazine. He will be presenting a paper on the same subject at the National Association of Broadcasters engineering conference in April.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

- Equipment for the planned BBG FM station in **Tripoli, Libya**, has finally arrived in Tripoli, and installation of the facility has begun.
- The BBG FM facility in **Ajloun, Jordan**, was vandalized in late February and again in March. We are working with the U.S Embassy, the Jordanian Government, and Jordan Radio-TV (JRTV, our contractor) to restore the site to operation. This FM station was providing some Radio Sawa broadcast service to parts of Syria south of Damascus, but two other BBG FM stations in Lebanon remain in service providing Radio Sawa to areas around Damascus, Homs, and coastal regions in northern Syria. In the interim, JRTV has established a low power FM facility at the nearby site of Ras Munif for our transmissions.

Greenville Transmitting Station: The name "Edward R. Murrow Transmitting Station" now proudly greets visitors to the BBG transmitting facility's main building in Greenville, North Carolina. The 12 inch antique gold colored block letters were installed above the building's main entrance. Also, the station worked with IBB's Office of Communications and External Affairs to design new signs for the station's main entrance and two displays for the lobby, one of which will honor the famous journalist and former USIA Director. Plans are underway to formally rededicate the station in early May.

IBB Information Technology (IT): IT Division representatives met with the RFE/RL team, performed a site survey, and started dialog about cross facility utilization for business continuity and disaster recovery, as well as sharing services. IT teams are currently putting together quotes

and funding requests for tertiary virtualization and storage nodes intended to be deployed in Prague.

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities:

- The IAC Team met with representatives of Akamai, the content delivery network supporting BBG websites. Akamai is exploring its ability to create an out-of-the-box solution for decoy routing of URLs. It is also interested in creating an interface application to accelerate delivery of web content through any BBG circumvention tool.
- Emergent Space Technologies was awarded an IAC contract to develop and implement a satellite IP delivery system for PNN and Radio Farda audiences in Iran. The software package will enable the transmission of multicast/unicast files and streams to clients via one-way satellite link.
- Ken Berman departed in March as head of the IAC Program. Ken accepted a Deputy CIO position with the Commerce Department's International Trade Commission.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION

iTunes Store: The collaboration between ODDI staff member Addie Nascimento and Dan Dzara of the General Counsel's office has led to the creation of a unified US international media (USIM) iTunes store. While VOA has had a well-regarded podcast store on iTunes for some time, RFA launched in March and RFE/RL is planning to launch in late spring. The other entities plan to have content available on iTunes by the fall. This effort will bring all of USIM to iTunes as a major publisher of their international content.

Middle East Voices: Under the direction of Randy Abramson, ODDI Director of Products and Operations, many ODDI staff have been working with VOA to improve and expand the experimental Middle East Voices site (<http://www.middleeastvoices.com/>). This site marks USIM's first effort with a mobile-first, adaptive design, which detects and reacts to the type of device asking to view the site and optimizes the presentation for that device. For example, users accessing the site on a smartphone will find a site optimized for their mobile experience; users on a desktop will see a site optimized for that size and finally, users with a tablet for that size.

Weapons of Mouse Destruction: Inspired by Saman Arbabi's work as Co-Creator and Executive Producer of *Parazit*, Weapons of Mouse Destruction (WMD), www.weaponsofmousedestruction.org, formally launched at the 2012 SXSW Festival in Austin, TX with the support of ODDI and the BBG. WMD is a campaign designed to raise awareness about media and internet freedom using art. People from around the world upload photos showing solidarity with those living in censored environments. With artwork donated by Shepherd Fairey and media support from VICE.tv, as well as critical support from TED prize winner JR, the campaign is off to a strong start. In six-weeks, the WMD team and ODDI delivered a fully functioning user generated website, an android and Apple app and a full digital advertising campaign. The WMD project is now at a critical turning point, and ODDI will manage the near term project strategy to ensure it is well positioned for internal and external long term success.

Internal Pitch Fest: The BBG Pitch Fest (www.bit.ly/bbgpitchfest) gives all BBG and Entity employees and contractors a chance to develop their ideas for future programming— and serves to unearth the great ideas our staff have not yet had the chance to express. The Pitch Fest asks for radio, television, interactive and other types of programming and content ideas. Ideas can be from anyone for any language service, and global ideas are encouraged. Once a panel jury selects an idea, with the final decision by each entity head, ODDI will work with the creator to produce a pilot, a podcast or some other low-cost proof of concept. The prizes include an executive producer credit, a pizza lunch for their entire service or division, and a certificate acknowledging the winner’s creative contributions to the BBG.

Online Video/Audio Platform: ODDI, in close cooperation with all of the entities and TSI, is currently reevaluating our online video/audio platform for the distribution of rich media content to our websites and mobile devices, as well as on YouTube, iTunes, Facebook, and beyond. As we recompetite the contract, we are looking at opportunities to work with outside vendors, as well as our grantee entities. These other vendors may use systems that integrate with Pangea or otherwise provide the Agency better results.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Partnerships with Other Government Agencies: OSD’s Joan Mower and IBB Director Dick Lobo met with USAID Deputy Administrator Don Steinberg. He committed to working more closely with BBG, in line with the Obama Administration’s efforts to forge closer communication between agencies to achieve cost-savings. OSD representatives will also meet with team members from the State Department’s Global Health Initiative to discuss becoming part of that inter-agency project, and with Ambassador Jimmy Kolker, of HHS Global Health, to discuss cooperation between BBG and HHS on health issues.

Continued Expansion in South Sudan: The State Department has informed OSD that they have penciled in \$1.4 million for continued South Sudan programming in 2013. In addition, new FM affiliate stations in the towns of Wau and Malakal are now broadcasting VOA’s “South Sudan in Focus.” OSD’s Regional Marketing Representative Peter Byengoma assisted in the installation of satellite dishes at the two stations.



Malakal installation



Wau installation

New Opportunities in Bangladesh: DESH TV in Bangladesh held a news conference on March 26th to launch its new affiliation with VOA Bangla. VOA will provide updates on the US Presidential campaign, and begin working with DESH-TV to cover other stories from Washington. VOA kicked off the affiliation with a welcome message from Director David Ensor and a ten-minute report on the celebration of Bangladesh's Independence Day by Diaspora residents in the US. To support VOA efforts in Bangladesh, USAID has promised funding (up to \$250,000) for the creation of a reporting center in Dhaka following the model of the successful reporting center in Kano, Nigeria; the funding will also support training and town hall meetings.



Desh TV Managing Director Asaduzzaman Noor and OMPP's Neal Lavon
(From Dhaka's "Daily Star" newspaper, March 27, 2012)

Expanded Coverage in Serbia: Timocka Television and Radio have joined the BBG family of affiliates, with VOA's Open Studio program airing on television and RFE/RL's Balkan service delivering a half hour news program on radio. The TTR regional network serves eastern Serbia, a region in which BBG previously had little to no presence, and a potential audience of more than 500,000.

Online and Mobile Outlets in Russia: Opera, a major mobile phone browser in Europe, with more than 120 million units shipped worldwide, has agreed to place a link to the VOA Russian news feed on its mobile website news section. VOA Russian also has a big new online outlet in "Rambler," a significant Russian news portal. Rambler signed an IBB Internet license with the OSD Prague Office to "...incorporate Voice of America original web full text materials, original video and audio content from the VOANEWS.COM website" into their daily news output.

New Affiliates in the Andes: Teleamazonas, which is one of the Ecuador's top television networks and considered the leader in news programming, has start broadcasting VOA Spanish content to complement its newscasts. In addition, the Jesuit-run Grupo Fides of Bolivia is now a VOA affiliate. Grupo Fides operates 30 AM and FM stations across Bolivia, and has recently added a cable channel and a terrestrial signal, making it the most significant media player in the country.

West Africa SMS Success: SMS subscribers to VOA services on TIGO (in Ghana) and GLO (Nigeria) were up at the end of March - to about 48,000 in Ghana, and more than 215,000 in Nigeria. In Nigeria, mobile operators report the increase is due to recent VOA reports on security issues in Nigeria. The Nigerian government is said to be playing down internal problems, so citizens go to places like VOA for information.

Growth in the DRC: Two new affiliates - Radio Rurale Kanyabayonga (North Kivu) and Radio Soilel (near Beni), both in the Northeast part of DR Congo, are now broadcasting both VOA Swahili and French.

Tanzania Town Hall: In partnership with Radio France, OSD is organizing a Town Hall and media training event to take place May 17-18 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Development Proposals in Progress: OSD staffers are working with U.S. Embassy Beijing and Consulate Hong Kong on a proposal for funding for a media outreach program on noncommunicable diseases, and with U.S. Embassy Chisinau on a proposal for anti-corruption training of Moldovan journalists. The Moldovan Center for Journalism has committed to partnering with us on training of journalists.

Africa Health Network Funding Potential: OSD has reached out – with preliminary positive results – to Sony Corp. (which funds HIV work in Tanzania), Merck (involved in Africa health projects), Chevron, Exxon, and the Global Leadership Council to discuss potential funding for VOA's Africa Health Network.

International AIDS Conference at BBG: The International AIDS Society is holding its 2012 conference at the Cohen Building. The IAS is expecting around 400 attendees, a small group of those are reporters under different fellowships from IAS and scientist fellows with a grant from IAS, and many others will be recipients of grants from other partners on this event. OSD staff met with four IAS Executives to discuss partnership to implement their International Health Journalism training.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congressional Budget Briefings: Four members of the IBB/BBG senior management team briefed a dozen members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee staff on the FY13 budget proposal and the strategy that guided it, turning a request for a budget briefing into a 90-minute give-and-take on the agency's long-range plans for reform. Discussion was robust but friendly, providing openings for further dialogue and ideas for how to marshal our arguments for success.

Planned Security Meeting: Over the course of several weeks, plans were made and talking points assembled for response to a letter from Rep. Dana Rohrabacher requesting BBG action to ensure the security integrity of its workforce and to monitor for messaging that might somehow run counter to U.S. interests. Rather than respond with a letter in kind, we recommended a meeting between Rep. Rohrabacher and Governor Wimbush, which is now planned for mid-April.

Discussions with Sen. Coburn's Office: Working with VOA and RFE/RL senior staff, we coordinated first a response to an e-mail from, and then a meeting with, Senator Coburn's top foreign policy staffer, Jeremy Hayes. Mr. Hayes had contacted two Governors with concerns about online items on Afghanistan that, to his mind, reflected bias against the United States. When he indicated that the written response to his e-mail was insufficient, we proposed that David Ensor meet with Mr. Hayes to elevate the conversation and to deepen ties; they had met once before over a similar issue. Tight messaging, two pre-briefs and the natural talents of Mr. Ensor combined to win Mr. Hayes over just a bit; the conversation was mutually respectful, and though he continues to engage with us on matters of content, his subsequent messages have taken on a different tone and are once again directed to BBG staff rather than to Governors first.

RFE/RL Congressional Relations: Steve Korn's visits with key staff for the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations committees were accompanied by this office, as well as the outgoing director for congressional relations at RFE/RL. Discussions were highly productive, and the need to focus on all of U.S. international broadcasting was underscored by BBG staff.

Media: BBG Public Affairs helped raise the profile of several noteworthy initiatives by the broadcast entities, including an Alhurra interview with George Clooney as he was about to be arrested at a protest, OCB's efforts to increase digital outreach to Cuba, VOA's coverage of oral arguments on the health care law at the Supreme Court, and the visit to Washington of RFE/RL's Daud Khattak.

Gallup Event: An event at Gallup to highlight the BBG's new research capabilities was highly successful. The capacity crowd of more than 100, including stakeholders from organizations promoting press freedom and other human rights, heard from Governor Meehan about the BBG's vision for retooling to meet 21st-Century media needs and from Bruce Sherman on the role of reliable research in identifying and connecting with audiences.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Khmer Program Review: Audiences for US international broadcasting are exceptionally large in Cambodia: RFA and VOA Khmer together reach a third of adults there each week (on radio, TV or internet). According to a survey in Sept-Oct 2011, weekly audience reaches in Khmer on radio, TV or internet are 24 percent for each broadcaster, with television contributing increasingly to the VOA Khmer audience; on radio, 24 percent of adults listen weekly to RFA Khmer, and 18 percent to VOA Khmer. More than 80 percent of the VOA Khmer audience listens via FM affiliates, about 10 percent to the medium wave relay from Thailand, with almost no shortwave listening. Nationally, only six percent of Cambodian adults have used the internet in the past year, but in Phnom Penh, 21 percent have. About 90 percent of Cambodians own mobile phones, but very few use this medium to obtain news. VOA Khmer Action Plan focuses on enhancing the already very successful television programming for target audiences in Cambodia with support needed from VOA Operations and Language Programming, and IBB Training, Strategy & Development (OMPP, Development), and Digital & Design Innovation.

Central Africa Review: A survey is planned for Rwanda this year and Gallup is currently waiting for the Rwandan government's approval; survey results are expected in July 2012. VOA

Central Africa Action Plan focuses on expansion of reach and impact via new program initiatives and greater audience engagement and promotion of such content. Most actions are for the service itself but support is needed from IBB Research and Strategy & Development for planning purposes.

Somali Review: For the first time ever, IBB Research was able to commission a representative survey of a large part of Somalia; the July 2011 survey covered about 95 percent of the territory of Somaliland and Puntland. VOA is the leading international broadcaster in these two regions; three quarters of the adult population listened to VOA during the previous seven days. VOA's key role is underscored by the value that the population places on the station's news—two-thirds named VOA as one of their top three sources of news and information, far ahead of other domestic or international stations. Virtually all listeners think VOA's reporting is credible. The audience is fairly evenly split between FM and SW listeners. In addition to the survey, BBG Research commissioned focus groups in Puntland and a monitoring panel in Somaliland. Both qualitative projects supported the survey findings of listeners' high esteem of VOA Somali programs. Other government agencies, DoD and State, expressed keen interest in IBB's research findings. VOA Somali Action Plan focuses on the feasibility of launching a mid-day show when listening rates are highest, and on ways to increase audience engagement using the web and social media.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Buyout Opportunity: On March 21, 2012, the agency announced an opportunity for employees to apply for a Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment, or Buyout. Under this program, employees who resign or retire by June 30, 2012, may receive up to \$25,000.00 as a separation incentive. The agency has a continuing need to adjust employee skill sets by the most cost effective and least disruptive means in order to meet changing program, media, and technological challenges to our mission. Buyouts also are vital tools in assisting the agency in reducing the impact of a potential Reduction in Force in conjunction with implementation of the FY 2013 budget. The Buyout opportunity will close on May 4, 2012. To date, OHR has received 10 Buyout applications from employees throughout the agency.

2013 Budget Meetings: OHR continues to meet with agency employees and management groups to explain federal Reduction in Force (RIF) regulations. To date, OHR has conducted 19 informational sessions with employees in the Tibetan Service, Cantonese Service, Central News Division, Latin America Division, Spanish Branch, TV Enhancement Team, Georgian Service, Turkish Service, English Programs, Vietnamese Service, Greek Service, Albanian Service, and video conferences with employees at the Office of Cuba Broadcasting. Additional meetings with Services are scheduled for April. OHR also has made federal RIF regulations and Frequently Asked Questions available to employees through its Intranet page.

OFFICE OF CONTRACTS

On March 22, 2012, the IBB Office of Contracts participated in a presentation made by the Executive Office of the President's (EOP) Small Agency Procurement Committee to discuss the best methods to implement the Office of Federal Procurement Policy's (OFPP) September 6,

2011 Memorandum regarding Contracting Officer Representative (COR) training. We learned that IBB's in-house training, created by the office of Contracts and implemented last fall, is fully compliant and we are ahead of other small agencies on this issue. Our in-house class syllabus meets OFPP requirements for COR Level I, and we are beginning to get our staff certified at the COR levels II and III. We were asked by a member of the Committee to share our class powerpoint slides so other Agencies can follow our example.



April 11, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for April

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

President Salutes VOA at 70

President Obama joined in the celebration of VOA's 70th anniversary by sending a videotaped message describing VOA as a "voice of freedom" that reminds people living in repressive societies that "they are not alone." The president said millions of people around the world "draw hope and strength" from VOA broadcasts.



Photo: VOA Public Relations

"In the face of foreign governments that censor," the president said, "you provide news that's accurate and objective. In the face of regimes that deny universal rights, you stand for freedom and democracy." Joining the president in sending videotaped messages to VOA were Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Nobel Peace Prize Winners Aung San Suu Kyi and the Dalai Lama. President Obama and Mrs. Clinton both paid tribute to VOA reporter Mukarram Khan Aatif, who in January was shot and killed by Taliban militants in Pakistan. Burmese democracy leader and Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi was in the midst of Burma's election campaign when VOA contacted her, but she took time out to send a message to VOA. She said the anniversary

was like the birthday of a friend, “because the VOA and other broadcasting stations were the friends who kept me company during my long years of house arrest.” The Dalai Lama said it is “unfortunate that censorship and distortion of news is prevalent in some parts of the world.” For that reason he said, “news organizations like VOA are critically important in providing comprehensive and impartial news.”

Many other public officials and political leaders expressed their gratitude to VOA for the role it has played in their lives, including the presidents of Montenegro, Kosovo, and Albania. Bamir Topi, the Albanian president, recalled how as a small boy he and his father listened to VOA “with the volume turned down to avoid being spied on.” Now, he said, VOA is heard freely and openly in a democratic Albania. Veran Matic, founder and co-owner of B92 TV Station in Belgrade, also sent his greetings. His station is a major affiliate of VOA's Serbian Service and he congratulated “all friends and colleagues at VOA on the great work they do.”

VOA’s Public Affairs site (www.INSIDEVOA.com) has posted video of the 70th anniversary celebration, interviews with past VOA directors, and highlights of the organization’s history.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

VOA Korean Gets First-Hand Look at North Korean Missile Site

Early in April, VOA Korean’s Sungwon Baik was among a group of foreign journalists invited by North Korean authorities to see the country’s missile launching site in Dongchang-Ri. During a tour for the journalists given by Jin Myong Jang, general manager of the launch facility, Baik posed several pointed questions, including how North Korea, whose people suffer from chronic malnutrition, could justify devoting money to its missile program. In his answer, an obviously displeased Jang stressed the importance of technological development for the country.



(Photo: AP/David Guttenfelder)

Sungwon Baik, under the gaze of a North Korean photographer

“No matter how much you are hungry,” he said, “you have to continue to develop technology, as without it you will become the most under-developed country in the world.” While touring the site, journalists were able to see in the distance North Korea's long-range rocket on its launch platform, which prompted Baik to ask Jang whether the North Korean government intends to place a warhead instead of a satellite on the rocket. Jang said he is only a technician in charge of a peaceful satellite program and wouldn’t know whether the North Korean military will make such a decision. The VOA Korean Service broadcast multiple live reports by Baik from Pyongyang about his visit to the launch site.

VOA Burmese Coverage of By-Election

Aung San Su Kyi's National League for Democracy Party won a landslide election April 1, claiming 43 of the contested 45 seats in parliament. VOA Burmese staffer Kyaw Kyaw Thein reported the victory from NLD headquarters, from where he did television and radio interactives with VOA studios in Washington. The service also spoke with Ambassador Derek Mitchell (Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma) on the day of the election. Ambassador Mitchell told VOA he was glad the election went peacefully, and he also conveyed a message from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton congratulating the Burmese people on the election and expressing the hope Burmese leaders keep moving forward with their reforms. Central News reporter Danielle Bernstein was also in Burma for the election campaign, and Bangkok correspondent Dan Schearf joined her in Rangoon for the actual voting, the NLD's lopsided victory and the celebrations that followed. Both reporters provided coverage for radio, television and the Internet.

Russians Turn to VOA for Western Perspectives on Their Presidential Elections

VOA Russian's website quickly felt the repercussions of Vladimir Putin's victory in the March presidential election. On the day that police in Moscow dispersed and detained hundreds of demonstrators protesting Putin's victory, the Russian service saw daily traffic to its website reach a new record -- more than 125,000 visits. Visitors tuned in for immediate Western perspectives on the election results and prospects for U.S.-Russia relations when Putin becomes president for the third time. From the service-operated Studio 27, VOA Russian Service provided live post-election video programming through UStream, which included discussions with experts and comments by Russians living in the United States.

Afghan Service Deals Head On with Another Tough Story

Last month the Afghan Service gave no-holds-barred coverage to the story of the burning of the Qurans by U.S. forces in Afghanistan. This month the service had to deal with a story that provoked as much or even more outrage among its audience: the massacre of 16 Afghan civilians, including women and children, by a U.S. soldier in Kandahar Province. Once again, the service held nothing back, including giving full coverage to Afghan President Hamid Karzai's call for international forces to expedite their withdrawal from Afghanistan. For days afterward, Ashna radio call-in programs focused on the killings. The service also spoke with Afghan scholars in Afghanistan and the United States about the impact of the killings on relations between the United States and Afghanistan. In an interview with the service, Representative Jim Moran acknowledged the shootings "will have a very deep and lasting negative impact." Ekhlil Hakimi, Afghanistan's Ambassador to the United States, also talked with the service about the tragedy.

With the Pope in Cuba

VOA Spanish was with Pope Benedict every step of the way during his recent trip to Cuba. Besides filing full reports on Benedict's statements to the Cuban people and his meetings with Cuban officials, the service also spoke with Cuban bloggers and dissidents about the trip. For the most part, VOA's coverage came through without any interference from the Cuban authorities, but during a *Foro Interamericano* interview with independent blogger Dagoberto Valdez, the blogger's phone was disconnected during the show and he was unable to participate any further. Central News correspondent Jerome Socolovsky and videographer Mike Kornely

also covered the pope's visit and filed, in Spanish as well as English, for radio, TV and the Internet.

Leadership Changes in Senegal, Mali

Events in Senegal and Mali kept the French to Africa Service busy in March. In Senegal, the focus was on a runoff presidential election between a 12-year incumbent, Abdoulaye Wade, whom many said was not legally eligible to seek re-election, and opposition leader Macky Sall. In the days and weeks leading up to the March 25 vote, the service was busy following the campaign as well as the almost daily demonstrations by opponents and supporters of President Wade. The demonstrations were so intense that some Senegalese began to fear the country's tradition of peaceful transitions of power was in jeopardy. But those fears were not realized. Macky Sall won the election and President Wade, shortly after the polls closed, conceded defeat, drawing praise in Senegal as well as from the international community. Senegal's successful democratic election came only days after a far different government transition in Mali, where the military overthrew a democratically elected president, Amadou Toumani Touré. French to Africa ran special news and call-in programs to cover reaction to the coup, which drew unanimous condemnation from the international community.

VOA Tibetan Self-Immolation Coverage

As in month's past, VOA's Tibetan Service continues to provide unequalled coverage of the self-immolations in Tibet and India:

- March 14: The service receives exclusive photos and video from a source inside Tibet of a self-immolation. Also included is a PDF message: "It is the wish of his family and friends that the news and images will reach Voice of America, and that it can be broadcast on Wednesday night's *Kunleng* TV program." The story was broadcast into Tibet that morning on the *Kunleng* satellite TV program and its SW radio show.
- March 16: A source tells the service of a self-immolation in a remote area of eastern Tibet within 7 hours of its occurrence, and conducts a live on-air interview with the source and publishes the story on the VOA Tibetan website and social media sites.
- March 17: The service receives news and photos of a self-immolation in northeast Tibet and shares it with the VOA English website. VOA is the first U.S.-based news agency to post the story of this self-immolation.
- March 26: The service is the first to broadcast into Tibet news and eyewitness accounts of the self-immolation of a Tibetan exile in New Delhi.
- March 28: The service reports news of another self-immolation and broadcasts an in-depth feature report that includes 1) statement by U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland saying "China is aggravating the situation in the Tibetan region by its attacks on the Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual leader-in-exile"; 2) news of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee approval of a resolution deploring what it called "the repressive policies targeting Tibetans"; and 3) statement by Hong Lei, spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, responding with dismay to the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee resolution deploring China's "repressive policies."
- March 30: From a source in Dharamsala, the service learns that two monks self-immolated in the Prefecture capital town of Barkham, 80 kilometers from their

monastery. VOA Tibetan published photos of the monks and reported in the Kunleng TV program that day that included a live on-air interview with the source in Dharamsala.

- VOA Tibetan also covered the “Indefinite Hunger Strike for Tibet” by three young Tibetans at UN Headquarters in New York City. Throughout the 30-day strike, the service provided live television coverage and radio updates.

VOA Tibetan’s coverage has not gone unnoticed by Chinese authorities. The PRC-controlled site “China Tibet Online” accuses VOA of being a “speech center for Tibetan separatists.” The PRC site --

http://eng.tibet.cn/2010home/news/201203/t20120317_1727770.html -- is an example of the propaganda VOA faces from Beijing.

It’s a TV Show, It’s a Webcast, It’s Podelis

Podelis, VOA’s cutting-edge TV-webcast to Russia, went live on satellite in mid-March. The interactive new show is designed to appeal to the so-called “second screen culture” of young people who are comfortable having the TV on while they interact and surf through sites like Facebook and Twitter. The Russian-speaking anchors of the weekly broadcast interact with the audience in real time on Twitter, Skype and other social media channels that are displayed on a giant video wall in the studio. In a taped interview, the U.S. Ambassador to Russia, Michael McFaul, told the *Podelis* audience that he is now relying on social media sites like Twitter to communicate directly to the people in Russia. McFaul said, “I want to engage with Russian society in any way I can, so I do it through television, I do it through radio, I do it through Twitter.” *Podelis* enables citizen journalists and members of the audience to comment on VOA reports, contribute show suggestions, provide eyewitness updates and guide the live conversation to subjects that are trending in Russia. The program’s webpage is staffed round-the-clock to moderate and curate audience contributions from social media sites that serve as an incubator for the program.

Kurdish Connection Launched

On March 23rd, the Kurdish Service launched its twice monthly television program *Kurdish Connection*. A ten-minute roundup of news-related material and features of interest to the Kurdish region. The program is assembled completely inside the service and is distributed via the web and YouTube. Anchor Dakhil Elias hopes to capitalize on the sizable Kurdish population in the Washington, D.C. region to bring interesting interviews and original stories to the Kurdish audience in the region and the diaspora.

VOA Hausa Strengthens Its Presence in Northern Nigeria

The Hausa Service opened a new reporting center in the northern Nigerian city of Maiduguri, a flashpoint of recent violence involving the Boko Haram Islamist militant group. Before the reporting center’s opening, Africa Division Director Gwen Dillard and TV enhancement team producer Bart Childs traveled to Maiduguri, where they worked with Hausa Service staff in training stringers and helped conduct roundtable discussions with experts, officials and other local figures.

Health Program for Africa Connects Audience, Doctors

A new VOA program, *Health Chat*, is giving listeners in Africa a direct line to medical

professionals. Veteran health reporter Linord Moudou, the host of *Health Chat*, says the half-hour show makes it possible for people to question doctors and health care professionals about the specific issues they face in Africa. “We want to tailor the show to our audience,” Linord says, “so we will listen to their concerns, answer their questions, and discuss things like prevention and family health, subjects that affect the lives of our listeners.” The weekly English language call-in program, which airs every Tuesday (at 17:30 UTC), also highlights the latest health and medical news, with a focus on one particular issue each week.



Photo: VOA Public Relations

A guest on a recent show, Dr. Halima Mwenesi, a senior project director at the global development organization [FHI 360](#), discussed malaria control and what is being done to fight the mosquito-borne disease, which kills nearly one-million people around the world every year, many of them children in Africa. *Health Chat* is broadcast on shortwave, FM and AM affiliate stations in Africa. A companion [webpage](#) has health information, stories, helpful links and a place to leave comments and ask questions.

New Central Africa Service Shows Focus on Business and Health

VOA’s Central Africa Service has introduced two new interactive radio shows in Burundi. One, called *Tujahe*, is targeted at young entrepreneurs; the other, *Kira*, provides up-to-date information about the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the central African country. The two 30-minute programs are in the Kirundi language and produced in Burundi but broadcast from VOA studios in Washington. In the first edition of *Tujahe*, young entrepreneurs and those interested in job creation in Burundi were able to share their experiences and get advice from business expert Pierre-Claver Nduwumwami. *Tujahe*, which airs on Sundays, is hosted by Olivier Nkengurutse and Diane Ndonse. In the first *Kira* show, Burundian physician and HIV/AIDS expert Anita Munyana joined program hosts Alain-Yves Irankunda and Edwige Mbominmpa in answering listener questions. The show, which airs on Saturdays, also features reports from the field, audience trivia questions and music by Burundian artists. Both programs are partly funded by grants from USAID and the State Department. They are broadcast on shortwave, FM, and on the Internet.

VOA's Election Coverage on a Leading Satellite Channel in Bangladesh

VOA has begun supplying Desh TV, one of the most popular satellite channels in Bangladesh, with weekly video updates highlighting the latest developments from the U.S. presidential election. The fast-moving special feature, called *VOA 60*, wraps up the top news in one minute about the candidates vying to be president. The feature airs every Friday on Desh TV's prime-time news program, which is carried on satellite throughout the region and elsewhere. VOA's agreement with Desh TV extends beyond *VOA 60*. On March 26th, VOA produced a special 10-minute program for Desh TV to mark the country's 41st national day. The program included interviews with Dr. Nurun Nabi, a freedom fighter in Bangladesh's war of independence, and Sharmeen Ahmed, a peace activist and daughter of the country's first prime minister.

VOA Launches New TV Program for Pakistan, Café DC

Café DC, a new weekly TV interview show for Pakistan, premiered early in March. The new Urdu Service show offers a relaxed and personal look at some of the people making headlines in and around Washington. In the first program, U.S. Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)



Photo: VOA Public Relations
Congressman Chris Van Hollen with *Café DC* host Faiz Rehman

talked about his experiences living in Sri Lanka and Turkey as a young boy, and the impact of being born in Pakistan, where his father served as a U.S. diplomat.



The host of *Café DC*, Faiz Rehman, says the program is meant to give newsmakers “plenty of opportunity to talk about the burning issues of the day, but it also gives them a chance to sit back and discuss what inspires them, as well as the personal things that are important to them.” The 20-minute show is first being offered as a multimedia product on the VOA Urdu website, and a shorter edition will be aired on *Beyond the Headlines*, broadcast in Urdu on *Express TV*, Pakistan's 2nd largest cable network.

New Programs Debut on Deewa

Deewa Radio introduced two new features in March. In *Behind Bars*, Deewa stringer Sadia Qasim Shah visits prisons and profiles female inmates in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly NWFP) Province. The Deewa stringer discusses what daily life is like for women in the prisons, the crimes they were convicted of, their links with the outside world, and relations with the relatives and friends. The other new program, *Pashtun Magazine*, also produced weekly, examines the history of the first Pashto magazine/newspaper, which was launched in 1924. Deewa's Washington staff talks about the contents, writers and impact of the magazine on Pashtuns of the pre-India partition era from 1924-1947.

***Straight Talk* between Israelis and Iranians**

VOA Persian's *Straight Talk* used its global reach to highlight a novel interactive effort between Iranians and Israelis. An online initiative, "Israel Loves Iran," recently began on Facebook, and in 10 days reached over 47,000 active fans and had over half a million views. *Straight Talk* brought in Ronny Edry, the Israeli who started the initiative, live from Tel Aviv and, with the help of simultaneous translation, he interacted with callers in Iran as well as the program's social media audience. This dual broadcast and web presence underscored the ability of *Straight Talk* to reach audiences in Iran.

VOA Persian Offers Nowruz Celebrations from Around the World

Persians – along with Central Asians, Kurds, and other people - marked the coming of the New Year, "Nowruz," in March. VOA Persian celebrated by broadcasting 11 hours of holiday programming that included Nowruz messages from President Obama, Secretary of State Clinton, and Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. The program included a special two-hour concert, recorded live at the Newseum, featuring legendary pop singer Sattar and other stars such as King Raam and the band Kiosk. VOA Persian's London correspondent, Ali Farhoodi, recorded and produced over 15 packages focusing on the Nowruz celebrations in the London metropolitan area, including festivities at a multicultural center in Hendon and a formal celebration at the National Portrait Gallery. This material was broadcast on *Late Edition*.

VOA Khmer Interviews Cambodian Opposition Leader in Exile

In an interview at VOA studios in Washington, Cambodia's opposition leader in exile, Sam Rainsy, criticized his country's government for blatantly interfering with attempts to prosecute crimes committed by the Khmer Rouge. Rainsy told VOA Khmer that officials in the government of Prime Minister Hun Sen fear a serious investigation. "Any serious and in-depth investigation," he said, "would show that several members of the current government were involved in the Khmer Rouge crimes." VOA Khmer continues to cover the UN-backed Khmer Rouge tribunal from Phnom Penh.

Another Busy Night at the Oscars for VOA Indonesian

The VOA Indonesian Service's Academy Awards coverage live reports for several popular national TV affiliate programs, including: *Insert Pagi Trans TV*, *Insert Siang Trans TV*, *Obsesi Global TV*, *Fokus Selebriti Global TV*, *Apakabar Indonesia Pagi TVOne*, *Dahsyat RCTI*, *Go Spot RCTI*, *Selebrita Trans 7* and *Friends ANTV*. On the red carpet, the VOA Indonesian TV team was able to interview celebrities including George Clooney, Jane Seymour, Jessica

Chastain, Wolfgang Puck, Gregory S. Hooper, Robert Richardson, Damien Bichir, Max von Sydow, and Milla Jovovich.

Saving Angela Bushi



A young Albanian girl, Angela Bushi, has a rare, often fatal, genetic disorder called Wolcott-Rallison Syndrome. Since hospitals in Albania, were unable to provide the treatment she needed, she was flown to the United States, where doctors at a Miami hospital performed the unprecedented transplant of a liver, two kidneys and a pancreas in the hope of extending her life. VOA Albanian Service sent a reporter to Florida to talk with Angela's parents and the doctors. The VOA story was reprinted in newspapers in Albania and Kosovo and broadcast by several networks in the region.

Notable Interviews

- TV Ashna had an exclusive interview with Former First Lady Laura Bush as the U.S. - Afghan Women's Council celebrated its 10th anniversary. Mrs. Bush spoke about her work on behalf of Afghan women and sent New Year greetings to the Afghan people.
- The Creole Service talked with the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti, Kenneth Merten, about reconstruction efforts in the country. The interview was played prominently in the country's top radio and television outlets.
- VOA Korean ran a series of interviews with members of Congress -- Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), Christopher Smith (R-NJ), James McGovern(D-MA) -- focusing on China's forced repatriation of North Korean refugees.
- In an interview with VOA Serbian, Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) said that the countries of Western Balkans are taking dramatic steps toward Euro-Atlantic integration, which was good news for the region, Europe, and the United States.
- VOA Macedonian interviewed Congressman Michael Turner (R-OH), chairman of the US Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and the newest member of the Congressional Caucus on Macedonia and Macedonian-Americans. Discussing the name dispute between Macedonia and Greece that is blocking Macedonia's NATO membership, the congressman said the United States should do more than just take a "wait and see" approach.
- Yermolai Solzhenitsyn, managing partner of McKinsey and Company and son of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, talked with the Russian Service about the problems Moscow has to solve in order to become an international financial center.
- Mykola Prysiashniuk, Ukraine's Minister of Agriculture, was a guest on the service's *Chas-Time* TV program, where he spoke of Ukraine's potential -- as the historic "breadbasket of Europe" -- to help solve the global food shortages.
- VOA Indonesian interviewed popular American artist Usher. He spoke about his involvement with the Clinton Global Initiative and his own foundation, the New Look Foundation, which works to empower youth around the globe with leadership skills.

- South Asian actress Zeba Bakhtiar, a Pashtoon Pakistani, who has starred in several Bollywood (India) and Lollywood (Pakistani) movies, spoke with Deewa Radio about her life and answered questions from callers.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

New Look for VOA Websites

VOA is giving its websites a new look -- and saving some money in the process. The new layout makes navigation easier for the user, moves more content to the top of the page, provides bigger images, and more multimedia functionality. The design also allows online commenting on audio and video for the first time. VOA began the transition to the new content management system with its [Indonesian](#), [Spanish](#) and [Creole](#) websites. Eventually more than 50 VOA websites will make the switch. Iscar Blanco, managing editor of the Spanish site, says it gives the service more exposure with social media and also allows it “to be more creative in the way we lay out the page every day. The content management system, called Pangea, will also save money by migrating VOA and other U.S. international broadcasters to the same platform and reducing duplicate systems. Pangea was created by Internet technology developers at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, which has shared the program with VOA and will also store content on its servers.

VOA Showcasing Material from Other USIB Entities

VOA’s main English website is now posting original material from its sister networks, in a move that enhances VOA coverage and generates increased exposure for USIB reporters. Since the month-old effort began, more than a dozen reports have been put on the VOA site, including a creative [RFE feature](#) about the life of a young man in Sarajevo who, 20 years ago, appeared in an iconic photograph from the Bosnian War. VOA is also providing links to its sister stations.

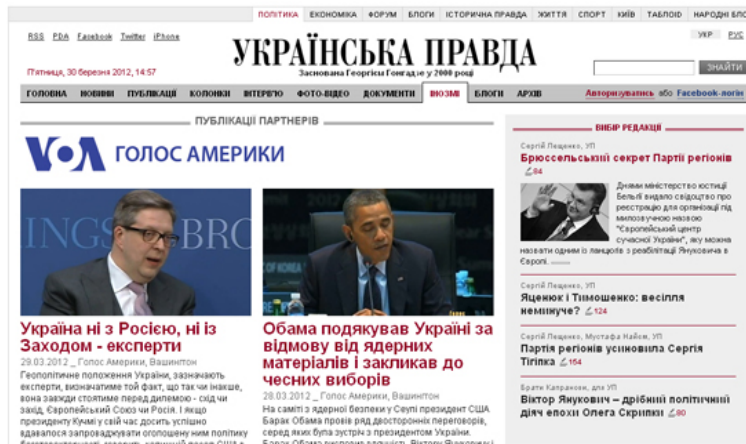
Voanews.com

The English Division’s website upgraded its presidential election coverage by launching a searchable database of hundreds of speeches by the five men vying for the White House. This project allows readers to search for words and phrases uttered by the candidates. It then displays every instance of the word or phrase in quotes set up in Storify-style format below; readers can embed individual quotes onto other sites or see the full context of the comment by hovering over the quote. Readers can also submit missing transcripts for review and inclusion.

<http://tools.voanews.com/english/presidential-speeches/>

VOA Ukrainian Syndicates Its Content to Prime Ukrainian News Portal

The popular Ukrayinska Pravda news website (pravda.com.ua) launched an international partners box on its home page featuring materials from the Ukrainian Services of Voice of America, BBC, Deutsche Welle and Radio Liberty. The widget is updated on a daily basis and when you click on “Holos Ameryky” it takes you to a page devoted to VOA Ukrainian reports and interviews: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/inozmi/voa/>



OMG! OMG! Meiyu Now Available as Podcasts

VOA's hit Chinese-English video blog, *OMG! Meiyu*, is attracting fans at the iTunes store, where Jessica Beinecke's popular teaching segments are now available for free as podcasts. Millions of people in China and elsewhere have come to love the catchy video feature, which teaches "the newest and most authentic American slang," and encourages fans to ask



about expressions being used by young Americans. The short video program catapulted to fame late last year. Since then, *OMG! Meiyu* segments have been downloaded from social media sites more than 8 million times. *OMG!* was introduced to the iTunes store March 14th. Since then, it has rocketed to the top of the iTunes charts, and is currently ranked #5 overall in the Chinese iTunes store. *OMG! Meiyu* is also available in the U.S. iTunes store.

Chinese Social Media Sites Block OMG! Meiyu

On March 5, less than two weeks before *OMG!* made its iTunes debut, one of the leading Chinese social media sites, Youku, shut down Jessica's *OMG!* page, probably due to pressure from Chinese state authorities. A second Chinese host site, Tudou, began blocking as well. *OMG!* fans reacted immediately:

- "I like OMG Meiyu very much ! It's the best program I've ever seen. I'm looking forward to seeing you soon"
- we need u back!!!"
- "I'm so SAD that I have no OMG to watch!!!!!"

To stay in touch with fans, *OMG!* turned to Weibo, the Chinese version of Twitter, and posted text-based lessons with pictures to keep followers engaged. On April 9, Jessica discovered a way to upload video. Fans expressed their excitement:

- "Nothing can stop you, Nothing can stop us from watching your videos, Nothing can stop me from loving you, you are the best English teacher ever!"

- “That's great ! We can see u on the chinese website again”
- “I am going to burst into tears!!!”

VOA Indonesian Conducts Celebrity Interview on Google+

The Indonesian Service interviewed saxophonist Dave Koz live via a video session on the social media site Google+. Koz was in Indonesia participating in the “Java Jazz Festival” in Jakarta. By using the “Hangout” feature on Google+, the interview was broadcast live on YouTube and also recorded for later on-demand viewing. It was the service’s first experiment using Google+ to conduct an interview.

VOANews.com Web and Mobile Traffic March 2012

Language Service	Visits			Pages Viewed			Quality Metrics (March 2012)		Mobile Visits		
	March 2012	February 2012	Change *	March 2012	February 2012	Change *	Page s per Visit	Avg. Time Spent (min)	March 2012	February 2012	Change *
All VOA	15,473,519	14,395,275	1%	36,486,982	34,057,894	0%	2.36	3:44	2,894,032	2,550,667	6%
English	3,331,747	3,254,204	-4%	5,918,306	5,773,124	-4%	1.74	2:11	1,412,291	1,178,742	12%
Persian	2,399,173	2,438,525	1%	5,143,111	5,295,511	-9%	2.14	3:47	60,219	64,793	-13%
Special English	1,860,465	1,786,356	1%	5,222,688	4,972,508	-2%	2.81	4:39	125,597	122,725	-4%
Russian	1,663,617	1,413,350	1%	3,858,855	3,378,467	7%	2.32	3:45	80,963	74,475	2%
Vietnamese	1,615,008	1,499,074	1%	5,066,601	4,868,142	-3%	3.14	4:56	130,955	112,170	9%
Chinese	1,263,781	941,540	26%	3,383,282	2,528,458	25%	2.68	4:51	2,344	1,358	61%
Burmese	759,255	704,719	1%	1,658,983	1,541,922	1%	2.19	3:40	60,303	50,296	12%
Somali	524,948	467,927	5%	1,075,211	957,912	5%	2.05	3:40	98,153	87,246	5%
Amharic	409,383	331,358	16%	747,581	575,215	22%	1.83	2:25	109,107	73,464	39%
Spanish	244,354	270,131	-15%	369,014	410,499	-16%	1.51	1:17	240,818	243,807	-8%
Tigrigna	213,610	157,780	27%	389,949	279,115	31%	1.83	2:44			
Indonesian	138,226	140,338	-8%	262,532	266,550	-8%	1.90	2:36	53,349	51,271	-3%
Albanian	134,772	146,132	-14%	307,127	328,706	-13%	2.28	2:54	6,566	6,951	-12%
Urdu	122,797	118,873	-3%	328,500	317,997	-3%	2.68	5:17	40,283	40,186	-6%
Tibetan-English	103,900	94,052	3%	157,792	134,454	10%	1.52	1:31			
Hausa	102,172	104,110	-8%	227,267	228,566	-7%	2.22	4:49	278,185	293,050	-11%
Khmer	94,778	94,790	-6%	195,424	202,311	-10%	2.06	3:18	14,021	12,573	4%
Ukrainian	91,881	91,175	-6%	143,871	150,406	-11%	1.57	1:44	4,572	4,265	0%
Pashto	91,220	82,764	3%	163,660	155,579	-2%	1.79	2:44	9,902	8,477	9%
Tibetan	87,998	71,016	16%	198,256	148,763	25%	2.25	4:12	22,234	4,543	358%
Portuguese	78,971	65,105	13%	176,170	147,696	12%	2.23	4:01	8,616	5,666	42%
Korean	69,632	65,395	0%	172,300	165,013	-2%	2.47	3:10	29,947	20,587	36%
Turkish	65,512	92,288	-34%	115,733	144,808	-25%	1.77	1:47	4,262	6,672	-40%
Dari	64,725	65,207	-7%	142,040	154,592	-14%	2.19	3:07	7,307	6,992	-2%
Lao	47,505	49,725	-11%	161,424	161,227	-6%	3.40	6:14			
Serbian	46,254	56,714	-24%	89,019	104,031	-20%	1.92	2:06	1,737	1,911	-15%
Khmer-English	45,530	43,885	-3%	81,199	78,177	-3%	1.78	2:21			
Zimbabwe-English	41,884	47,788	-18%	66,391	75,820	-18%	1.59	1:43	58,234	48,034	13%
Thai	29,676	33,563	-17%	43,635	47,255	-14%	1.47	1:54	2,022	2,173	-13%
Central Africa	29,511	28,536	-3%	43,483	42,386	-4%	1.47	1:46			
French to Africa	29,133	32,869	-17%	54,077	61,084	-17%	1.86	2:23	4,325	4,340	-7%
Macedonian	28,391	23,167	15%	41,792	36,888	6%	1.47	1:19	1,379	988	31%
Afaan Oromoo	27,526	22,312	15%	67,849	51,885	22%	2.46	3:42			
Azerbaijani	27,152	21,625	17%	49,245	38,727	19%	1.81	2:49	1,944	1,264	44%
Uzbek	24,465	22,443	2%	50,030	45,698	2%	2.04	4:22	15,649	13,751	6%
Kurdish	20,008	19,627	-5%	38,088	36,835	-3%	1.90	2:57	1,398	858	52%
Creole	18,467	16,924	2%	30,249	26,992	5%	1.64	2:45			
Cantonese	18,156	15,733	8%	34,564	30,109	7%	1.90	2:03			

Bangla	18,013	16,740	1%	26,983	26,203	-4%	1.50	2:19	2,455	2,235	3%
Georgian	15,785	17,059	-13%	29,558	33,422	-17%	1.87	2:21	221	256	-19%
Deewa	15,663	15,133	-3%	34,431	34,948	-8%	2.20	3:54			
Armenian	15,423	18,570	-22%	31,059	35,414	-18%	2.01	2:42	442	473	-13%
Swahili	13,324	15,127	-18%	20,606	23,871	-19%	1.55	2:19	4,012	3,981	-6%
Bosnian	13,087	13,306	-8%	22,740	24,292	-12%	1.74	2:27	220	94	119%
Greek	9,762	8,885	3%	16,764	15,382	2%	1.72	1:13			
Kurdi	6,339	7,092	-16%	9,801	12,452	-26%	1.55	2:16			
Shona	4,519	4,277	-1%	8,151	7,832	-3%	1.80	2:24			
Ndebele	2,352	2,732	-19%	3,661	4,240	-19%	1.56	1:45			

*Percent change is corrected for the number of days in the month. Because February had 29 days and March had 31, some percent changes may look larger or smaller than the changes in visits or page views.

<h2 style="text-align: center;">VOA Social Media Report</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">February 16, 2012 - March 15, 2012</h3>				
	Youtube	Facebook		Twitter
Language Service (alphabetical order)	Video Views	Sum of Page Likes (includes all pages)	# of Pages	Followers
Afghan	116,615	69,395	3	1,328
Albanian	224,287	31,333	1	1,649
Armenian	26,966	398	1	46
Azerbaijani	22,475	323	1	1,300
Bangla	30,825	1,977	1	na
Bosnian	42,999	1,816	1	121
Burmese	253,653	4,876	1	1,395
Cantonese	27,977	94	1	260
Central Africa	1,415	504	1	na
Chinese	232,869	4,359	1	13,179
Creole	2,127	699	1	4,847
Deewa	9,107	3,087	2	337
English	1,218,475	79,076	9	57,867
French	1,369	5,066	2	523
Georgian	10,418	2,496	1	198
Greek	3,841	333	1	856
Hausa	2,923	28,833	2	3,840
Horn	6,140	15,854	4	365
Indonesian	191,259	799,131	2	24,870
Khmer	180,191	17,446	1	3,524
Korean	878	194	1	42
Kurdish	32,981	5,179	2	2,284
Lao	1,640	383	1	na
Macedonian	2,890	8,667	1	195
Persian	563,041	972,646	10	12,844
Portuguese	294	3,959	1	249
Russian	729,707	6,562	3	34,061
Serbian	114,670	6,721	1	304
Somali	8,699	11,128	1	1,510
Spanish	124,368	2,163	1	7,864
Special English	734,962	138,930	1	31,054
Swahili	1,502	2,529	1	231
Thai	4,940	1,628	1	na
Tibetan	**	7,448	1	7,775
Turkish	21,471	1,410	1	2,736
Ukrainian	22,111	6,583	1	6,334
Urdu	180,777	1,228	2	2,197
Uzbek	72,828	431	1	624
Vietnamese	626,798	14,153	1	1,552
Zimbabwe	414	924	1	384

** did not have data at the time of reporting

GOENGLISH.ME

goEnglish.me, an interactive “learning English” website, is currently available in Indonesian, Chinese, Russian, and Persian versions. A Vietnamese version is currently in development and will launch in winter/spring 2012. The data below is for the month of March, 2012.

goEnglish site	Registered Users	Visits	Average Time on Site (minutes)
Russian	8,010	34,949	5:38
Farsi	90,510	30,172	8:40
Chinese	25,990	14,931	8:17
Indonesian	2,310	3,577	8:50

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA & OUTREACH

- Freelance reporter Scott Rensberger contacted VOA Public Relations about doing a piece for Dutch TV on VOA Mandarin’s highly popular show *OMG! Meiyu*, and he interviewed the show’s host Jessica Beinecke and East Asia and Pacific Division Director Bill Baum.
- Arirang TV reporter Hae Yeon interviewed VOA correspondent Steve Herman about his coverage of the Nuclear Security Summit from March 26-27.
- Washington Post Reporter Kristen Page-Kirby has requested background material on the VOA Studio Tour.
- The VOA 70th Anniversary Site (<http://www.insidevoa.com/about/voa70/>) has posted additional interviews with past VOA directors, reflections from former staff members and appreciations from our audience. The site also includes complete video coverage of the March 7th anniversary event.
- Latest additions to our blog, What’s Up Inside VOA (<http://whatsupvoa.wordpress.com/>), are “More than Meets the Eye,” about Eric Felten; “Women’s History in the Re-Making,” about the Women’s History Month re-enactment of the 1913 Women’s Suffrage March; and “Voice of America – a Broadcasting Success for 70 Years,” a wrap-up of the March 7th 70th Anniversary event.

VOA STUDIO TOUR

- Twenty students from the Global Learning Center visited VOA and met with Senior Russian Editor for Social Media Arkady Cherepansky. —February 27
- Students from the Global Learning Center visited VOA to take the Studio Tour and a special tour of the Persian Service in language. – March 8
- Fifty-three students and escorts from the Close Up Foundation took the Studio Tour. – March 13
- Ten African participants in a State Department International Visitors Leadership Program on U.S. Foreign Policy and Human Rights met with English to Africa Editor Ashenafi Abedje, Acting French to Africa Service Chief Timothee Dongangmaye, and Zimbabwe Service broadcaster Ray Choto. – March 13

- Twenty-five students and teachers from the Fairfax Academy took the Mandarin version of the Studio Tour and met with host of *OMG! Meiyu*” Jessica Beinecke. – March 15
- Sixteen members of the Transition Network met with VOA multimedia producer Kate Woodsome. – March 16
- Five Egyptian participants in a State Department International Visitors Leadership Program on Social Media and Elections met with Middle East hub editor Davin Hutchins for a discussion about VOA’s *Middle East Voices*. – March 16
- Twenty-five students and teachers from the Perry Hall High School took the VOA Studio Tour. They did not meet with a speaker. – March 19
- Six Russian English teachers, who were participating in a State Department International Visitors Leadership Program on Promoting American Culture and Values Through Social Media in English Language Teaching Classrooms, met with Avi Arditti from Special English. – March 20
- Eleven Clemson University students and their instructor met with Serbian Service Chief Zoran Zic. – March 21
- Twenty-three students and teachers from Pinecrest School met with VOA broadcaster Pia Salmre. – March 21
- Seven South African journalists taking part in a State Department International Visitors Leadership Program on the Rights and Responsibilities of a Free Press in a Democracy met with English to Africa hub Senior Managing Editor Ashenafi Abedje. – March 23
- A group of AFS international students on a State Department program were interviewed by host of *Up Front* Jackson Mvunganyi. – March 23
- Twelve American University students met with Spanish Managing Editor for Internet Iscar Blanco. – March 28
- Five Haitian journalists taking part in a State Department International Visitors Leadership Program on Accountability in Government met with Ronald Cesar and other Creole Service staff. – March 29
- A group of seniors from Georgetown Village met with Senior Diplomatic Correspondent Andre de Nesnera. --- April 3
- Indonesian students taking part in “2012 YouthCaN (Communicating and Networking)” conference to be held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City stopped in Washington to visit VOA and meet with broadcasters in the Indonesian Service. – April 3

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- Obama, Clinton, Nobel Winners Salute VOA on 70th Anniversary – March 7
- VOA Launches New TV Program for Pakistan, ‘Café DC’ – March 9
- Voice of America Launches Health Business Shows in Burundi – March 12
- VOA Health Program for Africa Connects Audience, Doctors – March 13
- VOA’s ‘Podelis’ on Satellite to Russia: Amb McFaul Talks Twitter – March 14
- Iranian Music Icon Headlines VOA Nowruz TV Special – March 19
- VOA Video Feature ‘OMG! Meiu’ Hits iTunes Store – March 27
- VOA Websites Get New Design – March 30
- VOA Provides U.S. Election Coverage to Desh TV in Bangladesh – April 4, 2012

DATE: April 2, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: Interim Management Team

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for March 2014

Global Strategy:

- The Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) collaborated with Gallup and entity research directors to develop an impact model for U.S. International Media, which maps to our mission statement and includes varied indicators – quantitative, qualitative, and anecdotal – for different types of markets.
- In conjunction with FY 2015 budget formulation, OSD drafted a new BBG Strategic Plan, *Achieving Strategic Impact*, to cover FY 2014-2018. The plan, required by the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, expands on BBG's FY 2012-2016 plan, fits a framework created by IBB and entity leadership, and aligns our strategic planning cycle to the presidential election cycle.
- The Office of Digital and Design Innovation (ODDI), in partnership with OSD and RFE/RL, launched new RFE/RL DIRECT sites in English, Russian and Ukrainian and added special Ukrainian coverage to existing VOA DIRECT sites to provide broadcast and digital affiliates with access to select content on the crisis situation in Ukraine.
- ODDI met with the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) to discuss a potential interagency partnership on DOD's Trans-Regional Web Initiative. Talks have centered on developing a common set of digital 'tools' for aggregating and publishing USG content from a range of content creators (BBG, DOD, USAID, State) to various digital platforms.
- Office of Performance Review reviewed an Urdu-language feature program at the request of VOA Language Programming, and recommended that the program get more rigorous oversight after finding that the programmers made poor editorial and creative choices.

Global Operations:

- Office of Technology, Services and Innovation is working on plans for 3 new BBG FM stations in DRC. Installation of a new BBG FM transmitter in Nouakchott, Mauritania, will begin in early April, and installation of a new antenna and tower for the BBG FM station in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso should be completed by June.
- GSA has awarded the construction contract for Cohen Building office space renovations.
- In March, an agency user in London reported that his workstation became infected with a particularly insidious form of malware. Staff members in London removed the workstation from the network and had to rebuild it. The incident was discovered in time to prevent further infection of directories on the agency's main shared file system.

Global Communications:

- Office of Communications and External Relations (COMM) is coordinating monthly visits (April through August) for Foreign Service Institute students to learn about BBG and meet relevant language service personnel before deploying to their mission assignments. COMM is also planning a meeting with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' International Visitors Program to discuss bringing groups of select professionals who specialize in journalism, technology and government affairs to the Cohen Building for round tables and briefings on BBG.



April 2, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for April

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- On March 25, the day of the BBG All-Hands Meeting on the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2015, VOA's Executive Editor Steve Redisch, Chief of Staff Barbara Brady, Language Programming Director Kelu Chao, and IBB's Human Resources Director Donna Grace met with all VOA elements that are proposed to be reduced or eliminated as part of the FY 15 budget submission.
- VOA correspondent Daniel Schearf and a local cameraman were accosted and assaulted by Russian forces in Crimea as they tried to cover a standoff at a military base on March 22. The VOA team drove past Belbek air base, one of the last military bases that was, at that time, still in Ukrainian hands, and shot some video of Russian forces outside the gates. When they drove past the base again a few hours later, they noticed considerably more activity, including the presence of several armored personnel carriers. They stopped to shoot the action, attracting the attention of an APC crew who drove up and jumped out, knocked the cameraman to the ground and seized all the camera equipment. Meanwhile, VOA stringer Jamie Dettmer, who is now in Kyiv but has reported for VOA from eastern Ukraine, has received anonymous phone messages warning that he will be killed.
- The monthly report for March discussed the detention of VOA's South Sudan Project bureau chief and another colleague in two separate incidents. Both men were subsequently released, but the bureau chief, Andrew Green, was required to return to the National Security office in the city of Jebel for a follow-up meeting on March 20. U.S. Embassy Consular Officer Elizabeth Shackleford accompanied him to the office. They met with the Deputy Director General for National Security, as well as two officials in charge of the media. National Security stated that Liberty FM, a VOA affiliate radio station with transmitters in Juba and Yei, has been ordered to stop broadcasting VOA programming effective immediately. Green was told that if VOA wants to continue disseminating its broadcasts, it needs to use its own station. The National Security officers also said that VOA needs to be careful about the type of content that it broadcasts in the future, and cannot run content that "incites violence." Green then asked if VOA was still allowed to have affiliates. National Security told him that VOA needed to tell the affiliates to contact local security officers and ask if it was okay for them to air VOA content. National Security said affiliates need to know that they will be held responsible, as Liberty FM was, for anything that is considered inflammatory. The BBG Office of Marketing has taken the lead in communicating with affiliates that may be threatened. VOA journalists in South Sudan have asked that their names not be used publicly when discussing these incidents.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim CEO & Director, André Mendes
DATE: April 20, 2015
SUBJECT: IBB Monthly Report for March 2015

GLOBAL STRATEGY:

- BBG's Africa FM expansion is taking off. Eight FMs are launching in FY 2015 – Bujumbura (completed), Dakar (completed), Gao, Timbuktu, Niamey, and three cities in Democratic Republic of the Congo. These augment recent-year additions in Bamako, Bangui, Nouakchott, and N'Djamena as well as older FMs in Abidjan, Accra, Freetown, Hargeisa, Nairobi, and Ouagadougou. To generate the corresponding content for local audiences and manage the growing relationships in the field, the Office of Strategy and Development is engaging VOA in an accelerated forward-deployment strategy that puts staff closer to our audience markets.
- Under Secretary Stengel hosted a lunch with leadership from U.S. public media (PBS, NPR, WGBH, CPB) attended by BBG to facilitate technical support and content sharing between the newly forming public media corporation of Ukraine and our own public media organizations.

GLOBAL OPERATIONS:

Office of Security (SEC)

SEC recommended the make, model, and type of protective equipment for VOA correspondents. The equipment was subsequently issued to VOA journalists thereby improving safety and reducing risk.

Technology Services and Innovation (TSI)

- TSI is continuing interactions with the Director General and other officials of Jordan Radio and TV to prompt their efforts to restore BBG's leased FM sites at Amman and Ajloun to full operating power.
- U.S. Embassy Bamako is finalizing the hosting agreement text with Radio-TV Mali for new BBG FM transmitters in Gao and Timbuktu. TSI has been configuring the equipment for these installations at our domestic warehouse. We are shipping new satellite dish receiving dishes to address reception issues at BBG FM sites located in N'djamena, Chad, and Douala, Cameroon.
- TSI issued operational orders to the Sri Lanka Transmitting Station in March to reschedule all transmissions immediately from those antennas affected by recently discovered severe corrosion of towers and guy wires. TSI is planning to send a structural consultant to the station to provide a professional, third-party assessment of the corrosion as well as recommendations for remedial action. TSI is also conducting a system wide condition assessment of antenna structural support systems at all network transmitting stations to identify vulnerable transmission assets that could fail if we do not provide the required maintenance and budgetary support.
- In mid-March, Typhoon Tavi damaged several antennas at the BBG Tinian Transmitting Station. The antennas had to be removed from service for repairs but are now repaired.
- TSI overhauled the electrical generator for the BBG medium wave transmitter at Khost, Afghanistan. The generator at Khost was moved to the dealer's maintenance workshop in Kabul for overhaul and then returned to the site. A new generator from Pol E Charkhi, Afghanistan, was installed temporarily at Khost. All of this work was done without interruption to the broadcasts.

DATE: August 7, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for July 2013

JULY HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

New Chief Financial Officer: Ms. Leslie Hyland has joined the BBG as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) effective July 29, 2013. Ms. Hyland will plan and coordinate all phases of the agency's budgetary processes, from yearly formulation and presentation to justification and execution. The CFO is the principal budget, accounting, and financial management officer for the BBG. The Office provides advice to the Board and senior management and coordinates closely on budgetary matters with Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, Middle East Broadcasting Networks, and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting.

Prior to joining the BBG, Ms. Hyland served as the Director of Audit and Risk Management at The Australian National University in Canberra, Australia. Previously, she was the Director of Financial Policy with the U.S. Department of Energy, where her responsibilities included management, internal review, and financial development and planning. From 2006 to 2009, Ms. Hyland was the Director of Financial Management for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). She also has held leadership roles in finance and accounting for the International Trade Administration and the U.S. Department of State in Washington, Tokyo, and Kiev. Ms. Hyland earned her bachelor's degree in accounting from the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey in Monterrey, Mexico, and is fluent in Spanish.

Opera Software Agreement Implementation: VOA is executing its portion of a new agreement with Opera software. The agreement is unparalleled and initial reports of impact are positive. While Opera is not widely used in developed countries, in the developing world (including many BBG markets), it is often the most popular browser by far, largely because it comes pre-installed on many mid-range phones, which are not quite smartphones, but do allow for some internet access. For example, approximately 50% of VOA Hausa's traffic comes from the Opera Mini browser (designed for mobile phones), dwarfing traffic from the next closest browser used. In the initial stages of this partnership, five VOA services (Hausa, Spanish, Urdu, Vietnamese, and Swahili) became available as promoted "speed dial" options on Opera's popular mobile and desktop browsers. VOA banner ads will also be rotated on the Opera home page in relevant regions, using Opera's unsold ad inventory. In the near future, VOA video streams will also be available through the Opera store on connected TVs. Opera software will be preinstalled on all new Sony connected TVs, putting these streams into an enormous number of households in the next several years. This is a barter deal, which comes at no monetary cost. In return for the placement, VOA is producing and airing 15 second spots promoting Opera periodically on relevant language services' broadcasts (e.g. "Find VOA Hausa on the Opera Mini browser!"), and placing desktop and mobile ads on the services' websites. Opera is interested in working

with BBG because of our global audience on broadcast media, which coincides nicely with the markets in which they are or seek to be successful.

New Analytics Infrastructure Launching in Beta: Office of Digital and Design Innovation (ODDI) is working to improve analytics infrastructure at BBG. Under the direction of Senior Analyst, Rebecca Shakespeare, and in close cooperation with RFE/RL Digital, RFA and the Office of Contracts, we launched a new analytical platform that captures meaningful metrics and usage data about BBG content on digital platforms. Rebecca has also launched a separate project for presenting meaningful data on all social media in a simple dashboard that will be available for Board members, as well as entity staff to see how we achieve “engagement.”

This full analytical system will be implemented in the mid-Fall, following an update to our content management systems. Following this release, ODDI will be building a data warehouse for more sophisticated analysis. Working closely with Office of Strategy and Development; Office of Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI); and others, we will be connecting data sets, such as our affiliate customer relationship management (CRM), our research, and the Strategic Management and Audience Research Tool (SMART) together.

Memorandum of Intent for 24/7 FM Licenses in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) Director of Marketing Doug Boynton, East and Southern Africa (ESA) Regional Marketing Officer Paula Caffey and ESA Representative Rebecca Robles met in Kinshasa with DRC Minister of Media, Laurent Mende. OSD signed a Memorandum of Intent (MOI) with the Ministry, which paves the way for BBG to obtain five 24/7 FMs in the country, in Kinshasa and four other cities. State Department approval is required to implement the agreement. The MOI is one of the highlights among series of OSD successes during a marketing trip that also took Doug and Paula to Kenya and Tanzania.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION

Jamming of Other BBG Satellite Transmissions: The Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq TV feeds on Nilesat 201 experienced destructive interference on July 26 and 27 at the following times:

- Friday, July 26 --- 1305-1549 UTC, video and audio was unstable and intermittent during this interval.
- Saturday, July 27 --- 0925-0929 UTC (4 min.), complete loss of video/audio. Stable signals returned as of 1030 UTC.

FM and TV Transmission Project in Dakar, Senegal: The Office of Strategy and Development completed a visit to Dakar, arranged a potential agreement for an FM license there, and has identified at least one potential host. TSI engineer Ken Claerbout will conduct a site survey in mid-August to identify any technical issues. During this trip, Ken will also visit **Bujumbura, Burundi**, to explore the technical feasibility of establishing a BBG 24/7 FM facility there.

IBB Information Technology (IT):

- The Dalet 5.1e radio production system (RadioSuite HD) upgrade for VOA continues to make good progress. 100% of core radio studios have been upgraded. 66% of all studios have been upgraded, with completion scheduled for this fiscal year.
- TSI has configured all servers used by the agency with Two Factor Authentication, which requires a second form of authentication beyond just a simple username / password authentication. Server administration staff will now have to use a VPN PIN system along with their username and password combination to access a server using any elevated privilege account. By doing this, the agency can avoid access from unwanted hackers, either directly or via malware and will ensure that malware cannot spread laterally throughout the IT server farm.
- Teams from the TSI IT Directorate visited the VOA New York news bureau and studio to assist with the office move to the newly renovated space. A few outstanding items remain to be addressed by the construction contractor; however, the space is occupied and employees are working.

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities: The IAC team met with representatives from VOA PNN and our contractor, Oliver + Coady, to demonstrate a feature complete version of the Android mobile app, now named Paik, for social news reading, user reporting of newsworthy content, and multi-user chat. A final beta version of the app is expected to be ready for testing later in August, and production rollout to occur shortly thereafter.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

N'Djamena 24/7 Installed: Chadians can now listen to VOA French programs from 6am to 10pm daily after the successful, July 8 installation of equipment at the VOA/Sawa 24/7 FM station in N'Djamena. The station will begin operating 24 hours a day after the September installation of a second generator and two diesel fuel tanks. An OSD-VOA-Radio Sawa committee is discussing options to re-format the N'Djamena 24/7 to include VOA and Radio Sawa programs. A formal station launch is scheduled for the week of September 15, 2013.

Afghanistan's Channel One looks to VOA: OSD has drafted a contract for signature, seizing on reports from Afghanistan of Channel One's interest in working with VOA on a special series detailing the implications of the US and NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014. VOA is currently working on solving delivery issues before the contract is submitted for signature.

September TV in Kyrgyzstan to broadcast RFE/RL Kyrgyz: The popular regional network September TV in South Kyrgyzstan approached the RFE/RL bureau in Bishkek about turning two of its flagship radio programs into TV programs. The daily morning and evening broadcasts would be recorded for TV by September TV at no cost to RFE/RL. The contract to finalize this agreement is currently with September TV.

VOA Strengthens Ties with Top-Rated Ecuador TV Network: Teleamazonas, in Ecuador, added VOA Spanish discussion program *Foro Interamericano* to its program grid, as VOA prepares to host its top two news executives in Washington, DC to work on further collaboration.

Meanwhile, a newly signed agreement with TeleSucesos provides national, over-the-air and cable presence for the *El Mundo al Día* newscast.

Venezuela's Globovisión Reaffirms Ties with VOA: Talks with new, top news executives point to increased reliance on VOA for U.S. news coverage, which now includes live-shots and Skype feeds. Globovisión is one of the very few remaining large, independent news sources in Venezuela: when it was sold following the country's most recent election, many observers feared that its independence would be compromised and that the partnership with VOA would likely end.

OSD Agreement with Burma Newspaper to Offer VOA English Teaching Lessons: Bangkok Regional Marketing Officer Birgit Berg capped a successful visit to Yangon, Burma this week, signing an agreement with 7 Days News to publish VOA Burmese English teaching lessons in their newspaper. Birgit also met with the management of Forever Group Television network and City FM while in Burma.

Agreements in Progress: OSD is working to process the following agreements with outside funders who support BBG programming in various areas:

- A previously received \$600,000 from AFRICOM for VOA broadcasting to Mali in Bambara and French, and an additional \$100,000 for call-in programs and radio dramas on themes relating to countering violent extremist rhetoric.
- \$150,000 from AFRICOM for VOA broadcasting to Somalia in Somali.
- \$128,000 from the Department of State for VOA coverage of the Afghan elections in Dari and Pashto.
- \$200,000 for journalist training and support of VOA French health programming on radio and television with the national broadcaster in Cote d'Ivoire.
- \$1 million from the Department of State to continue VOA special broadcasts to South Sudan.
- \$120,000 from the Department of State to train Ethiopian, Egyptian, and Sudanese journalists on Nile-related issues.
- Funding for journalist training on polio from the CDC.
- Gifts of travel to Moldova and Georgia, to allow OSD staff to train journalists in those countries.
- In addition, a proposal has been submitted for up to \$6 million in Department of State funding for Hausa TV programming. OSD is awaiting a reply.

Upcoming Trainings: OSD is organizing trainings for affiliate stations in various countries and internship opportunities at VOA for staff members of certain affiliate stations. These types of trainings help to secure loyalty (and, thus, continued placement) from our partner stations in priority markets. Trainings coming soon include:

- TV crew, production, video editing, and digital TV training for staff members at VOA partner TV Dozhd in Moscow, Russia.
- A two month internship at VOA for a staff member at key VOA Ukrainian TV affiliate Channel 5.
- Technical training for 14 affiliates in Haiti. The training will cover FM transmitters, studio equipment, and satellite feed equipment.

- Training for Nicaraguan and Costa Rican reporters, in partnership with VOA affiliate Canal 9 of Costa Rica, and the U.S. Embassies in Managua and San Jose.
- Training for reporters in Mauritania on critical aspects of relevant social and political issues, in support of a media cooperation agreement, to be conducted by MBN.

BBG has also received outside funding for several additional training sessions:

- Georgia – OSD’s Inna Dubinsky will conduct two trainings in Georgia in August 2013. They will be on Avian Influenza (funded by the Department of State) and Citizen Journalism (funded by NED).
- Burundi – OSD arranged for the U.S. Embassy to support a VOA staffer to train citizen journalists in Burundi in September.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: Governor Meehan, Libby Liu and André Mendes provided a briefing on the agency’s Internet freedom efforts to majority and minority staff of the Senate Appropriations State, Foreign Operations subcommittee upon their request. This office prepared talking points and other briefing materials and provided an advance summary of the agency’s combined Internet anti-censorship work that was used as the departure point for the briefing. We sent follow-up material to answer questions raised during the meeting. The Senate staffers gained an understanding of the collaborative nature of this work within the agency and with other parts of the federal government, as well as the private sector. They expressed support for providing more sustained funding.

The agency hosted Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) majority staff member Brandon Yoder, newly assigned to the public diplomacy portfolio, for a tour of the Cohen Building and meetings with BBG senior management.

An agency response to a letter from Reps. Butterfield and Jones regarding the FY 2014 budget proposal and its effect on employees at the Edward R. Murrow Transmitting Station resulted in no further questions from the congressmen.

The Congressional Coordinator arranged a visit by all three BBG Board nominees with SFRC Chairman Robert Menendez, planned additional internal and external meetings for nominee Matt Armstrong, and worked on follow-up communications with SFRC majority and minority staff leading up to Senate confirmation. With the announcement of the President’s intent to nominate Kenneth Weinstein to the Board, she began immediate work with the nominee to complete the required SFRC paperwork.

An updated Board Resource Book for new Governors was prepared in coordination with Board operations staff.

To assist Senate and House Appropriations staffers as they prepared for markup of their FY 2014 spending bills, the office drafted responses to multiple questions regarding the BBG’s budget proposal; this was done in close collaboration with the office of the CFO and OMB. We also tracked and provided updates and analysis of both bills for the Board and agency leadership.

We conferred with House Foreign Affairs Committee staff as they began work on a bill to restructure the BBG and kept the Board apprised of these conversations. As the committee turned from this work to an effort to complete a simplified foreign affairs authorization bill before the August recess, we tracked and provided analysis of this legislation, as well.

The office coordinated submission of reprogramming and notification letters to Capitol Hill involving VOA and IBB offices.

We assisted VOA in follow-up to the June 26 House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) hearing, including letters to HFAC leadership and a briefing on the Persian Service for Committee member Ted Deutsch.

An HFAC staff delegation to BBG-related sites overseas, including regional IBB offices and RFE/RL headquarters, was planned with input from the across agency. Originally envisioned for the August recess, the delegation may instead take place in September.

Media: The office actively engaged a variety of media on the subject of the newly-enacted amendment to Smith-Mundt, including participation in a well-attended Google Hangout sponsored by Huffington Post Live featuring both opponents and proponents of the legal change. We fielded multiple queries on the topic after the posting of an article by John Hudson of [Foreign Policy](#), who had visited the BBG for the first time two days before writing the piece and chose to focus on the agency's past involvement with propaganda. We engaged with writers for [The Verge](#), [NBC News](#), [Inter Press Service](#), [The Atlantic Wire](#), the [Heritage Foundation](#), [BuzzFeed](#), [PBS Media Shift](#), and [RIA Novosti](#). Other coverage included: [The Post and Courier](#), [The Daily Caller](#), [paidContent](#), [RIA Novosti](#) and [techdirt](#). Additionally, NPR's On The Media aired three segments focusing on the legal change based in part on input from this office.

Expanded information on the new regulations was featured on BBG.gov with two fact sheets that served as the template for ongoing media inquiries.

BBG Public Affairs also responded to media inquiries from the [Wall Street Journal](#) and [Radio World](#) on Leslie Hyland's appointment as BBG's CFO, and from [The Hollywood Reporter](#) regarding board nominee Jeff Shell.

The team worked with the Office of Cuba Broadcasting and various stakeholders to provide timely information to [Foreign Policy](#) for a story on AeroMartí that highlighted the agency's efforts to expend its resources in a more cost-effective way by ending the plane's contract and devoting more effort to successful projects involving digital media.

A letter from IBB Director Dick Lobo responding to an op-ed on the BBG by former Governor Enders Wimbush was published in [The Wall Street Journal](#).

Web and Social Media: Growth on BBG's website continues with help from digital media specialist Laurie Moy, who joined us this year: Site visits are up 5.82% (20,948 vs. 19,796 in June), unique visitors have increased 6.87% (16,979 vs. 15,887); and page views is up 5.32% (40,706 vs. 36,682).

We now have 1,100 Likes on Facebook, and it continues to be the top social network driver to our website. Postings are timed to maximize traffic on Facebook, which is heavy on weekends.

On Twitter we now have 2,074 followers, including influential multipliers who began following the agency feed this month: Rekha Murthy (Media journalist from PRX), Mark Glaser (Executive editor of PBS MediaShift and Idea Lab), Josh Stearns, and Liberation Tech.

Internal Communication: Workplace Engagement efforts included organizing a highly popular post-work kickball game involving employees across the agency, as well as senior managers. This was an outgrowth of an idea posted on *Launchpad*, the intranet forum that this office debuted during the spring.

The *Launchpad* community of users has grown to more than 350, with increased discussion of more than 50 ideas posted from individuals across the agency.

The office continued its leadership role in the agency's Health and Wellness program, including planning for improved facilities in the fitness center and publishing the second edition of an e-newsletter with fitness tips and information on classes available for free to all agency employees.

Outreach: The agency hosted briefings for interns from the State Department's International Information Program, as well as students from the Washington, DC campus of Bahcesehir University in Istanbul. The latter event resulted in connections for future interns, as well as interviews with citizen journalists by the VOA Turkish Service.

Professor Guy Golan of Syracuse University spent much of July 30 in consultations at the BBG as a follow up to his recent opinion piece about mediated public diplomacy.

Lynne Weil addressed a class on new trends in public diplomacy for senior Foreign Service officers who are about to deploy overseas. She focused on innovation across the BBG, using materials prepared for the June innovation showcase on Capitol Hill.

Lynne also met with Katherine Brown, the executive director of the newly re-launched U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, which has an enhanced mandate by statute and is likely to be increasingly visible in the coming months.

Graphics: The Graphics Department supported agency marketing, advertising and promotion with production and shipment of materials for a trade show in Panama; marketing items for an Office of Strategic Development trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Kenya; and ongoing design work for the OSD Marketing Program Catalog and the VOA Calendar.

Graphic support was provided in the design for the OSD proposal for Hausa TV in Nigeria; training sessions in Indonesia, Georgia, and Washington, DC; and a Zimbabwe election event.

Updated, more attractive signage and other graphics were completed for the VOA studio tour.

Design work continued on branding for VOA Learning English.

The office also provided posters, banners and materials for Workplace Engagement initiative and developed a poster campaign for VOA's new Skype on Radio program.

Graphic support was provided for English to Africa journalist training in South Sudan and a VOA Somali Service town hall in Somalia.

Jenny Lea Ramsey, who had stepped in to fulfill many of the duties of long-time Graphics Department head Tuleda Johnson during a lengthy absence in May-June, became the office's provisional leader and spent her first month in this role devising the means to improve work flow and develop the team's capabilities.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW (OPR)

Research & Program Reviews

Lao Review, July 18, 2013: In Laos, a national survey conducted late 2012 to early 2013 found a weekly VOA audience of 3.1%, including 1.8% for the daily VOA Lao radio program, and 1.4% for the weekly content of VOA Thai on a Thai television channel. Thai television dominates in Laos (most Laotians can understand Thai), with audiences even larger than Lao domestic media. VOA television placement in Thailand could therefore reach audiences both in Thailand and Laos. VOA Lao Service was recommended by OPR analyst to coordinate with VOA Learning English in securing customized English lessons for co-production with Lao National Radio; to examine feasibility of eliminating SW transmissions and focus on development of video content for Lao National TV.

Vietnamese Review, August 1, 2013: In a Vietnam national survey conducted in late 2012 and early 2013, the weekly all-media USIB audience is 1.9%, with an all-media audience of 1.5% for VOA. The leading international broadcaster of those included in the questionnaire is Discovery Channel, with a weekly audience of 3.4%. Such access to international channels in Vietnam is the subject of a qualitative study soon to be issued.

Office of the Inspector General (OIG) – Government Accountability Office (GAO) Activities

GAO Engagement on Budget Justification Review of President's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Request for International Affairs (function 150) – Code 320976: BBG responded to GAO questions about anomalies in its Broadcasting Capital Improvements account, specifically citing large increases in unobligated balances. In reviewing the account history the agency noted errors in its posting of numbers for FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014, resulting from discrepancies in postings between the budget tables and general ledger accounts. The response also noted problems in making projections for FY 2013 and 2014, where budget assumptions were not consistently applied. The agency informed GAO that it would work to reconcile the accuracy of postings to the budget tables in FY 2014. In addition, the agency noted that it has instituted procedures to ensure consistent application of budget assumptions in the future. Documentation will be provided to GAO.

OIG Audit of BBG Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) FY 2013:

OIG delivered the notice for findings and recommendations (NFR) to IBB/TSI on August 5, 2013. BBG's position on the condition, cause and recommendation (coordinated by TSI) is due back to the OIG in seven days. The exit conference for IBB, including the CFO and TSI, is tentatively scheduled for August 7, 2013.

OIG Inspection of BBG Operations in the United Arab Emirates (UAE): The OIG request for briefing materials was received by the BBG on July 29, 2013. OPR has requested briefing materials from MBN and VOA on operations in UAE, including budget, resources, personnel, challenges/issues, successes, activities supporting the BBG's strategic plan goals, transmission, digital and traditional platforms, audience research and key points of contact. All materials are due to the OIG no later than August 30, 2013.

OIG Inspection of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB): BBG was notified on August 2, 2013 that the OIG has scheduled an inspection of OCB for September-November, 2013. This inspection will focus primarily on OCB operations, but will also inspect the procedures and support that the IBB offices provide to OCB. The entrance conference with IBB director/staff and OCB director (via teleconference) will be held the week of September 9, 2013; date TBD. The on-site inspection in Miami will take place November 4-15, 2013, with an on-site security inspection by the security inspector earlier on October 2-4, 2013. Requested survey documentation is due to the OIG no later than September 6, 2013.

OIG Audit of the Broadcasting Board of Governors Administration and Oversight of Acquisition Functions: The OIG Audit team continues to conduct interviews with the Office of Contracts/Contract Officers regarding a sample of contracts from FY 2011 and FY 2012. OPR, working with the IBB director's office, has coordinated the interviews and document collection related to this audit.

OIG Draft Report of Inspection of U.S. International Broadcasting to Russia: The Office of Performance Review coordinated the BBG response to the three versions of this draft report, including comments from VOA, RFE/RL, IBB and members of the Board. OPR submitted one coordinated BBG response to the OIG on July 10, 2013.

OIG Inspection of the IBB Germany Transmitting Station, Report Number ISP-IB-13-20: OPR coordinated and submitted the BBG compliance response to the OIG on July 11, 2013. TSI provided updated information on the sole open recommendation in the hopes of closing it out.

OIG Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, Report Number ISP-IB-13-07: IBB/OPR received OIG's compliance follow up review and analysis of BBG's compliance response on May 7, 2013, indicating that all seven recommendations remain open. OPR coordinated and submitted the BBG compliance response to the OIG on July 12, 2013.

OIG Inspection of VOA's Latin America Division: The Office of Performance Review worked with VOA and IBB managers to address contracting and management concerns raised by the OIG in the draft report. The draft report includes a recommendation for the BBG in

coordination with VOA and OCB on implementation of specific collaborative actions outlined in the BBG strategic plan. OPR submitted the BBG Response to the OIG on July 17, 2013.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Benefits for Same-Sex Partners: The Supreme Court ruled on June 26, 2013, that Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act is unconstitutional. As a result of this decision, the Federal Government is now able to extend benefits to legally married same-sex spouses of Federal employees. The decision applies to all legally married same-sex spouses of Federal employees, regardless of employees' state of residency. Benefit eligibility includes Federal Employees Health Benefits, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance, Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance, Federal Long-Term Care Insurance, and Federal Flexible Spending Accounts. Because the Supreme Court's decision addressed the constitutionality of a statute that defined "marriage" and "spouse," same-sex couples who are in a civil union or other forms of domestic partnership other than marriage will remain ineligible for most Federal benefits programs.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Office of Personnel Management/BBG Diversity and Inclusion Discussion: On July 18, 2013, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) conducted a Feedback Assessment Review (FAR) in response to the federal employee survey recently completed. During the discussions, OPM made recommendations to the Agency on ways to make diversity and inclusion a priority, as well as effective ways for addressing those issues identified in the survey.

Upcoming Events:

August – Women's Equality Day Event

End of August – MLK 50th Anniversary March on Washington



August 13, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for August

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

Cambodian Efforts Fail to Silence VOA Election Coverage

VOA Khmer provided extensive coverage of July's national election in Cambodia, including interviews with ruling and opposition leaders and on-the-ground reporting from six stringers in Cambodia's major provinces. There was never any let-up in the VOA coverage despite early warnings from the government that all international broadcasts in the Khmer language would be banned in the 31 days preceding the vote. The government rolled back the comprehensive ban on election coverage following a public outcry by VOA, other international media organizations and human rights groups. VOA issued a statement condemning the effort to silence the media: "The decision to pull VOA off FM stations in Cambodia deprives audiences of vital news and information ahead of the July 28th general election." Despite the lifting of the 30 day ban on all election coverage, the government did impose media restrictions in the last 48 hours of the campaign, which resulted in some VOA broadcasts being pulled from affiliate stations. VOA Khmer language programming continued throughout the election and its aftermath on MW and SW and on its popular websites. After polls closed and the restrictions were fully lifted, VOA was immediately back on local affiliate stations with news of the continuing controversy about the results of the vote.

All Hands Meeting

On August 7, VOA Director David Ensor held an "All Hands" meeting to discuss the state of VOA and its future direction. He was joined by IBB Deputy Director Jeff Trimble, who gave an update on the budget, VOA Chief of Staff Barbara Brady, who talked about workplace engagement issues, and VOA Executive Editor Steve Redisch, who described efforts to restructure and improve the Central News operation. Addressing a crowded auditorium, Ensor said the state of the Voice of America is strong and that it is well positioned for the future. He also addressed some of the concerns and questions many employees have expressed during the

meetings he and his senior management team have had with staff in Language Programming, Operations, and Central News. Director Ensor told the audience that he intends to hold an All Hands meeting every quarter. (To view the meeting in its entirety: <http://www.voanews.com/mp4/voa/special-events/All-Hands-Meeting.mp4>.)

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

Elections in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe held its presidential election July 31, but VOA's Zimbabwe Service began gearing up well before then. Relying on its network of eight stringers and Washington-based staff, the service, popularly known as Studio 7, provided campaign coverage from every province in Zimbabwe, and much of the coverage was highly interactive. On July 18, the service broadcast an in-house panel discussion called "Zimbabwe: Elections and Beyond." The event was streamed live online, making it the Zimbabwe Service's first video event. Panelists engaged in an hour-long discussion about challenges facing the country and answered questions from Studio 7 listeners that arrived in a variety of ways: e-mail, the WhatsApp smartphone app, as well as from the live audience at VOA headquarters. Among the web tools the service created for the elections was a candidate map that offered profiles of the presidential candidates, as well as profiles of some of the candidates in local elections. The map had pop-ups with links to interviews and stories about the candidates. Another web tool the service provided was a crowdsourcing map called "Zimbabwe Election 2013: What Are You Seeing?" It invited visitors to post, before, during, and after the elections, what they witnessed. Hundreds of people posted stories about intimidation, long queues, voters being driven in from other areas, as well as stories of quiet and peaceful voting. The service also received some pictures, including a picture of people tearing down, in front of a policeman who stood idly by, campaign signs of the opposition MDC-T party.



Mali Election

The people of Mali went to the polls July 28 following months of turmoil that began with a coup last October that was followed by an Islamist insurgency and the subsequent intervention of

French military forces. VOA's French to Africa Service sent Bagassi Koura to Mali to report on the run-up to the election and the election itself. He filed for radio and the web, shot video and still photos, all of which were used extensively on his election blog:

<http://www.lavoixdelamerique.com/archive/mali-blog/latest/3712/3712.html>. The newsroom's West Africa Correspondent, Anne Look, filed election reports for radio and TV from Bamako, Mali's capital. Among the highlights was a video interview with former Assistant Secretary of State for African affairs Johnnie Carson. On the day of the election, VOA added two special election broadcasts, with reports from polling stations around the country and analysis from studio guests. A 30-minute Bambara language radio show *Mali Kura* (in English, *New Mali*), aired live at noon and a second live half-hour program was broadcast in the evening. The programs included reports from VOA journalists in Gao, Timbuktu, Bamako and other cities.

Alhurra Joins VOA to Cover Crisis in Egypt

Africa 54 – VOA's TV magazine show – put its versatility on display in July, with live reporting on the deadly clashes in Egypt between security forces and supporters of ousted President Morsi. As demonstrators filled Cairo's Tahrir Square, *Africa 54* got an on-the-scene report from Tarek El Shamy, the Cairo News Bureau Chief for VOA's sister station Alhurra TV.



Africa 54 host Vincent Makori goes live with AlhurraTV's Tarek el Shamy

A First for VOA Somali

On July 12, VOA's Somali Service launched its first TV program, *Qubanaha VOA* (*Variety*, in Somali), a weekly web-based magazine. The show offers reports from Somalia, from house material and interviews and can be watched online and will be available to TV affiliate stations. The program's debut brought immediate feedback from longtime radio listeners who said they were excited to see the faces of Somali Service reporters who had been familiar voices on the radio. "Now you are remarkable. This is what we need," wrote one fan. "When it comes to source[s], you are number one."



Qubahaha hosts Abdi H. Mahamud (left) and Sahra Nur

Ashna Radio Launches Bilingual Show

On July 8th, VOA's Ashna Radio launched the first-ever bilingual radio call-in program targeting audiences in Afghanistan. The hour-long Dari-Pashto call-in brings guests and callers into an open discussion with two VOA hosts. The program covers major topics such as human rights, democracy, and current affairs and features two male and two female hosts (two Dari / two Pashto) who alternate every other day. This program has had an enthusiastic reception so far, with some listeners saying that it conveys a message of unity at a time when Afghanistan needs it.

New U.S. Envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan Talks with VOA Dari

VOA Dari's Najiba Salaam went to the State Department in July for an interview with Ambassador James Dobbins, the newly appointed U.S. special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. The 70-year-old diplomat spoke bluntly about prospects for peace in the region: the "Taliban can't be completely eliminated and the government of Afghanistan can't be overthrown... Therefore, the war can only end through some process of negotiation." He continued "...the White House has said we're trying to negotiate a security agreement with Afghanistan with the intention of stationing significant American civilian and military advice and assistance capabilities, but if Afghans don't want us, we will leave." The Dari Service made the interview available on all its platforms, radio, TV and online.



VOA's Najiba Salaam (left) with Ambassador James Dobbins

Young Victim of Taliban Attack Speaks at UN

Malala Yousafzai, the 16-year-old Pakistani girl who was shot in the face by the Taliban last October for advocating education for girls, addressed the United Nations July 12. She spoke in support of the Global Education First Initiative that has been launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The goal of the initiative is to have all children of school age, especially girls, in school by 2015. Radio Ashna's Nazrana Ghaffar interviewed Malala's father, Ziauddin Yousafzai. This was the first detailed interview he had given the media since his daughter was attacked.

New Hong Kong Internet Radio Now Broadcasting VOA Cantonese

VOA Cantonese radio is now rebroadcast by Hong Kong's internet radio "D100" for two full hours every Sunday, 6:00 am to 8:00 am local time. D100 was launched in late July and VOA Cantonese was first aired on July 28, 2013. VOA Cantonese Service is providing custom made "News of the Week" for this time slot, looking back at current affairs in the U.S., China and worldwide. <http://www.d100.net/program.php>



VOA Reporter Goes Deep into the Hermit Kingdom

VOA Asia correspondent Steve Herman was one of only a handful of reporters invited for an extended visit to North Korea to accompany an American veteran in his search for the remains of a colleague shot down during the Korean War. In spite of the enormous logistical difficulties, Herman managed to report from the remote North Korean town of Hyangsan on the unusual flooding that complicated the search for the remains. When he got to Pyongyang, Herman was able to file an interview with the American veteran, Thomas Hudner. The 88-year-old former U.S. Navy pilot made the unprecedented trip to North Korea to search for the remains of his wingman, Jesse Brown, who died after a crash landing in 1950. Hudner was awarded the Medal of Honor for his effort to save Brown. In his interview with Herman, the former pilot said he deemed the trip a success, despite failing to locate Jesse Brown's plane or body. "The more cooperation we get from former enemies, the better off the world will be," he said. A tweet from Herman as he was leaving Pyongyang that North Korea planned more missile tests provoked widespread comment and news reports around Asia.

VOA Russian's Coverage of Navalny Case

On July 18, Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was sentenced to five years in prison for embezzlement. He was released the following day to prepare his appeal. VOA Russian's coverage included on-the-site reporting in Russia, as well as from Ukraine and the U.S. which gave viewers insight they could not have gotten anywhere else. The service also organized a live roundtable web-TV discussion about the verdict. The program was streamed live on the VOA Russian website and the YouTube recording of the broadcast received more than 5,800 on-demand views.

Russian Law against Propaganda ... of 'Nontraditional Sexual Relations'

In June, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed legislation banning "propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations." The legislation immediately sparked protests by supporters of the lesbian, gay,

bisexual and transgender communities in Russia and elsewhere. In its coverage of the controversy, VOA Russian has interviewed gay activists and human rights leaders in Russia, including Olga Lenkova, communications manager of the Russian LGBT organization, Coming Out. VOA Russian's New York correspondent, Michael Gutkin, interviewed the former editor-in-chief of the Russian station Kontr TV, Anton Krasovsky, who came out as gay in January and immediately lost his job. The interview was among the most popular articles on the Russian Service website garnering, in addition to web traffic, more than 6,600 views on *YouTube*.



Anton Krasovsky (left) with VOA's Michael Gutkin in VOA's New York studio

VOA and RFE/RL Cooperation

Cooperation and cross-promotion between VOA and RFE/RL continue to move forward. On July 25, VOA's Ukrainian Service conducted a live interview with RFE/RL reporter Bogdan Tsiupin from VOA's studio in London on the arrest of a Ukrainian citizen by British authorities. British police charged Pavlo Lapshyn with the murder of an elderly Muslim man and are also investigating him in connection with bombings at three mosques in central England. VOA Georgian shared with RFE/RL's Georgian Service interviews it did with Georgian Foreign Minister Maia Panjikidze and other members of a Georgian government delegation that visited Washington in July. The two Russian services continue to exchange content widgets on their websites, with VOA showing RL's original Russia-centric production, while RL takes VOA's *US News in 60 Seconds* and other Americana features such as *Made in USA* and *Hollywood Boulevard*.

Mufti Talks to VOA Albanian on Religious Extremism in the Balkans

In an interview with VOA's Albanian Service, the head of Kosovo's Islamic community called on all citizens to fight against religious extremism. Mufti Naim Ternava said such a war should be a joint action of everyone, including religious and state institutions. He said religious extremism cannot have a place in Kosovo, and that so far, it has not been successful in his country. He said debate on this issue must remain open. The mufti was a guest at the Iftar Dinner hosted by Secretary of State John Kerry.



Mufti Naim Ternava

VOA Macedonian Launches *Hollywood Minute* on Nationwide Affiliate

Macedonia's nationwide Alfa TV on July 31 began carrying a VOA Macedonian Service feed, *Hollywood Minute*. The affiliate will carry the feed twice weekly as part of its *Tabloid* entertainment show. Alfa already carries VOA Macedonian's flagship daily show, *Newsflash*.

VOA Mandarin Programs Published

Eleven of VOA Mandarin's *History's Mysteries* TV programs have been compiled into a book called *National Secrets*. The book, which sells for about \$20, was issued by Hong Kong-based publisher Mirror Books. China Branch Chief Sasha Gong and Mandarin Chief Ming Zhang

provided the materials to the publisher, and OMPP put together the contract. The first 2,000 books were put up for sale in Hong Kong and Taiwan, and a second printing is under way.

U.S. Embassy and Creole Service Combine to Train Haitian Journalists

The Creole Service, working with the US Embassy in Port-Au-Prince, recently concluded a one-week training seminar in Washington for 15 Haitian journalists. The seminar included sessions on the role of the press in a democracy and explanations of how the U.S. system of government works, with visits to the White House, State Department and Congress, where the journalists met with Democratic Congressman John Conyers. The seminar also featured sessions on social media, writing headlines, editorial guidelines, interview techniques and television anchoring.

Barry Manilow Visits Border Crossings

VOA *Border Crossings* host Larry London caught up with Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Barry Manilow at the Capitol Fourth concert in Washington. The 70-year-old pop icon talked to Larry as he rehearsed for the annual Independence Day concert and fireworks display on the National Mall. It's not the first time Manilow was chosen to sing at the capital city's Fourth of July celebration. In 2009, he opened the event with *Let Freedom Ring*, a patriotic song that he closed the show with this year. "It's really great to sing a song that I'm so proud of," said Manilow. "I'm honored that they asked me to come back and do it; it's just overwhelming to be able to perform in front of the Capitol."



Barry Manilow (left) with VOA's Larry London

Other Notable Interviews

- In an interview with VOA Russian, former Russian Prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov spoke candidly about President Vladimir Putin: "I do not care about Putin's positive qualities as a person; I care about his decisions as president. I worked closely with Putin, and for three out of four years of his first term, I believed we were doing the right thing and had the same vision for Russia's future. Then, our disagreements started, and I realized that we had profound ideological differences."
- The day after Cambodia's parliamentary elections, opposition leader Sam Rainsy and his vice president were guests on VOA Khmer's radio call-in show, saying the elections were deeply marred by irregularities.
- Appearing on the VOA TV program *Africa 54*, President Obama's Special Assistant for African Affairs, Grant Harris, said South Sudan "desperately needs a government that will advance its development, peace and security issues." The interview came on the heels of the decision by South Sudan President Salva Kiir to dismiss his entire cabinet as well as the vice president, Riek Machar. What the United States is asking, Harris said, is that President Kiir quickly and transparently reconstitute the government ... in a way that reflects the diversity of the people of South Sudan."
- Former U.S. ambassador to Bosnia Thomas Miller told VOA Bosnian that several thousand

people are still considered missing after the Bosnian War. Miller, who serves as head of the International Commission of Missing Persons, added that Bosnia needs to work on achieving real reconciliation, and that finding the missing and identifying their remains would be an important step toward that end.

- VOA's Azerbaijan Service conducted a video interview with Richard Kauzlarich, the former U.S. ambassador to Baku, about the country's presidential election, scheduled for October 9. Mr. Kauzlarich spoke about the prospects for democracy in Azerbaijan and said he was "pessimistic" about the prospects of free and fair election. The interview was widely viewed and republished in major news websites in Azerbaijan.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

New Mobile App Gives Access to 43 VOA Languages

Getting the latest news from VOA's many language services just got easier with the launch of new mobile and tablet apps that work on iPhones, iPads, and Android devices. Chinese, Russian, Swahili, Turkish, English and more – they are all there at the touch of a button on two of the world's most popular mobile platforms. The Apple iOS and Google Android apps are free and provide the latest news and information in text, audio, and video. Users can even pick their favorite stories and download them for offline viewing to watch or listen to later when wireless reception is better. Content is divided by region as well as topic – with special news sections on science and technology, health, entertainment. Users can customize the fonts and content for 43 of VOA's languages and the apps are designed for touch interactivity, so that they can easily change stories by swiping across the screen like you are reading a newspaper or magazine. Users can also share their favorite stories on Facebook and Twitter. (To download the iPhone and iPad app, which offers news in 43 VOA languages, go to the Apple iTunes Store. To download the Android app, which includes 33 VOA languages, go to the Google Play Store.)



Big Social Media Surge for VOA's Khmer Service

VOA Khmer's July parliamentary election coverage was undoubtedly a factor in a major surge on its social media. By August 1, the service's YouTube site had nine million views on, an increase of one million from June. The service also registered a big surge on its Twitter, getting 1,000 new followers in July. Many of its tweets were retweeted and according to SocialBakers.Com, the Khmer Service is now the top Twitter page in Cambodia, with over 12,000 followers. <http://www.socialbakers.com/twitter/country/cambodia/> -Storify page on Election Day: <http://storify.com/voakhmer/cambodia-election-2013>

Hausa Racks Up Big Numbers in July

In July, Hausa broke a few records, including recording over a 5,450,408 Page Views to its mobile site, and 155,826 Visits to its website. The service also broke a single day mobile site

record with a whopping 269,475 Page Views – more than double its normal traffic – on 7/12/13, when it broke a big story about the release from prison of Hamza Al-Mustapha, a former security aide to ex-head of state Sani Abacha. In addition, the service had over 824 downloads on its newly launched “Opera Speed Dial” extension. To attract fasting Muslims around the world, Hausa created special Ramadan initiatives including “Voices of Ramadan” on both its web and mobile platforms to which thousands have been going to hear sermons, Quran recitations and spiritual advice.

State Department and Learning English Expand Collaboration

Learning English is collaborating with the Office of English Language Programs at the Department of State to provide audio and video products for use on its American English website. The partnership benefits both VOA and the State Department. It gives VOA a greater audience for its English teaching content while making State’s educational materials for teachers available on the Learning English website.

Audience Feedback for Learning English

July saw overwhelmingly positive audience reaction to Learning English’s products and redesigned website:

From Brazil: “It’s a pleasure to learn English like this. Thank you VOA.”

From Pakistan: “It’s really great job of VOA because all the Videos reports are very informative, up-to-date, understandable (as it’s in slower version and with CC or subtitles). I repeat after videos and through this way I can learn English. Learn English naturally...”

From Ukraine: “I love this website. Videos you make help me to learn English. Thank you very much.”

From South Sudan: “You just do not know how people from other parts of the world to whom English is foreign language are benefiting from your program. I thought I had mustered enough English until I came across your program almost ten years ago. Now I know that learning English is a lifelong process.”

100,000 Facebook Likes for Straight Talk Africa

Following its July 10 program on the crisis in Egypt, *Straight Talk Africa* passed 100,000 Facebook likes. Host Shaka Ssali spoke with several newsmakers from all sides of the crisis, including Egyptian legislator, Dr. Abdul Mawgoud R. Dardery. He is also a spokesman for the Foreign Relations Committee of the Freedom and Justice Party – the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood. Dardery said what took place in Egypt was clearly a coup d’etat and that it signals the return of the “police state.”

The Newest Royal

Finally, *On Assignment*’s chat segment with Henry Ridgwell in London about Baby George has been viewed more than 50,000 times (and climbing), making it the #1 video so far this year on VOANews.com.

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

PRESS RELEASES

- *VOA Rolls Out Mobile App with News in 43 Languages* – August 8
- *White House Official Tells "Africa 54" New Government Needed in S. Sudan* – July 26
- *VOA Covers Elections in Mali* – July 25
- *VOA Panel Examines Zimbabwe Challenges* – July 19
- *VOA Somali Service Launches TV Program* – July 16
- *VOA's "On Ten" Wins CINE Award* – July 8
- *VOA Condemns Cambodian Ban on Foreign Broadcasters* – June 28
- *VOA's "Washington Forum" Airing on RTI in Ivory Coast* – June 27
- *John Kerry Tells VOA: Snowden Betrayed Country* – June 24
- *Voice of America Hosting Global Immigration Debate* – June 24
- *"On Ten" Exclusive: Bono Offers Message of Solidarity to People of Iran* – June 14
- *VOA Jazz Show Builds on Musical Legacy* – June 13
- *VOA Covers Iran Election with TV Special* – June 6

INSIDEVOA.COM HIGHLIGHTS

- *VOA Wins Second Award for Powerful Story on 9/11 Victim* – July 16
- *VOA Radio Photo Contest in Cambodia* – July 12
- *Larry London Snags Exclusive Interview with Barry Manilow* – July 11
- *New FM Partnership in Pakistan* – July 11
- *"Africa 54" Puts Spotlight on Egypt* – July 10
- *Veteran VOA Reporters Share 2013 Burke Award* – July 9

VOA STUDIO TOUR

- Burmese Community Center for Education students toured VOA. – July 30
- Summit International Cultural Center brought Chinese visitors to VOA. – July 29
- Cyprus Friendship Organization students met VOA Turkish staff. – July 26
- Ball State University Indonesian and Malaysian students met VOA Executive Editor and language service staff. – July 26
- Fifteen Shanghai Media Group journalists met with Chinese Branch staff. – July 17
- Chinese participants in a State Department IVLP program met Chinese Branch representatives. – July 12
- Twenty-five Burmese students met with Burmese Service staff. – July 12
- Michigan State Youth & Governance Program students visited VOA. – July 10
- Benjamin Franklin Fellows participants took tour and met language service representatives. – July 10

EVENTS

- VOA Public Relations worked with other Agency elements on the panel discussion "Zimbabwe: Elections and Beyond" – July 18

REQUESTS TO USE VOA MATERIAL

- VOA Public Relations processed twenty requests to use VOA material.

DATE: August 4, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: Interim Management Team

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for July 2014

Global Strategy:

- IBB Research drafted a global comparative analysis of the reach of Western International broadcasters versus Chinese, Russian, Arab, and Iranian international broadcasting.
- IBB Director of Audience Insights Bill Bell presented the latest survey findings on media use in Turkey during the Gallup BBG Research Series event on July 29, 2014.
- The ODDI Mobile Team, led by Will Sullivan and in partnership with MBN Digital, successfully released a new mobile application for Radio Sawa for iOS and Android featuring seven custom, continuous audio streams and the interactive ‘Sawa Chat’ that allows listeners to share their voices directly through the mobile application.

Global Operations:

- Unrest in **Iraq** continues to stop transmissions from BBG FM and TV sites in **Mosul** and **Tikrit**. Our contractor is searching for safer sites to relocate equipment in order to resume broadcasts in these cities.
- The equipment to restore operations at the BBG FM transmitter in **Ajloun, Jordan**, has been installed and tested at low power (one kilowatt) while TSI awaits the installation of an electrical power line required to operate at full power (20 kilowatts).
- TSI is supporting the establishment of **Top Congo Radio**, a new VOA affiliate in **Kinshasa**, by purchasing studio equipment items for them that should be available by the planned August 15 inauguration ceremony.
- TSI prepared a task order to design an expansion of the BBG Kuwait Transmitting Station to house additional transmitters that will allow BBG to centralize several essential shortwave transmissions at the Kuwait station, which has the lowest operating costs our network.
- In July, TSI completed the conversion of all video channels distributed from the Network Control Center (NCC) to the more modern 16:9 wide screen format, which is more competitive in many global markets.
- TSI successfully deployed the AirWatch Mobile Device Management system in July to monitor employee compliance with agency mobile device policies. Out of 289 agency mobile users, 279 devices have already been enrolled.
- The TSI Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) team provided two training sessions to Office of Cuba Broadcasting on the Hughes satellite terminals web portal for use in their Internet censorship circumvention efforts.
- OHR began a comprehensive review of the agency’s Competitive Level codes in preparation for a potential reduction-in-force. Competitive level codes identify jobs similar enough in grade, duties, and qualification requirements that the incumbent of one position could successfully perform the duties of another position with the same Competitive Level.



August 5, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for August

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- Abraham Agoth – a new stringer for VOA's South Sudan in Focus program – says he has received phone calls from the governor and the information minister of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, located in the northwest of the country. Both officials asked where he was, but he didn't tell them. At the time of the calls he was away from home, and his wife later told him that security officials had come to his house and harassed her in an effort to find out where he was. From what Agoth has learned, the officials are unhappy with his reports on rebel activities for South Sudan in Focus as well as for a local radio station in Aweil, capital city of Bahr el Ghazal state. The officials asked a colleague of his, "Why are these VOA people always reporting about rebels? Are they rebel supporters?" Agoth has been advised by his editors to be careful and to keep them informed of any further developments. Sonya Lawrence Green, chief of English to Africa, has shared information about the incident with the U.S. Ambassador to South Sudan, Susan Page, and Consular Officer Elizabeth Shackelford.
- On July 31, VOA Khmer reporter Reasey Poch was detained by police in the suburb of Ho Chi Minh City for an hour after interviewing the Taiwanese general manager of a factory where anti-Chinese riots occurred last May. A day earlier, a Vietnamese foreign ministry official had warned Poch not to interview the factory manager because the paperwork for permission would take three days. Poch went ahead and interviewed the manager the next day as local police peered in through the office window. However, he was later taken into custody and forced to sign a paper acknowledging that the interview was done without permission. Poch left Vietnam that night without a problem. He was on a two week reporting assignment, covering the South China Sea dispute. He interviewed Vietnamese officials, fishermen, students and scholars about the issue and its effect on the relations with China.



December 5, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for December

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

Ethiopian Politician Jailed for Talking to VOA

Update from October: We reported last month that a member of the central committee of a branch of Ethiopia's ruling party had broken the rule of secrecy to speak to the Horn of Africa Service about factional disputes threatening party unity. To protect his identity, the service withheld his name and altered his voice. The broadcast eventually forced the government to reply to the allegations. However, the interviewee's identity was eventually discovered, and he is said to have been jailed for several weeks. Details of the charge have not been revealed.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES



VOA Director David Ensor (center right) along with Myint Myint Win (center left), Managing Director of SkyNet, sign the agreement to broadcast VOA content to Burma.

Satellite TV Agreement in Burma

Audiences in Burma will soon have a new way to watch VOA television programs following the signing of a breakthrough agreement with Sky Net, a direct-to-home satellite TV provider. Under the agreement, Sky Net will carry a new VOA Asia TV channel that will provide Burmese-language news, as well as English-language education, information and entertainment programs. The agreement was signed in Rangoon by VOA Director David Ensor and Myint Myint Win, managing director of Shwe Than Lwin Media Co. Ltd., which operates Sky Net. In attendance were U.S. Ambassador to Burma Derek Mitchell, BBG Governor Victor Ashe, Burmese Service Chief Lwin Than, OMPP's Doug Boynton, and Burmese Government officials. Ensor thanked the government of Burma and the Sky Net management team for helping to arrange what he called an "historic event." VOA Burmese language radio, television and Internet programs have an estimated weekly audience of nearly 20 percent, according to a recent Gallup survey. The agreement with Sky Net follows one earlier this year allowing Burmese state-run radio and television to air VOA English language teaching programs.

Radio Farda's *Breakfast with News* Makes Leap to PNN TV

Radio Farda's popular morning program, *Breakfast with News*, is reaching new audiences in Iran through a groundbreaking collaboration with Voice of America. Starting December 4, *Breakfast with News* has been available on the VOA Persian language satellite channel. The program is broadcast into Iran on the Hotbird direct-to-home satellite, and on *Livestation*, a 24 hour a day Internet streaming platform. Each 60-minute program, which begins at 7 AM in Tehran, adapts the "radio on TV" format by offering viewers a number of visualized features on economics, sports, and culture, as well as daily press and music reviews. The program retains its audio feed, allowing radio listeners in Iran to tune in during their morning commute. The host of *Breakfast with News* is Radio Farda's Mirali Hosseini -- a familiar face to Iranian audiences since before the Islamic Revolution. It was Hosseini who announced the news on state television that the Shah's rule had come to an end. Also on December 4, VOA's Persian morning radio program, *Radio Tamasha*, also made the leap to TV. Its hour-long morning show starts at 6 AM local time, giving PNN's TV stream a new two-hour up-to-date morning news block.

New VOA Urdu Show for Young Pakistanis

VOA Urdu's *Zindagi 360* only began airing in September, but it is already attracting big audiences, with more than a quarter million viewers per episode in its first weeks. The half-hour show, hosted by Raza Naqvi and Annie Ali Khan, focuses on topics that resonate with young people in Pakistan, including music, life in America, even food. Part of the attraction of the show is the great chemistry between the hosts, who speak a mixture of English and Urdu as they explore life in the U.S. and talk to both Pakistanis and Americans from around the United States. One recent episode took viewers to famous locations in Washington that were used for Hollywood movies like the 2006 film, *Night at the Museum*. Another show focused on a well-known pizzeria in Washington that is owned by a Pakistani-American. The show, which is recorded on the streets instead of the studio, airs Friday evenings on Pakistan's Hum TV, a private cable entertainment network.

VOA Radio Show Encourages Entrepreneurship in Burundi

Tujahe, a new Central African Service program about entrepreneurship, is attracting a lot of interest in Burundi. The focus of the weekly Kirundi-language program is on helping young

people in Burundi find a way to support themselves. *Tujahe* – where we are going in Kirundi – provides listeners with information about how to start a business, write a business plan, obtain necessary documents and access the market. It also features stories about businesses that have succeeded and failed, providing “lessons learned” to aspiring entrepreneurs. The program airs 7:30 Saturday evenings in Burundi and is also available on demand on the VOA Central African website. *Tujahe* is funded through a USAID grant.

No Matter Where You Are, Portuguese to Africa Is Now in Reach

Lusophone speakers in Brazil, Canada, Portugal, and the United Kingdom are now able to listen to VOA’s Portuguese to Africa Service, thanks to a partnership with AudioNow, a U.S.-based company that lets people on any phone system listen to live broadcasts and streams. No matter where they are in the world, VOA Portuguese listeners can hear their favorite programs simply by calling a uniquely assigned phone number. In addition to VOA, other AudioNow partners include RFI, BBC, and Al Jazeera, C-SPAN Radio and PBS NewsHour.

Enhanced VOA Macedonian Newsflash Goes on Air

November 12 marked the kickoff of VOA Macedonian’s expanded *Newsflash* program. It is now ten minutes long (up from eight) and produced in a live-to-tape format, instead of a feed, as was done previously. The initiative was undertaken without new funding and is entirely sustainable on a divisional level. The new format allows for more in-depth coverage, as requested by the target audience. The show was also refreshed with a new graphics package. (New opening can be seen [here](#).) The expanded show immediately attracted the attention of the target audience. The Washington-based correspondent for Macedonian TV visited one of the shoots in Studio 51 and produced a story about the show.

Panetta One on One with VOA

Pentagon correspondent Luis Ramirez had an exclusive interview with Defense Secretary Leon Panetta during his trip to Asia in November. During the stop in Bangkok, Panetta told Ramirez that he favors giving Turkey anti-missile defense systems to place near its border with Syria. Panetta also said he had confidence in General John Allen as commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, despite his connection to a scandal that forced C.I.A. Director David Petraeus to resign.

VOA Russian Reporter Testifies before Lantos Human Rights Commission

VOA Russian Service reporter Fatima Tlisova testified as a North Caucasus expert before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission of the U.S. Congress. Tlisova, who has extensive experience reporting on rights issues in the region, told the Commission that local security forces were acting with impunity and committing widespread human rights abuses. Journalists, independent lawyers, and civil and political activists are often targeted and oppressed by Russian security forces to the point where, as she put it, “self-censorship becomes the principal rule of survival.” She said it is extremely difficult for foreign media and human rights groups to access the region and document what is happening since Russian authorities restrict access and require multiple registration and license requirements for entry. “Most of the people in the North Caucasus who I’ve recently interviewed say that they live in fear,” said Tlisova. “They don’t trust the authorities and are afraid to become victims of the Russian security forces even more than they are afraid of the rebels.” Fatima Tlisova is an award winning investigative journalist

who has written extensively on Russia and the North Caucasus, including the role of Islam, human rights abuses, and freedom of the press.



Fatima Tlisova

Party Time in Beijing

Beijing correspondents Bill Ide, Fred Wang and bureau stringers provided thorough coverage of China's week-long Party Congress (11/8-11/15). One of the highlights was a speech by outgoing Chinese leader Hu Jintao, who warned delegates about the corrosive effect of corruption – a theme echoed by his successor, Xi Jinping, in his first speech to the Congress after being named head of the Communist Party and military. The VOA team in Beijing filed TV, radio and web articles about the Congress. In addition to covering the public comments, the team provided analysis and context from informed observers and the other reporters.

Monitoring Jordan's Descent

Cairo correspondent Elizabeth Arrott traveled to Jordan in mid-November to report on the kingdom's political instability and the spillover effect of the Syrian conflict on the country. Among the stories covered, one of the largest anti-government protests in recent Jordanian memory over cuts in fuel subsidies.

The Magnitsky Act Coverage

VOA Russian has closely covered developments relating to the Magnitsky Act. The bill, approved by the House but still in the Senate, has attracted far more attention in Russia than in the United States. It freezes the bank accounts and bans visas for about 60 Russian officials believed to have been involved in the arrest and death of Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian lawyer for an American investment fund who died in a Moscow jail three years ago. In addition to coverage on its own website, VOA's Russian Service has curated a special report on the Magnitsky bill for Grani.ru, a popular Russian analytical resource, and provided live reports for Dozhd TV. The legislation has become a source of friction between Moscow and Washington. Russian Prime minister Dmitri Medvedev described House approval of the bill as a huge mistake and warned that Russia would respond.

Albania Centennial

Albania celebrated the 100th anniversary of its declaration of independence from Ottoman rule and VOA's Albanian Service covered it extensively. As part of its anniversary programming, the Albanian Service interviewed U.S. ambassador to Albania, Alexander Arvizu, and four of his

predecessors. Their comments were rebroadcast and republished by almost all local media in Albania with full attribution to VOA. In addition, the U.S. Embassy in Tirana prepared a collage based on the VOA material and distributed it to the local media. The service also aired a story on the role President Woodrow Wilson played in securing international recognition for Albania's sovereignty in 1919. The service covered a November 28th anniversary ceremony on Capitol Hill that paid homage to Albanians for their role in saving Jews during World War II. The event organizer, former Congressman Joe DioGuardi, said Albania is the only nation that can claim that every Jew who either lived in Albania or sought refuge there was saved during World War II. A select group of Albanian-Americans joined Jewish leaders and members of Congress in commending Albanians in Albania and Kosova for their role during the Holocaust.

Turkish Media Rely on VOA Kurdish for Hunger Strike Coverage

A recently concluded hunger strike by Kurdish prisoners in Turkish prisons shows the reach of VOA's Kurdish Service extends well beyond its target audience. The prisoners went on a hunger strike for three demands: 1) to receive education in Kurdish, 2) to use Kurdish in their trials and 3) an end to isolation of Kurdistan Workers' Party leader Abdullah Öcalan, who is imprisoned on an island south of İstanbul. The strike lasted more than two months and only ended when Öcalan urged the strikers to call it off. Kurdish Service coverage of the strike included an exclusive interview with the mayor of Diyarbakir, located in a predominantly Kurdish region of Turkey. The interview quickly captured the attention of Turkish media, picked up by two widely circulated newspapers, *Hurriyet* and *Milliyet*, and two popular websites, www.ensonhaber.com and www.internethaber.com, all of which gave credit to VOA's Kurdish Service.

CPJ Honoree Hears about Award Thanks to VOA

The Committee to Protect Journalists in New York recently gave its International Press Freedom Award to human rights activist Azimjon Askarov. The committee made the award in absentia because Askarov is now imprisoned in Kyrgyzstan. CPJ honored Askarov for his reporting on police torture and corrupt criminal prosecutions in Kyrgyzstan. It is in retribution for his reporting that he is now serving a life term in prison on charges that CPJ describes as fabricated. The organization notes that his prosecution and conviction have been challenged by a range of human rights organizations, as well as by the Kyrgyz government's own ombudsman's office. Askarov, who is imprisoned near Bishkek, is able to listen to VOA Uzbek, and his lawyer says he learned about the CPJ award on a VOA Uzbek broadcast.

Karwan Explores Violence against Women

Karwan TV devoted its November 23 program to the issue of violence against women in Afghanistan. The broadcast coincided with the UN's International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. One report profiled a 16-year old girl in an arranged marriage, who told of the abuse she suffered in her husband's house. She told Karwan, "They beat me all the time. I was hungry most of the time and I had no clean clothes. They did not let me wash my clothes." The girl is now separated from her husband. In another report, Karwan talked with the officials of SAFE, an organization that supports women in Washington, D.C., and with the victims of violence who have been helped by SAFE.

Many Contributors to Multi-Platform Series on Kurds

In November, Central News put out a multi-part TV/radio/web series on the plight of the Kurds in the Middle East, which included reports from inside Syria, Iraq's Kurdistan region, and Turkey. The series was a joint effort between Central News and the Kurdish and Turkish services in the Near East Division that allowed information and material to be shared by the reporters from the various elements. Also in November, Central News issued a multi-part series on the problem of poaching in Africa that included on-scene reporting by correspondent Gabe Joselow from the Central African Republic on the slaughter of elephants for their ivory tusks, as well as reports from Hong Kong and elsewhere in Asia on the trade. Both series were well received by language services.

2012 Indonesian Affiliate Conferences

VOA's Indonesian Service held two conferences with affiliates in November, one in Bandung, from November 4-6, and the other in Surabaya, November 11-13. Over 200 radio, TV and new media affiliates participated in the conferences. A central part of both conferences was an "Affiliates Business Meeting" in which VOA programs were promoted and feedback from affiliates for improvement and new ideas was solicited. Participants were encouraged to Tweet their thoughts during the conferences and a prize was given for the person who tweeted the most (see #mitravoa on Twitter).

Spotlighting Excellence

In November, IBB's Office of Performance Review presented its first-ever Spotlight on Excellence Awards. The purpose of the awards is to reward those language services that are performing at a high level and whose programs are advancing the goals and mission of the agency. Three services in VOA's East Asia and Pacific Division won honors. The Khmer Service won for "Journalistic Standards" for its outstanding reporting on the Khmer Rouge Tribunals. The Indonesian Service won for "Presentation Quality" and the Vietnamese Service won for "Technical Quality" for its outstanding accomplishments on VOA's most second popular website after English. In the South Asia Division, the Urdu Service won an award for "Unique VOA Quality" for the television program *Sana Ek Pakistani*, a show about young Pakistanis living in America. The Russian Service social media driven weekly program *Podelis* was given an award for "Excellence in Audience Engagement."

Pashto Icon Is a Big Hit with Deewa's Young Audiences

A VOA Pashto children's poetry program is getting credit for encouraging young people in the volatile Pakistan-Afghan border region to go to school. The Deewa radio program *Jump Jump Camel*, which began broadcasting earlier this year, is the first such international Pashto broadcast. The weekly program airs children's songs by the well-known Pashto musician and singer Sardar Ali. Ali is an icon on the Pashto music scene, and he is as enthusiastic about the program as his young listeners. He says music is key to capturing the attention of the young people. "Without music," he says, "it's just regular talk to them." *Jump Jump Camel* is a hit with parents as well as children, according to the chief of VOA's Deewa Radio and television section, Nafees Takar. It is not unusual, he says, for mothers to call Deewa to say how much they appreciate the poetry program because it has made their children excited about learning and made them eager to go to school.

UrbanFest 2012

For two days at the end of November, staffers of VOA's Indonesian Service participated in Jakarta's UrbanFest 2012. The annual outdoor music and culture festival attracts 40-50,000 people, most of them young. This year, in addition to promoting VOA programs, the VOA booth at the festival featured a mini-TV studio where people were challenged to "try-out" as VOA newscasters. The try-outs were videotaped and will be found on VOA Indonesia's YouTube channel.

Notable Interviews

- The Georgian Service had an exclusive TV interview with the new foreign minister of Georgia, Maia Panjikidze, during her first official visit to Washington. Panjikidze is a member of the coalition of opposition parties, called Georgian Dream, that won the October parliamentary elections in Georgia.
- In an interview with the Creole Service, the prime minister of Haiti, Laurent Lamothe, said the government has cut red tape to allow easier flow of foreign investment.
- The EU High Representative for Bosnia, Valentin Inzko, appeared live on VOA Bosnian's *Studio Washington*. Inzko accused the leadership of the Serbian entity of creating new political tensions and said Bosnia's political stalemate slows down Bosnian integration into Europe.
- UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Mia Farrow spoke with English to Africa about the plight of civilians in the Democratic Republic of Congo who have endured so many years of conflict.
- TV to Africa's Vincent Makori conducted a two-part in-studio interview with UNAIDS' Executive Director, Michel Sidibe, for *In Focus*.
- John Negroponte, former director of National Intelligence during the George W. Bush administration, gave a wide-ranging interview, in Spanish, to *Foro Interamericano* that covered U.S. relations with Latin America, the Iranian presence in the region, as well as the turmoil in the Middle East.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

Tops on the English Website

The top-trafficked story on the English website for the period was Kate Woodsome's "New Chinese Passports Rile Asian Neighbors" (<http://www.voanews.com/content/china-passport-disputes/1552044.html>). It has had more than 123,000 page views and was the top-ranked story for both the Middle East and Asia. It is one of our most trafficked stories for the entire year. Also, the VOA News Google Plus page surpassed 220,000 followers during this time period and continues to grow at a rate of 2,000 to 3,000 a day.

MOOCs May Be on Their Way to Learning English

Massive open online courses – MOOCs – are the big new thing in higher education. VOA Learning English is talking with a faculty member at UC Berkeley about starting an English teaching MOOC. Learning English is also pursuing a project to connect audience members with

University of Virginia students specially trained to help international scholars practice their English.

Middle East Voices

With major news events happening in Gaza, Egypt and Syria, traffic to the Middle East Voices website increased by 48 percent, with the largest increase in traffic from Egypt. One posting on domestic violence in Egypt, [<http://middleeastvoices.voanews.com/2012/11/voices-opening-the-closed-door-addressing-domestic-violence-in-egypt-video-86655/>] received almost 1,200 page views and even more individual Facebook Likes. A *Points of View* podcast using comments from Amr Hamzawy, founder of the Free Egypt Party and former liberal member of the Egyptian People's Assembly, focuses on the controversies over the drafting of a new constitution. This audio file has had nearly 1,000 listens from Egypt.

VOANews.com Web and Mobile Traffic											
November 2012											
Language Service	Visits			Pageviews			Quality Metrics (November 2012)		Mobile Visits		
	November 2012	October 2012	% change	November 2012	October 2012	% change	PV / Visit	time on site	November 2012	October 2012	% change
All VOA	14,000,937	14,176,237	2%	38,258,315	42,713,572	-7%	2.73	5:23	4,491,636	4,185,888	11%
English	3,459,108	3,315,629	8%	6,144,473	6,856,423	-7%	1.78	3:00	1,950,458	1,706,141	18%
Vietnamese	2,226,394	2,365,577	-3%	7,964,586	8,935,349	-8%	3.58	7:17	260,030	292,219	-8%
Persian	1,998,133	2,397,827	-14%	6,520,131	5,913,960	14%	3.26	10:14	107,266	129,011	-14%
Russian	1,397,169	960,018	50%	2,260,696	2,557,573	-9%	1.62	3:53	99,275	86,232	19%
Special English	1,025,685	1,070,211	-1%	3,837,559	4,254,739	-7%	3.74	10:15	164,364	154,919	10%
Chinese	900,540	971,163	-4%	2,985,556	3,292,749	-6%	3.32	11:23	215	675	-67%
Burmese	661,696	656,217	4%	1,842,874	2,175,937	-12%	2.79	10:28	131,916	126,962	7%
Somali	395,470	443,511	-8%	1,017,744	1,715,548	-39%	2.57	8:46	168,191	153,566	13%
Amharic	307,055	385,760	-18%	1,002,837	1,753,945	-41%	3.27	13:26	261,053	289,302	-7%
Spanish	187,957	170,488	14%	299,301	293,851	5%	1.59	2:43	646,114	575,707	16%
Tigrigna	156,205	179,626	-10%	525,872	189,816	186%	3.37	11:36			
Ukrainian	129,466	121,291	10%	180,368	199,134	-6%	1.39	2:19	10,818	10,985	2%
Khmer	123,649	129,172	-1%	357,833	293,529	26%	2.89	8:26	32,388	35,014	-4%
Urdu	99,203	176,270	-42%	474,986	440,414	11%	4.79	8:44	48,506	54,869	-9%
Albanian	97,898	95,277	6%	248,296	225,116	14%	2.54	5:53	9,086	9,166	2%
Tibetan	73,780	75,084	2%	257,777	227,481	17%	3.49	16:33	13,311	10,496	31%
Hausa	69,906	69,689	4%	154,488	175,046	-9%	2.21	7:17	245,630	244,950	4%
Korean	69,118	72,331	-1%	184,398	165,403	15%	2.67	6:46	68,554	68,794	3%
Portuguese	59,234	61,520	-1%	169,552	246,382	-29%	2.86	9:52	11,814	12,558	-3%
Khmer - English	46,378	38,373	25%	99,896	83,434	24%	2.15	6:16	18,311	13,077	45%
Tibetan - English	46,006	43,018	11%	112,264	91,187	27%	2.44	13:42	6,790	4,708	49%
Dari	44,793	45,802	1%	123,130	139,188	-9%	2.75	8:59	5,866	6,036	0%
Lao	44,199	43,490	5%	190,825	182,885	8%	4.32	10:49	2,657	1,072	156%
Pashto	43,496	46,462	-3%	135,425	129,036	8%	3.11	15:53	8,495	8,817	0%
Turkish	43,318	36,166	24%	74,285	69,588	10%	1.71	2:37	13,194	14,989	-9%
Thai	41,520	26,031	65%	50,159	51,665	0%	1.21	2:50	8,126	4,082	106%
Afaan Oromoo	37,415	36,495	6%	82,374	80,339	6%	2.2	7:19			
Serbian	28,750	32,619	-9%	70,052	60,279	20%	2.44	4:54	1,541	1,768	-10%
Central Africa	27,628	24,650	16%	62,746	63,103	3%	2.27	1:48	6,460	803	731%
Azerbaijani	21,735	21,307	5%	48,530	41,655	20%	2.23	5:31	2,151	2,142	4%
French to Africa	19,750	20,775	-2%	45,346	48,987	-4%	2.3	6:08	5,569	5,110	13%
Cantonese	18,319	18,205	4%	37,649	46,479	-16%	2.06	3:55	1,505	747	108%
Kurdish	17,040	14,466	22%	37,121	37,048	4%	2.18	6:52	2,048	2,432	-13%
Zimbabwe - English	16,790	17,769	-2%	33,779	30,604	14%	2.01	4:50	10,378	9,921	8%
Georgian	16,485	17,774	-4%	36,202	34,555	8%	2.2	2:43	315	503	-35%
Uzbek	14,882	15,857	-3%	45,887	49,860	-5%	3.08	7:55	14,132	14,154	3%

Bosnian	13,593	13,298	6%	29,039	28,841	4%	2.14	9:58	785	574	41%
Deewa	12,582	11,966	9%	35,672	25,858	43%	2.84	11:09	3,362	3,589	-3%
Macedonian	11,749	16,610	-27%	25,301	43,303	-40%	2.15	2:14	1,136	1,483	-21%
Bangla	11,578	11,606	3%	29,344	30,629	-1%	2.53	7:51	3,312	3,373	1%
Armenian	10,037	10,499	-1%	24,775	32,062	-20%	2.47	6:05	402	454	-9%
Swahili	9,149	8,730	8%	24,230	26,269	-5%	2.65	13:14	7,170	6,157	20%
Indonesian	8,818	9,181	-1%	21,228	25,083	-13%	2.41	2:57	128,151	110,295	20%
Greek	8,463	10,947	-20%	18,805	12,216	59%	2.22	1:26	-	3	-100%
Creole	7,119	7,853	-6%	25,513	25,405	4%	3.58	11:08			
Kurdi	4,316	3,516	27%	8,770	9,380	-3%	2.03	7:09			
Shona	3,451	2,665	34%	4,952	2,990	71%	1.43	5:27	9,780	7,206	40%
Ndebele	995	1,066	-4%	2,064	1,105	93%	2.07	5:03	1,011	827	26%

VOA Social Media Report

October 16, 2012 – November 15, 2012

	Youtube	Twitter	Facebook
	Video Views	Followers	Total Number of Fans (sum of all account fans)
Albanian	147,052	2,619	37,641
Armenian	8,714	48	456
Azerbaijani	12,766	2,018	389
Bangla	38,082	na	4,028
Bosnian	12,251	157	2,738
Burmese	381,143	2,628	19,983
Cantonese	24,582	378	152
Central Africa	1,312	86	1,216
Chinese	616,390	17,707	5,701
Creole	1,968	5396	310
Dari/Pashto	87,805	2,198	147,856
Deewa	6,116	1060	6,699
English	803,316	91,803	131,231
French	3,215	778	6,720
Georgian	3,667	335	3,482
Greek	4,139	1,343	415
Hausa	3,929	6,873	65,057
Horn	2,105	994	53,477
Indonesian	192,264	35,113	1,100,738
Khmer	441,064	7,381	39,593
Korean	4,498	87	622
Kurdish	4,933	3,737	7,850
Lao	2,082	na	941
Macedonian	1118	238	9,071
Persian	no data	18,853	1,168,455
Portuguese	384	388	6,039
Russian	217,068	54,391	8,189
Serbian	99,956	418	10,052
Somali	10,066	2,845	17,366
Spanish	60,469	11,693	3,046
Learning English	844,171	44,140	207,096
Swahili	4,269	548	3,629
Thai	50,545	na	3,200
Tibetan	107,404	2,246	10,197
Turkish	20,433	3,872	2,687
Ukrainian	1,949	8,010	7,680
Urdu	71,038	3,941	2,063
Uzbek	90,933	851	508
Vietnamese	1,497,034	2,060	20,753
Zimbabwe	4246	643	1,811
Congo Story	3,671	1073	4,004

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Media and Outreach

- VOA Director David Ensor discussed his role at VOA and VOA's mission with Washington Post reporter Tom Fox in an interview titled, "Leading the Voice of America: An Interview with VOA director David Ensor." It appeared on November 13, 2012. (http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/on-leadership/leading-the-voice-of-america-an-interview-with-voa-director-david-ensor/2012/11/13/a2fec54a-2dd3-11e2-beb2-4b4cf5087636_story.html)
- David Ensor also participated in a November 26th panel discussion at Columbia University, which focused on the challenges facing government-funded journalistic organizations.
- VOA Executive Editor Steve Redisch participated in a panel discussion at a BBC-sponsored conference "International Broadcasting Without Barriers," which brought broadcasters, satellite companies and government officials together to deal with the issue of satellite jamming.
- Host of VOA's *OMG! Meiyu* Jessica Beinecke was interviewed by NPR's Neal Conan for his radio show *Talk of the Nation* on November 28, 2012. During the show Jessica talked about *OMG! Meiyu* and answered questions from listeners. NPR published a companion piece, "From 'JK' To 'Eye Gunk': Taking U.S. Slang To China," on its website (<http://www.npr.org/2012/11/28/166082428/from-jk-to-eye-gunk-taking-u-s-slang-to-china>).
- On November 15, Reasey Poch, one of VOA Khmer's best-known TV personalities in Cambodia, was interviewed by Cambodia's CTN, the No.1 television station and a VOA Khmer TV affiliate, during a trip to that country. The 20-minute interview was live on the station's 6:00 p.m. newscast and focused on Reasey's background, his personal journey from the killing fields to the United States, his education, and how he came to work at VOA. CTN is VOA's most important TV affiliate in Cambodia.

Press Releases

- Agreement Signed to Put VOA Programs on Sky Net Satellite TV to Burma – Dec. 6
- VOA Radio Show Encourages Entrepreneurship in Burundi – Nov. 19
- VOA's Zindagi 360: Reaching a New Demographic in Pakistan – Nov. 15

VOA Studio Tour

- The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) brought 40 senior election officials from around the world to VOA for a meeting and Q&A with VOA Acting Associate Director of Language Programming Rebecca McMenamin. The stop at VOA was part of a four-day program to observe the U.S. election process first-hand. – November 6
- Participants in a Citizen Diplomats Program who have spent time in Afghanistan came to VOA to be interviewed by broadcasters in the Afghanistan Service and to meet with VOA Director David Ensor. Michael Collins, Acting Afghanistan Service Chief, discussed his service's Dari and Pashto programming. – November 7
- Afghanistan government media representatives taking part in a State Department-sponsored program on Government-Media Communications Strategies met with South

Asia Division Director Spozhmai Maiwandi and Afghanistan Service staff. Two of the participants were interviewed while at VOA. – November 15

- Journalists from the United Arab Emirates took part in a BBG/VOA-sponsored panel discussion with VOA Senior Reporter Cecily Hilleary and TV Alhurra State Department correspondent and host of *Free Hour* Michel Ghandour. The participants were on a UAE Embassy-sponsored trip to the United States. – November 27
- Students studying Persian at the Global Learning Center took a tour of VOA's Persian Service to talk with staff and observe a live VOA show. – November 29

F. PERSONNEL

John Lennon

After 44 years of service in U.S. international broadcasting, John Lennon will retire the end of December. Currently the Associate Director of Strategy and Planning, during his long and distinguished career John has held just about every position there is in broadcast journalism, starting as a writer and reporter. Before becoming Associate Director of Strategy and Planning, he served four years as Associate Director for Language Programming, overseeing programming for VOA's 43 language services. Prior to that, he was the Director of the Office of Performance Review, and for extended periods was IBB's Acting Associate Director for Program Support. During that time, John expanded the use of audience research and market analysis in the development of programming initiatives and helped establish the Office of Marketing and Program Placement. He also served as Deputy Director of the Latin American and European Divisions, Director of the South European Division, and Acting Director of WORLDNET Television. For a time, in 1994 and 1995, he left international broadcasting to serve in the National Security Council as a Director in the Office of Democracy. Throughout the years, despite his many responsibilities, John has always volunteered to provide professional guidance to young employees through the Agency's mentoring program. Director Ensor, in his announcement of John's retirement, said "No one has a keener understanding of all aspects of U.S. international broadcasting, and no one believes more in our mission and the importance of providing trusted news and information to our worldwide audiences."

New Chief of Afghan Service

Masood Farivar, an award-winning Afghan journalist and author, has been selected as the new chief of VOA's Afghanistan Service. He began his journalism career reporting on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the late 1980s. Following the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, he attended the Lawrenceville School in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, and Harvard College, from which he graduated in 1994 with a degree in history and politics. He spent the next 10 years working as a Dow Jones reporter and editor in New York, covering the United Nations and global energy markets for *Dow Jones Newswires* and the *Wall Street Journal*. Since 2007, Masood has been in Afghanistan working for Internews Network, providing oversight of news and cultural programming for *Salam Watandar (Hello Countrymen) Radio* and helping it become Afghanistan's largest network of independent radio stations. He spent the 2011-2012 academic year as a John S. Knight Fellow in Journalism at Stanford University. He is the author of a memoir and a contributor to *110 Stories: New York Writes After September 11*, a collection of

short stories and poems by New York writers. He will be coming from Kabul in the coming weeks to take the helm of the Afghanistan Service.

PNN Appointments

Setareh Derakhshesh has been selected as PNN Deputy Director, a new position created because of the enormous growth of PNN. As Deputy Director, she will act somewhat as a service chief does in other VOA Divisions. The heads of PNN news, programming and operations will report to her, and she will also assume other duties as delegated by the PNN Director. Setareh has been with PNN and its predecessor services since 1993, serving in a variety of roles: researcher, reporter, radio newscaster and producer, television news anchor and managing editor, current affairs program anchor and managing editor and acting executive editor. She has also been a webmaster and managing editor for print media publications as well as a researcher and copy editor for a local network news affiliate television station. In addition to her work in the journalism field, Setareh is a well-respected university lecturer on international relations as well as French literature and culture.

Cal Perry is joining us as Senior Executive Producer, responsible for PNN's programs and developing new programming, primarily targeted to audiences in the 15-35 demographic. Cal brings to PNN an on-the-ground Middle East perspective. He comes to VOA from Al Jazeera Television Network, where he is the Middle East Correspondent for Al Jazeera English, based in Jerusalem. Prior to that, he was at CNN, working his way from International Assignment Editor to International Correspondent, Bureau Chief in Baghdad and Beirut. In Baghdad, he ran CNN's 65-person bureau during the height of the insurgency. Cal has also been a Press Officer in Israel and Palestine as well as a Program Officer in Vietnam. His coverage of the Israel-Lebanon War in 2006 earned him an Edward R. Morrow award. Cal will join PNN on December 17.

DATE: December 5, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for November, 2012

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

Spotlight on Excellence Awards, November 28, 2012: The Office of Performance Review (OPR) carried out the first-ever “Spotlight on Excellence” Awards, initiated to recognize the great work being done by VOA and OCB. Six winning language services were recognized in the following categories, which are the criteria used in the annual program review process:

- Excellence in Journalistic Standards: VOA Khmer Service for war crimes trial coverage
- Excellence in Presentation: VOA Indonesian Service for its high quality segments distributed to its vast affiliate network
- Excellence in Technical Quality: VOA Vietnamese Service, as the the second most frequently visited web site in VOA (after English)
- Excellence in Relevance: Office of Cuba Broadcasting for “Estado de SATS” - produced by dissidents inside Cuba and smuggled out to OCB
- Excellence in Unique VOA/OCB Quality: VOA Urdu Service, for “Sana a Pakistani” - about life in America through the eyes of a young Pakistani woman who has just arrived in the country
- Excellence in Audience Engagement: VOA Russian, whose social media program “Podelis!” on November 1 was the most shared link among Russians discussing the American elections

The six winners were presented with framed certificates and DSLR cameras by IBB Director Dick Lobo.

Addressing Low Employee Morale: Following the release of the 2012 Federal Employee Viewpoints Survey, the federal entity directors received a report from the Partnership for Public Service outlining specific areas that are problematic and staff suggestions for making improvements. As part of our ongoing collaboration to improve low morale, in December, IBB, VOA and OCB leaders will meet to develop an action plan incorporating staff suggestions.

Jamming of MBN Alhurra Transmissions: The Alhurra-Iraq TV feed on Nilesat 201 was jammed on November 25 and 26 for nearly an hour each day. Nilesat has not provided any information with respect to the source of the interference. The signal has been clean and free of interference since 0555 UTC on Monday, November 26.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: Representatives from BBG and the department of State in Washington conducted a video conference with U.S. Embassy in Seoul in November to discuss next steps in the project. As a result, we plan to present a detailed technical plan to the Korea Communications Commission in mid-December for their eventual filing with the International Telecommunications Union.

MPLS Conversions: Efforts continue to convert fiber and other communications circuits throughout the BBG global delivery network to more economical and versatile MPLS (Multi-Protocol Label Switching) connections. An MPLS link has been established between RFA and the Cohen Building in Washington. A link between Washington and the Lampertheim Transmitting Station will be established in January. Direct connection of broadcast element programming to gateway stations will follow in the first quarter of 2013.

FM and TV Transmission Projects

- VOA expects to have the frequency and final broadcast authorization in hand for a new BBG FM station in **Juba, South Sudan**, early in December. The embassy indicated that the new antenna tower foundation was started the week of November 26, and the tower should be erected in 30-40 days. The detailed status of other infrastructure preparation is not known but as of this report, everything appears to be on track for an early January installation.
- The BBG FM facility in **Ajloun, Jordan**, site is still off-air because of acts of vandalism and theft. The site is one of BBG's major assets for broadcasting to Syria. We had pursued the option of relocating to another site nearby with improved security, but the tower cannot accommodate the required antenna. As a result, we are in the process of applying more pressure to Jordan Radio and TV to provide additional security at the Ajloun site. TSI recently contacted the military attaché at the U.S. Embassy to request assistance.

BBG Transmitting Station Activities

- We are sending in experts from Washington and the Philippines to assess the damage and options for repair following significant damage to our transmitter in Sri Lanka by Cyclone Nilam. This will likely be an expensive and lengthy maintenance and repair project.
- In October, the Sao Tome Transmitting Station was honored by its first visit by a Congressional delegation since 2005. Rep. Russ Carnahan (D-MO 3rd District), Rep. David Dreier (R-CA 9th District), Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA 33rd District), and Rep. Robert L. Turner (R-NY 9th District) were in attendance with supporting staff and toured the station with the Transmitting Station Manager and U.S. Ambassador Eric Benjaminson.

IBB Information Technology (IT)

- Hardware for the Prague Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery site is ready for configuration and then transshipment to Prague. A detailed project plan has been drafted, and a trip to Prague in mid-December is contemplated for detailed discussions with RFE/RL.

- IT continues to support the IBB Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) in its efforts to move to the Microsoft Customer Relationship Management (CRM) online platform for managing its affiliates. A targeted OSD operations launch on CRM is slated for early next year.
- The inventory transfer of all IT Hardware asset information into the Footprints Asset Management central database was a success. Moving forward, all new hardware assets are entered directly into the Footprints Asset Management central database. This direct entry of Assets into a “live environment” brings the BBG a step closer to “real time” asset monitoring required to meet mandated compliance standards. The Footprints Asset Management database, will provide a baseline for lifecycle planning, budgetary requests, and Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) compliance.

IBB Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities: The IAC Team coordinated a meeting with Psiphon, the IBB Office of Digital Design and Innovation, RFE/RL, and their mobile application developer EEA, to discuss the integration of Psiphon's circumvention layer into the mobile apps being developed for RFE/RL and VOA services. Based on results of preliminary testing, EEA expects final testing will be completed and the initial apps will be ready for release in 2 months.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION (ODDI)

In November, ODDI focused on infrastructure for U.S. international media, including the launch of “Direct” – the BBG’s new web system for delivering broadcast quality files to affiliates, and integrating the new Online Video/Audio Platform “Kalutura,” which will streamline process for putting our content on the web..

In addition to these two major efforts, ODDI developed a “back log” of feature upgrades requested by the Office of Strategy Development, VOA and the language services. They plan to initiate a number of two-week “sprints” over the remaining part of the quarter and into the next quarter to develop these requested upgrades. Finally, ODDI is working toward the creation and launch of new **Mobile Applications** for all the entities in both iOS (Apple) and Android. Our first launches will be with MBN and OCB in early January, followed by RFA early in the new year and then VOA in Q2. We are also going to be launching Symbian (Nokia) applications in Africa with the VOA services.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

New and Finalized Development Agreements:

- OSD secured an additional \$150,000 for the Bangladesh Project with VOA, bringing the total amount brought in to \$587,000.
- OSD negotiated with CDC to provide \$190,000 to VOA for a polio project in Nigeria.
- Africom turned over \$150,000 to VOA for the launch of a call-in show in Somali.
- The State Department turned over \$51,000 to continue the Citizen Journalists project in DRC. Embassy Kinshasa also indicated it will provide \$425,000 to continue the health show in DRC.

- The State Department provided \$120,000 for OSD to train journalists on pandemic influenza in China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Afghanistan.

U.S. Elections Coverage: The U.S. Presidential election created an opportunity to promote and coordinate an impressive number of radio and TV interactives with stations in Latin America. VOA reporters filed for affiliates from Washington, Boston, Chicago, and New York, where the VOA LatAm reporter did double-duty fielding requests for information in the aftermath of Sandy. More than 100 reports were filed on Election Day alone. OSD also used this as an opportunity to reach out to dozens of contacts who have been considering affiliation, to highlight the advantages of having VOA as a “U.S. bureau.”

Russia Affiliations: Russian Business Channel (RBC) and the VOA Russian service performed their first test of an interactive TV feature between a VOA reporter at the New York Stock Exchange and RBC reporters in Moscow this month. The second test will go this week and if successful, could lead to a regular affiliation with the channel. Additionally, Rambler.ru began to catalog VOA’s video RSS stream this month. This means that VOA’s Russian videos will now be featured on the Rambler.ru web site with text digests of the videos and direct links back to the VOA Russian web site. Rambler is one of the biggest search and news aggregators and should help push further traffic to the web site.

Zimbabwe Satellite Issues: Leading Africa-wide satellite TV and audio pay service Multichoice/DSTV expressed concern to OSD over threats they say they received from Zimbabwean ministry officials about VOA’s “Studio 7” radio program on the DSTV audio stream. OSD sent a letter to Multichoice’s General Manager for Corporate Affairs emphasizing VOA’s editorial integrity and objectivity. We await further response. VOA has a 24-hour English news and music audio channel on DSTV. DSTV/Multichoice is the major pay TV satellite service with pan-African coverage and a subscriber base of approximately 5.6 million Africa-wide.

Bangladesh Placement: ATN Bangla, the number two television station in Bangladesh, will begin airing VOA Bangla’s “Straight from America,” the week of December 3, as the result of an agreement negotiated by OSD.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: In November, BBG staff continued to work with key stakeholders in the House and Senate, as well as the State Department, regarding the Smith-Mundt Modernization Act, which had passed the House as part of the National Defense Authorization Act. It was dropped during the Senate markup process of the NDAA, but there is interest in the Senate in including the measure.

BBG’s congressional coordinator worked with VOA and RFA to address inquiries from Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA). David Ensor and Libby Liu jointly responded to a letter from the Congressman about VOA and RFA coverage of forced organ harvesting. Additionally, BBG facilitated a discussion with Rep. Rohrabacher to address his concerns about

a personnel action in RFA's Tibetan Service, and political influence on coverage allegedly exercised by the Tibetan government in exile.

Work continued with the White House Office of Confirmations and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to complete the required nomination paperwork for Jeff Shell, which was submitted on November 16. Additionally, two days of internal briefings for Mr. Shell with IBB and BBG senior managers and others were arranged through this office, along with courtesy visits to key staffers with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. A further round of such appointments is planned for mid-December.

With the arrest and eventual release of Antonio Rodiles, the Cuba-based independent producer of TV Martí's "Estado de SATS," regular updates were provided to Hill staff who follow issues about the island. Additionally, OCB Director Carlos García-Perez met on this matter with House Foreign Affairs Committee staffers, who offered to provide supportive statements from committee leadership as needed.

Media: Through news releases, contact with media freedom organizations and sustained contact with the State Department, the public affairs staff for the BBG and MBN continued working closely together to spread the word about two Alhurra journalists who went missing in Syria on August 20 and were reportedly in the custody of Syrian government forces. On Saturday, November 17, the agency publicized news of the release of one of the journalist to a delegation of Turkish parliamentarians and journalists' organizations; MBN remained in touch with family members of both journalists throughout this development and ensured that all concerned were kept up to speed on events.

BBG Public Affairs worked closely with the Office of Cuba Broadcasting to publicize the arrest and eventual release of Antonio Rodiles, the Cuba-based independent producer of TV Martí's "Estado de SATS."

Working with VOA, we helped David Ensor prepare for a lengthy "On Leadership" interview; these features on management in federal government, organized by the Partnership for Public Service, appear periodically in *The Washington Post*; this one was published in mid-November.

BBG Public Affairs worked with several IBB offices and all the broadcast entities to plan for and execute the annual release of the Performance Accountability Report, along with the global audience estimate; a telephone briefing on the latter, led by IBB Director Dick Lobo and Bruce Sherman and attended by the research directors of all the entities, framed the news for several bloggers and academics interested in U.S. international media.

Graphics: The six-person Graphics Department was engaged, as ever, in a variety of design and production projects to support both internal and external messaging, as well as marketing uses.

Sets, backdrops and Election 2012 on-air logos were designed in-house and produced for use by all VOA TV programs in time for live use on Election Night. These eye-catching, colorful graphics added professional, visual polish to VOA's round-the clock coverage.

Production of the VOA 2013 Calendar was completed and the calendars delivered at the end of November. The theme of this year's calendar is U.S. national parks; stunning photos, combined with descriptive write-ups of the featured scenes, make this an attractive item that also serves a public diplomacy purpose, since some of the calendars are shipped on request to U.S. embassies in countries where VOA is a well-known and key source of news.

Internal Communications: BBG Public Affairs, together with Graphics and other offices, began planning for a revamped Agency Health and Wellness program to include in-house announcements, posters, and revamping of the fitness room to make it more attractive visually, as well as to provide sought-after programs there.

Other Outreach: This office was the point of contact with Columbia University as it arranged a panel discussion featuring David Ensor and representatives of the BBC and France 24. Moderated by Nicholas Cull of USC's Annenberg School for Communications, the evening event drew more than 60 students and faculty members, who learned about the history and current trends of public service international broadcasting. The event provided an opportunity for BBG outreach to other parts of Columbia, as well as the Committee to Protect Journalists and the New York offices of Freedom House.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Update on OIG-GAO Inspections:

- An exit briefing with the BBG Governors regarding the *OIG Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors* was held by the OIG on November 19. BBG comments on the draft report and formal/informal recommendations are due to the OIG by December 10. IBB Director Lobo and his staff are collecting all responses for submission to the OIG.
- The GAO held an exit conference with IBB senior management regarding the *GAO Engagement on USIB Streamlining* on November 19, as well. OPR coordinated Agency comments and clarifications on the GAO's Statement of Facts discussed at the meeting, and provided further clarification and documentation to the GAO as requested at the exit conference. A draft report with recommendations is expected in December, upon which the Agency will have at least two weeks to submit a response.
- The OIG completed their annual FISMA audit of the Agency's information security program. The OIG reviewed progress towards remediating last year's findings and closed several recommendations based on these findings.

Zimbabwe Research Presentation at Gallup, November 8, 2012: OPR Research Analyst Sonja Gloeckle presented data from the recent BBG-Gallup survey of Zimbabwe during a BBG Research Series Briefing event at Gallup.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Buyout: On October 16, 2012, the agency announced an opportunity for employees to apply for a Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment, or Buyout. Thirty-two applicants applied for a buyout, including six employees who have requested separation dates after December 31, 2012, the advertised deadline to resign or retire and receive a buyout. The Office of Human Resources is working with the IBB Chief of Staff and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer to determine if later separation dates can be approved.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Partnership with Historically Black Colleges and Universities: During the month of November, OCR took part in a meeting with federal agency representatives and liaisons at the U.S. Department of Education, in an effort to discuss and take action in a positive step toward fulfilling the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), an initiative intended to increase support for and understanding of HBCUs. The proposed discussions involved reviewing the HBCU report for last fiscal year, discussing the future plans for the current and upcoming fiscal year. OCR is currently working on a transfer of surplus equipment to one of the land grant universities.

DATE: December 2, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Jeff Trimble, Deputy Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for November 2013

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

- Staff in the Office of the IBB Director coordinated with the Office of Performance Review to send a second letter to the Inspector General on November 22nd, responding to OIG's charge that the agency may have violated the Anti-Deficiency Act (ADA). This letter presents the agency's legal arguments against the ADA finding, along with documentation of the availability of funds in instances of pre-approval. The letter also asks OIG to consider the agency's mission in evaluating its contracting administration, noting that a less flexible approach will hinder the agency's response to surge requirements and fast start-ups.
- The Government of Kuwait approved our agreement to renew our transmitting station there for another 20 years. The transmitting station in Kuwait covers key broadcasts into Central Asia and the Middle East, including shortwave to Afghanistan and Radio Sawa signals to Saudi Arabia.
- In late November, Iran stopped deliberate interference on a Eutelsat satellite transponder, which had suffered interference for the past year. Iran denied it was responsible for the interference, but at a meeting in Geneva, announced that the offending signal would stop. There is now no regular jamming of Western TV programming from Iran; however, the government of Iran retains the capability.
- Over the past two years, the Office of Digital and Design Innovation (ODDI) has been working toward unifying web analytics to get consistent metrics on digital performance across the agency. Between May 2013 and early October, we were using our own configuration to collect mobile website metrics using our old analytics platform. After noting some discrepancies in May, we notified the entities and aimed to correct the problem. With the recent implementation of our new Adobe Analytics platform we find that the mobile website traffic numbers do not match from the old to the new platform, though the desktop analytics are consistent. For highly trafficked websites, the difference ranges from a 37% decrease in page views (VOA Hausa) to as much as an 85% decrease in page views (VOA Spanish). ODDI is planning to bring in an independent analytics auditor to verify our new configuration, and to identify any problems. We will take the necessary steps to correct the metrics platforms to ensure that our actual traffic is being reported as accurately as possible.
- Working with the Office of General Counsel and the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Communications and External Affairs wrote the Congressional Notification to identify search firms in order to hire a CEO of U.S. international media and delivered it on November 25.



December 2, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for December

KEY ISSUES/CHALLENGES

- Myanmar's Ministry of Information has notified VOA that permission has been granted to open an official accredited news bureau in Myanmar. This marks another milestone for VOA as the Myanmar government continues its rapid pace of change from one of the world's most repressive media minders to a government more accepting of freedom of information. Within the past year, VOA television programming has been allowed to appear on the Burmese cable channel SkyNet and VOA English Learning products have aired on Burmese state radio. In addition to VOA, the BBC, Reuters, and a Japanese news agency have also received permission to open news bureaus in Myanmar. The opportunity to open a bureau in Myanmar will give the VOA Burmese Service on-the-ground presence to deliver accurate, reliable and comprehensive reporting, provide exceptional programming to its audience, and remain the leading international broadcaster in Myanmar.
- VOA is one step closer to completing its new Persian Service management team by bringing Mohammad Manzarpour on board as the service's executive editor on November 22nd. Manzarpour, whose arrival had been delayed by some complicated visa issues, has hit the ground running by leading VOA Persian's blanket coverage of the Geneva nuclear talks.

Manzarpour comes to VOA with more than 15 years of multimedia journalism and management experience, including his most recent position as the Washington Bureau Chief for BBC Persian TV.

VOA also expects to fill the last remaining vacant Persian Service management position in the near future with the recruitment of a new Internet managing editor.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim Management Team
DATE: December 10, 2014
SUBJECT: IBB Monthly Report for November 2014

GLOBAL STRATEGY:

Office of Strategy & Development (OSD)

- The OSD-engineered FM expansion in Africa continues with Dakar, Senegal slated to debut by Dec 20 with VOA French to Africa programming in the new 24/7 format.
- An OSD/Global Strategy delegation has just traveled to Turkey to explore further local media partnerships in this newly important but challenging market, turning up important new opportunities with leading platforms, including mobile operator Turkcell, Internet portal Mynet, and national TV channels TGRT, Haber Turk, and CNNTurk.
- OSD, with ODDI's expertise, has stood up the next iteration of the internal system called SMART (Strategic Management and Audience Research Tool) with profiles for some 100 BBG target countries incorporating the strategic goals and performance targets developed during this past spring's strategy review – core strategic information in one central archive to drive ongoing performance management and review.
- OSD's Bruce Sherman attended the DG7 meeting in Amsterdam, along with Rob Bole and David Ensor. The meeting focused on potential areas of further collaboration among DG7 broadcasters, including strategies for local partnership, technical cooperation, editorial knowledge and strategy, media development in Russia, crisis broadcasting, online analytics, and digital safety and privacy of journalists. On the sidelines of the meeting, David and Bruce met with Robert Zaal, head of Radio Netherlands Worldwide, to discuss collaborating on French-language content for African audiences.

Office of Digital & Design Innovation (ODDI)

- Mobile – Coordinated with VOA French to Africa to manage an effective WhatsApp (the leading mobile messaging app on the continent) mobile messaging campaign to West Africa as part of VOA's Ebola crisis response. Since its launch on November 12, daily messages from VOA and international health organizations directly reach nearly 200 WhatsApp subscribers from across the region.
- Digital Services – Partnered with TSI Enterprise Applications team and OSD to update the SMART (strategic management) system to the new cloud-based Office365 version of SharePoint. These new updates include improved accessibility to all country and language service strategy documents, a more user-centric design, improved search functions and a host of new features that are integrated with the agency's enterprise digital communication and information platform.

Office of Performance Review (OPR)

OPR coordinated two meetings to discuss harmonization of RFE/RL-VOA-IBB programming and operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan's FATA region. The goal is to bring conclusions and recommendations to the Board early in 2015.

Office of Research & Assessments (ORA)

ORA received initial data back from Nigeria, the site of its first Impact Panel. Other impact panels (Afghanistan, Egypt, and Cambodia) are now going into the field. The Impact Panels are

designed to use mobile internet and SMS to quickly and frequently elicit audience reactions to a number of indicators of the BBG's Impact Model over a period of several months.

GLOBAL OPERATIONS:

- The Agency offered to all employees the opportunity to apply for a Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP or Buyout) on or before December 1, 2014. Twenty-seven applications were received in the Office of Human Resources and are being processed for 23 of the 27 employees to depart on December 31, 2014. The remaining four have been approved for departures early in 2015.
- This week the Partnership for Public Service released their annual "Best Places to Work" rankings which are based on the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results. BBG is ranked 24 out of 25 mid-size agencies. The subcomponent results had IBB 292 out of 315 subcomponents, VOA 278 out of 315 subcomponents and OCB 286 out of 315 subcomponents. As widely reported in the press, the 2014 data show a decline in morale among federal workers with their jobs and workplaces for a fourth consecutive year and the lowest overall score since the workplace rankings were launched in 2003. BBG has been meeting and benchmarking with other agencies that either rank higher or have made significant gains to explore strategies for improving morale and employee engagement.
- Unrest in Iraq continues to stop transmissions from BBG FM and TV sites in Mosul and Tikrit. In Al Hillah, the Government of Iraq has forced us to lower the power of the BBG FM transmitter that carries Radio Sawa because of operational issues and to turn off the transmitter carrying VOA and Radio Free Iraq because of license issues. With the help of the Office of General Counsel, the embassy, and local counsel, we are filing new license applications for a number of transmitters and querying the regulatory commission about operational issues. The regulatory commission also questioned the status of our FM operations in Basrah, and we resolved their concerns.



December 13, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for December

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- VOA Tibetan has found a way to get around the Chinese firewall. The secret is a QR code – a machine-readable code consisting of an array of black and white squares, typically used for storing URLs or other information for reading by a camera or a smartphone. The code appears on the TV screen of those watching Tibetan programs via satellite, and when they use their smartphones to scan the code, it takes them straight to the Tibetan website because the code is a proxy URL to the VOA Tibetan website. In other words, they are able to jump the Chinese Internet firewall. The service successfully tested and broadcast special QR codes on satellite television for the first time December 5. VOA Chinese and Tibetan have used QR codes for web and e-mail distribution in the past to provide proxies to netizens in China to break through China's firewall. Working closely with Creative Services and Graphics, VOA Tibetan has embedded proxies in the new QR codes that allow television viewers to scan and immediately access its websites without any technical knowledge required. Promotional announcements describe how to use the QR codes that have new proxies every week as needed.
- Ten young journalists from Haiti recently spent a week with the Creole Service for multimedia training. The effort is a joint project between VOA and the U.S. Embassy in Port-Au-Prince. The journalists learned the latest techniques on social media, especially Twitter and Facebook, as well as television skills and best practices from VOA's Best Practices Guide. They also learned about journalism in America and the American political process. In remarks welcoming the journalists to the United States, Bocchit Edmond, Haiti's Ambassador to the Organization of American States, told them: "Today you are in Washington to get experience from the best: VOA journalists.... In Haiti we really need you, journalists are the watchdogs of our very young democracy."

DATE: February 8, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for January, 2012

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

Appointment of New Director of Communications and External Affairs: Lynne Weil has been appointed Director of Communications and External Affairs of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). Ms. Weil will act as the Board's primary strategist on communications and outreach activities and as the Board's chief advisor for Congressional and external affairs. She will advise the Board on agency-wide external communications strategy and will coordinate communications operations of all of the BBG's media networks. Ms. Weil also will oversee the BBG Public Affairs office and Congressional Liaison.

Combatting Iran's Jamming Efforts: The Office of Strategy and Development's Gary Thatcher attended the World Radiocommunication Conference in Geneva January 23-27 as a member of the U.S. delegation. He worked closely with the French, who introduced a resolution to change International Telecommunication Union regulations to better address the problem of satellite uplink jamming. The French proposal now has 15 official supporters and is working its way through diplomatic channels for presentation to the full WRC before the conference ends in mid-February.

Commission on Innovation: On February 10th, we will be hosting our first full Commission on Innovation meeting at the DC offices of RFE/RL. We have a blockbuster meeting with a number of Board members, as well as luminaries from the technology and innovation world. The USIB entities will be featured by enabling them to tap into this brain trust to work on a series of opportunities and goals they are facing.

Pursuing a Breakthrough Deal in Burma: Burma's political opening is creating new possibilities to distribute BBG programming inside the country on local outlets for the first time ever. VOA's Burmese Service Chief Than Lwin Htun struck an agreement in principle with the Burmese in November. He and the head of Marketing and Program Placement for the Office of Strategy and Development, Doug Boynton, are in Burma now to follow up with government and media officials on specific proposals for program placement and other opportunities.

OFFICE OF THE IBB DIRECTOR

Contractor Issues: In an ongoing effort to address contractor concerns, the IBB Director's Office hosted two brown bags specifically for contractors. The first session allowed contractors to ask questions and provide comments about their experiences with BBG. This standing room only event lasted for two hours and gave contractors the opportunity to ask tough questions of

managers from Contracts, CFO, as well as IBB and VOA senior managers. The second session focused on invoicing and payments, but also covered a wide range of questions. As a result of these meetings, the agency created a Contractor Resources page on Sharepoint, which is a portal for all contractor related information; developed an invoice template that includes all the necessary information to process invoices quickly; and started to identify ways to streamline the payment process and make it more transparent. We also plan to take other actions to address the concerns of contractors, consistent with the regulations and policies governing contractors.

Merger Finalized: The BBG/IBB staff merger was finalized on January 15th. In addition to combining BBG and IBB senior leadership, the merger created the Office of Strategy and Development and the Office of Communications and External Affairs and clarified responsibility for management efficiency review functions, Board support, and the creation of Agency management and administrative policies.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

Jamming of BBG Satellite Transmissions to Iran: The most recent incident of interference suspected to be intentional jamming of BBG satellite transmissions to Iran began on December 28 against the Arabsat/EB2 satellite and continues in effect to date. The jamming of the Arabsat/EB2 satellite is intermittent but each episode is of long enough duration to disrupt programming significantly. The source of the jamming interference appears to be outside of Iran. Even though VOA PNN and BBC Persian broadcasts are affected by this jamming, it is possible that Arabic broadcasters operating at this frequency may be the primary target.

Jamming of Other BBG Satellite Transmissions: The BBG/IBB Arabsat transmission that includes Alhurra, Alhurra Iraq, various Radio Sawa streams (Sunda, Levant, and Gulf), Radio Farda, and VOA 24 began suffering intentional jamming on January 11, 2012. Jamming occurs for one or two periods, typically of short duration, almost daily with some gaps. The source of the jamming signal has been geo-located to Ethiopia. BBG/IBB transmissions do not appear to be the primary target of the jamming. There are other Ethiopian broadcasters in the frequency package. Jamming continues as of the date of this report in early February. TSI is working with Arabsat to relocate the BBG/IBB content to another frequency that might not be affected by the jamming.

New BBG FM Transmitters in Tripoli: For the planned BBG FM station in Tripoli, Libya, TSI delivered all needed equipment to Tunis for shipment on to Tripoli. Because the land border crossing entrances to Libya have been closed, the contractor decided to transport the equipment by boat to Benghazi and then truck it to Tripoli. As of early February, the equipment was still en route. If the shipment arrives successfully early in the month, the station could be on-air by the end of February.

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: TSI has submitted to the Far East Broadcasting Corporation (FEBC) and the Korean Communications Commission (KCC) three technical options that are being explored for the new BBG medium wave facility. In several discussions with FEBC, we have agreed to a design concept in principle. TSI's consultant is now working on the actual system design and we expect to have the bulk of that design complete

within a few weeks. TSI engineers Gerhard Straub and Ken Claerbout will travel to Korea in February to discuss the design aspects with FEBC and to discuss the contracting and construction procedure.

FM and TV Transmission Projects

- TSI continues to work on the installation of seven additional BBG FM facilities in **Afghanistan**. According to the current schedule, the installation at **Lashkar Gah in Helmand Province**, should be on-air in March, and the installation in **Ghazni** should be on-air in April. Bad weather, shipping delays, and security issues have delayed these and subsequent planned installations.
- BBG engineer Ken Claerbout traveled to **Juba, South Sudan**, in late January to explore alternatives for establishing a BBG FM transmitter on embassy property.
- All equipment ordered in September 2011 to repair and upgrade **14 FM affiliates in Haiti** has been delivered to BBG. Equipment installation is planned to be completed by the end of May with training to follow thereafter.

IBB Information Technology (IT)

- The Computer System Support Division (CSS) is collaborating with HR to set up Skype on HR staff workstations. The goal of this effort is to reduce training travel cost by leveraging Skype to conduct training electronically as opposed to physical travel.
- Representatives from RFE/RL will be onsite at the BBG from February 13 through March 31, 2012 to train and implement the migration for OCB and MBN to Pangea, the content management system currently used by and hosted at an RFE/RL facility in Prague.

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities

- The IAC technical staff of TSI met with RFA's freedom2connect staff to brief RFA on TSI's endeavors and to discuss RFA's plans. This will help ensure that the two programs are mutually reinforcing rather than overlapping.
- The IAC Team has launched Radio Sawa on Psiphon's latest circumvention tool, Psiphon 3, following Persian and Chinese launches. In the case of Radio Sawa, the network's audience in Syria could most benefit at this time with access to a robust internet circumvention tool. However, Radio Sawa officials remain concerned over whether propagating such a tool might incite the Syrian government (or ostensibly any other government in the region) to block or filter MBN websites.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION

The Office began the new year with a name change, **Office of Digital & Design Innovation**, to better reflect its mission and goals. The office also welcomed **Randy Abramson** as Director of Digital Products and Operations after a successful career as a top digital manager at Discovery; and **Adam Martin** as Manager of Technology Services from NPR where he was a top digital media product manager.

The Office has been implementing a number of important projects, some of which are not inherently cutting edge, but providing a strong foundation for next generation products. These include:

- **Arabic Translation Hub:** In partnership with the BBC World Service, we will be standing up a digital service that brings in Arabic content from journalistically-verified sources and uses a combination of machine, professional and crowdsourced translation into English at the speed of news. We will be launching this service on May 15th.
- **Apps4Africa:** We are working in partnership with the Department of State and the Apps for Africa organization to sponsor the next round of the highly popular contest that supports African entrepreneurs in building cutting edge mobile applications. The BBG Innovation contest will focus on creating news and information applications built for and by Africans.
- **USIB Web Analytics Platform:** Our office is leading a first-time program to create a single web analytics platform that will provide consistent digital metrics on usage of our content across web, mobile, video and social media. The new analytic platform will be selected by RFP in March and implemented in April.
- **USIB Video/Audio Distribution:** Like the analytics effort above, we are implementing the first enterprise-level, pan-USIB video and audio distribution and syndication platform. The creation of a single platform across all of the entities will remove the current fragmentation with consistent, service-rich, and efficient platform.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

This is the first monthly report of the new **Office of Strategy and Development**. OSD helps formulate agency strategy and lead its implementation. It's focused on growing the business. Core functions are strategy, research, development, program placement, crisis contingency planning, and international media training. In its first month, the office has brought in nearly a half-million dollars for mission-relevant programming and support. Another half-million is in the offing.

Health and Economic Programming in Africa: OSD has signed deals with USAID for \$447,000 in new monies for health programming in Nigeria and Tanzania and a new show on entrepreneurship in Burundi. A weekly Swahili women's empowerment/health program, funded by USAID, launched on January 21 in Tanzania. VOA will also launch a USAID-funded women's empowerment/health show on February 11 in Burundi and Rwanda. The business show will launch soon.

Journalism Training in Russia and Moldova: The U.S. Embassy in Russia has granted BBG \$15,000 to partner with the Moscow School of Higher Economics on a training workshop for Russian journalists in April 2012. RFE/RL will participate. Separately, the State Department (SecState's new office on democracy) has asked BBG for a proposal on training journalists in Moldova on issues related to the justice system and courts.

24/7 FM and New Affiliates in South Sudan: VOA airs the English-language “South Sudan in Focus” program daily in the country under a grant from the State Department. Distribution continues to expand. BBG’s long-promised FM license in South Sudan has now been delivered. Agency technical staff returned to Juba Jan. 30-Feb. 3 to survey the new location at the embassy for the FM. Separately, VOA staff secured agreements with state broadcasters to run VOA programs in the towns of Malakal and Wau. VOA also held a town hall meeting in Juba on Jan. 27. OSD is setting up dates for journalism training (funded by State) throughout the year.

Somali in the Refugee Camps: Kenya’s Star FM has started the rebroadcast of VOA Somali news shows in Garissa and Dadaab, Somali refugee camps in western Kenya. In addition, AFRICOM has signaled its intent to provide VOA \$100,000 to expand a call-in show to counter violent extremism in Somalia.

Nigeria Town Hall: On Jan. 23, VOA held a town hall meeting in Abuja, funded by USAID, for education leaders. The town hall focused on research that shows about 80% of primary school children in Bauchi and Sokoto States can identify neither English nor Hausa alphabets.



Ghana: XYZ Broadcasting Ltd., a new private FM in Accra launched on January 30 and is airing five VOA programs: “Housecall,” “Inquiry,” “Upfront,” “Reporter’s Round Table” and “Sonny Side of Sports,” plus a 5-minute VOA newscast in the morning.

Venezuela TV Station commits to VOA “El Mundo al Día”: DAT Televisión in Valencia, Venezuela, has committed to taking several of the VOA Spanish “El Mundo al Día” news packages every day. The station, whose signal covers most of Carabobo state, is also evaluating the service’s flagship weekly program, “Foro Interamericano,” for its weekend lineup.

Launching the First Research Studies with Gallup: The research contract with Gallup has been in effect for seven weeks. Already scheduled are projects in Russia, Burma, Nigeria, Rwanda, Haiti, and India (for Tibetan travelers). Following these will be surveys in Iran, Iraq,

Egypt, and China. BBG will host a public event to announcement the new partnership with Gallup in the coming weeks.

DG5 Strategists and Researchers Meeting: Representatives of the Office of Strategy and Development are scheduled to attend a meeting of strategists and researchers from the DG5 members in Amsterdam, Feb. 9-10. The agenda includes assessing measures of program impact across the DG5, finalization of bi-lateral agreements for the licensing of BBG data, and FM and other distribution sharing, among other issues.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Bangla Review and Action Planning: A July 2011 national survey (n=4,989) of Bangladesh highlights the continued marginalization of radio (8% of adults listening daily vs. 43% watching TV), growth of internet access (3.6% of adults—largely among wealthier, younger males), and the dominance of social media in weekly internet users' online activities. VOA Bangla reaches 1.8% of adults weekly on radio (up from 1.3% in 2010), 1.2% of adults on TV (nominally up from 0.6% in 2010), 0.1% on internet, and an unduplicated weekly audience of 2.9%—showing very little overlap between listeners and viewers. VOA's TV products reach more women, younger, and better educated audiences than do its radio products. Qualitative research in 2011 suggests listeners to VOA Bangla radio value its journalists' professionalism and quality language compared to domestic presenters, but some feel VOA's presentation lacks energy and effective pacing. Utilizing this latest research on the media market in Bangladesh, Performance Review met with Language Programming, Strategy & Development, Bangla service and South Asia division managers to develop a forward looking, actionable plan for expanding VOA's reach in Bangladesh, particularly in television and among 15-30 year olds.

Korean Research: A survey of 250 North Korean defectors, now residing in China, was conducted from April to October 2011. This sample is not representative of all North Koreans. Of this particular group, 88% had watched television, and 23% listened to radio, while they were in North Korea. Seventeen percent said they had listened weekly to RFA Korean, 14% to VOA Korean. Eighteen percent watched China's Korean-language Yanji TV at least once a week. Many in the group had watched South Korean television programs, but these were received mostly via DVDs or via China's Yanji TV. About 25% of the respondents had used a cell phone while in North Korea, and most were connected to a Chinese service provider. No one in the group sent or received SMS messages, used the internet, or had access to a satellite dish.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday: On January 24, 2012, the Agency's Office of Civil Rights, along with U.S. federal agency representatives of the South West Inter-Agency Committee honored the legacy of Reverend Dr. King, Jr. in a memorial program. Dr. Charlie Nelms, Chancellor, North Carolina Central University, served as an inspiring keynote speaker. The Morgan State University Choir rendered uplifting musical selections. We greatly appreciated the participation of our Agency leaders who rendered special remarks (IBB Director Dick Lobo, Governor Michael Meehan and VOA Director David Ensor).



February 8, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for February

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES



VOA Deewa Radio reporter Mukarram Khan Aatif

Killing of Deewa Reporter

On January 17, Mukarram Khan Aatif, a reporter for VOA's [Deewa Radio](#), was taking part in evening prayers at a local mosque near his home in the Pakistani town of Shabqadar when a masked man entered the mosque and fired several shots at Mr. Aatif, striking him in the head. He was taken to a hospital in Peshawar where he died of his wounds. The gunman and an accomplice who was waiting outside the mosque on a motorcycle escaped. A short while later a spokesman for the Taliban claimed responsibility for the killing and stated that the group had warned the journalist to stop reporting for Deewa. A veteran reporter, Mr. Aatif was mourned by friends and colleagues in the Federally Administered Tribal Area, as well as by his friends and colleagues in Washington. Richard M. Lobo, director of the International Broadcasting Bureau, joined the VOA Director Ensor and others at VOA headquarters in paying tribute to Mr. Aatif. The head of Deewa Radio, Nafees Takar, called Mr. Aatif's assassination a "huge loss

for Deewa and a tragedy for his family and friends.” Director Ensor praised a “courageous man” who had been threatened many times, but “refused to stop doing what he believed in.” Mr. Ensor added that “Deewa remains committed to bringing fair and unbiased news to the people of Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas.” He also called on the authorities in Pakistan to bring Mr. Aatif’s killers to justice and to do more to protect all journalists working there. For the past two years, Reporters Without Borders has named Pakistan as the world’s deadliest country for journalists. Mr. Aatif is the third journalist reporting for VOA to be killed in the line of duty. Since his death, at least four Deewa stringers have gone into hiding.

VOA at 70

On February 1, a little more than two weeks after honoring the memory of Mr. Aatif, Director Ensor again spoke to the VOA staff, as well as to some prominent former VOA leaders, including Mary Bitterman, who served as VOA director in the early eighties, and Alan Heil, a former deputy director. The occasion this time was to mark 70 years of VOA broadcasting and to discuss the role of VOA today and in the years ahead. Mr. Ensor began by recalling the first words of the opening broadcast on February 1, 1942 -- “the news may be good, the news may be bad, we shall tell you the truth” -- and said that VOA is still doing that today, only on many



different media. He then gave the audience a brief overview of changes under way at VOA, starting with the central newsroom, which is being re-organized to take better advantage of VOA’s worldwide newsgathering operation – and thereby better serve VOA’s 43 language services. He also showed a clip of the new state-of-the-art Studio 52 and mentioned other upgrades taking place in VOA offices in New York. The goal of these changes, he noted, was to ensure that VOA would remain what it has always been: an “information lifeline to people in closed societies.” To illustrate, he pointed to VOA’s expanded TV broadcasts to Iran, a new television news show for Burma that began airing in January, the popular video blog in Mandarin that has been viewed more than 7 million times in China, and new health programs on radio in Africa. Looking a little ahead into the future, he discussed a proposal to enhance programming offerings in the Mandarin language, for delivery via satellite and doubling to two hours a day TV on satellite in Mandarin.

Blog by Director Ensor Is Newest Feature on VOA Intranet

The ranks of VOA bloggers added a new member in January when David Ensor launched a blog, “From the Director,” on the VOA Intranet. The new blog enables the director to share his thoughts on issues relating to VOA directly with VOA staffers. The subject of the first blog was

the increase in satellite jamming, particularly by Iran. It is available here:
<http://www.insidevoa.com/about/from-the-director/Iran-Satellite-Jamming-138001048.html>

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

VOA Brings State of the Union to Millions

VOA used every one of its media platforms to bring President Obama's State of the Union address to people around the world. Here are some highlights: VOA Persian dedicated a special live program to the coverage of the address. The program was hosted by Siamak Dehghanpour in the studio, and he was joined by PNN White House correspondent Parichehr Farzam, stationed at the Congress for the occasion, as well as two Iranian-American activists, one a Democrat and one a Republican. The president's address and the Republican response were simultaneously translated into Persian, followed by analysis and discussion. Every service in the Near East and Central



VOA reporters clockwise from top right: Amra Alirejsovic (Bosnian), Lilica Kitanovska (Macedonian), Keida Kostreci (Albanian), and Marija Mitich Crouch (Serbian) provided original State of the Union Coverage to more than 35 affiliates in the Balkans.

Asia Division live-streamed the address on their websites. Shortly before it began, TGRT Live, the Turkish daily news program, conducted a live interview from the White House with VOA Correspondent Dan Robinson. Three services, Azeri, Turkish and Armenian, live-tweeted key phrases that appeared in a tweet box beneath the address, providing a form of simultaneous translation for social media. Many nationwide and local television affiliates in Eurasia carried VOA's reporting on the address. VOA Ukrainian filed a special report about the address and the Republican response for the morning news broadcast of ICTV, one of Ukraine's largest national TV networks, while more than 35 affiliates in Serbia and Montenegro aired the VOA Serbian report. In addition, SOTU feeds and special interactives for Albanian, Macedonian, Greek and Bosnian affiliates captured large audiences in the region. VOA Russian provided live video of the president's speech and the Republican response via Ustream, and real-time translations via

Twitter. The service also hosted a televised discussion with two prominent experts, Donald Jensen (Center for Transatlantic Relations, Johns Hopkins University) and Sergey Markedonov (Center for Strategic and International Studies, Russia and Eurasia Program), immediately following the address. The discussion was also streamed live online and made available on-demand. The program was fully produced by VOA Russian staff in Studio 27, which was designed to meet the specific needs of digital audiences and to provide VOA with the ability to go live via satellite or streaming at any time with a minimal studio crew.

VOA Close to Signing Affiliation Deal with Terrestrial Burmese Media

VOA Burmese Chief Than Lwin Htun returned to Myanmar in late January (at the time of writing this, he is still there). This time, he was joined by Doug Boynton, director of IBB Marketing. The two discussed with the Burmese Information Ministry a possible agreement to place VOA Burmese programming on terrestrial radio and TV stations as well as other issues, including future reporting from inside Myanmar. This visit was a follow-up to Mr. Than's initial trip in December.

Deewa Radio Now on TV

Starting January 9, Deewa Radio, VOA's popular Pashto language news service to the border region of Northwest Pakistan, has been broadcast on direct-to-home satellite TV. The first of the daily one-hour programs to the Federally Administered Tribal Area was broadcast from VOA studios in Washington and simulcast on radio and Asia Sat 3, which can be received in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Deewa Radio's program lineup includes news and current affairs shows, three daily call-in shows as well as contemporary Pashto music programs. The service's multimedia [website](#) provides coverage of regional and international events and links to social media sites that offer the audience a platform for informed discussion. The feedback so far has been enthusiastic: Sufian Khan from Doaba in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa said he saw the program in the village guest house and that scores of men gathered to watch.

Fazal Zaman Shalman from Swat Valley said the people in his village watched the program. After offering his congratulations, he made one request: Increase the length of the TV broadcast. Hubab from Hangu in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa called the service to say he was going to buy a dish to get access to Deewa TV.

Primaries, Speeches, Rebellions – a Month in the Life of Central News

The month of January is almost always a busy one for the Central News Division, but this past January set new standards for intensity. Not only did Central News field full-coverage, multi-platform reporting teams for the Republican Party contests in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Florida, it also gave comprehensive coverage to President Obama's State of the Union speech and to the growing rebellion in Syria as well as the mounting violence in Iraq and Nigeria. The Syria uprising has been an especially difficult story to cover because the government in Damascus has denied entry to almost all Western news organizations since the violence began last March. Elizabeth Arrott, Central News' Cairo bureau chief, was one of the few journalists to get a visa. Shortly after landing in Damascus in mid-January, she began turning out radio and television packages. She got important backup from London's Henry Ridgewell, who provided TV and radio pieces from the Syria-Lebanon border, including an exclusive package on a secret hospital set up in Lebanon to treat wounded Syrian dissidents.

Angelina Jolie Turns to VOA to Set the Record Straight

In the Land of Blood and Honey, the movie Angelina Jolie directed about the war in Bosnia in the 1990s, has been warmly praised in the United States, but it has gotten a harsh reception by some media outlets and social networks in Serbia and Republika Srpska in Bosnia. The actress/director turned to VOA's Bosnian and Serbian Services to help set the record straight. In an interview broadcast by both services, Jolie said that her main motive in doing the film was to prevent future atrocities and human rights violations – and not to focus special blame on one side or the other. “There is no black and white, good or evil,” she said. “This is what we tried to show in the film. There is just humanity, but also pain, on all sides.” She also stressed that she never advocated the abolition of Republika Srpska, as had been charged by some media outlets in the region. VOA Serbian and Bosnian broadcast the interview on their TV shows and posted it online. Dozens of outlets, including leading TV stations, news agencies, newspapers, and websites and portals in Serbia and in Bosnia, carried the interview and/or her statement, with full credit to VOA.

Inside Sources Help VOA Tibetan Evade Beijing's Information Blockade

Chinese authorities invest much time and effort in keeping information about unrest in Tibet from reaching the outside world. But through the diligence of its staff and the courage of its sources inside Tibet, VOA's Tibetan Service seems to always get the news that Beijing tries to suppress. In January, there were three self-immolations and several large scale protests in Tibet that were violently put down by Chinese security forces. VOA Tibetan received audio, video and documentation relating to each of these events. Some examples:

Service sources provided photographs of a protest by several thousand people in Draggo in the Kandze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on January 23. The protest ended with security forces firing on the crowd, killing two and injuring at least 32 others.

The service was given an eight-second mobile phone video of a protest by hundreds of people in Serthar on January 24. Once again, security forces fired on the protesters, killing two and injuring more than 40 people.

The service received an exclusive 60-second video of protesters in front of a police building in Ngaba Zamthang on January 26.

A VOA Tibetan source smuggled a document from inside China that described the security and communications situation in Sichuan following the January 23-24 protests.

Urdu Service Interview with US Envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan Gets Wide Use

Marc Grossman, special U.S. Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, gave an exclusive interview to Urdu TV in January. The interview was shared with the GEO News and Express News in Pakistan. The service also provided telephone reports to these channels and gave them footage of the interview via FTP. The interview was also picked up and distributed by the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP). In each instance, attribution was given to VOA.

Spanish Service Gives Affiliates Ringside Seat on U.S. Election

Since the Iowa caucus in early January, VOA Spanish has been providing its radio and TV affiliates in Venezuela, Costa Rica, Colombia, Peru, El Salvador, Ecuador, Uruguay and Bolivia with comprehensive reports on the U.S. election campaign. In addition to daily broadcasts, the service is also using live tweets to deliver updates.

Former U.S. Ambassador to Albania Says Country Is Ruled by Dividers, not Uniter

In an interview with VOA, John Withers, former U.S. ambassador to Tirana, voiced his concern that Albania is not following the path of Western democracies. He said the country's political leaders represent the interests of various political factions rather than the interest of the nation. Mr. Withers, who during his years in Tirana was often at odds with the government there, called the country's leaders "dividers" rather than "uniter" and criticized the government for what he described as "its attacks against democratic institutions." Ambassador Withers' interview was reprinted by 10 daily newspapers in Albania and rebroadcast on five TV stations, two of which were national.

VOA Albanian Tells Holocaust Survivor's Story

On International Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27th, the Albanian Service aired the story of Johanna Newmann of Silver Spring, Maryland. She told VOA that Albanians saved her family from the Nazis. Mrs. Newmann was 12 years old in 1939 when she, along with hundreds of Jewish families, fled from Germany to Albania. She said the Albanians never betrayed them to the Nazis and used their custom of *besa*, the work of honor, to save the Jews. The Albanians showed great human dignity, said Mrs. Newmann.

Swahili Service Targets Young Women

A new Swahili Service program, *Crossroads: Healthy Decisions for Youth*, examines critical health issues facing young women in Tanzania. Hosted by VOA Swahili journalists Esther Githul-Ewart and Mikamiti Kibayasi, the 30-minute weekend show includes a roundtable segment that gives young women an opportunity to talk about the health issues most important to them. It also includes an "Ask the Doctor" segment for specific questions from the radio audience. Managers at VOA affiliate station Sport Radio 91.2 FM say listeners started to call in immediately after the first broadcast to say they liked the new program. Service Chief Mwamoyo Hamza says each program gives a girl a chance to talk about a specific health issue that has affected her: for instance, the first program examined the consequences of a forced abortion.

VOA Calendars Help Promote Zimbabwe Service Free-to-Air Satellite Radio

In January, the Zimbabwe Service shipped some 40,000 2012 calendars to Harare to promote the free-to-air (also known as free-to-home) satellite transmission of the Studio 7 news program in Shona, English and Ndebele, as well as the service's LiveTalk call-in program. Studio 7 offers a total of two hours of programming every Monday through Friday and one hour Saturday and Sunday. The service began audio transmission by satellite in June 2011, motivated by 2010 marketing data showing an extraordinary proliferation of small-dish free-to-air receivers in Zimbabwe. A third or more of the country now receives television and radio signals on such devices. The service's marketing and promotion activities focus on informing listeners that they can capture a high-quality audio Studio 7 and LiveTalk signal over their free-to-air receivers.

SSIF Spotlights Ethnic Fighting in Jonglei State

The English Division's South Sudan in Focus (SSIF) provided extensive coverage in January of the violence between the Lou Nuer and Murle ethnic groups in Jonglei State. Although the fighting took place in remote areas, SSIF stringers were able to reach local authorities for updates on the fighting. In addition, SSIF conducted interviews with UN officials as well as

representatives of the Red Cross and Doctors without Borders to get more background on the violence in Jonglei.

VOA Indonesian Expands Its Reach

The Indonesian Service is now supplying three two-minute news stories, seven days a week, to the KBR68H radio network in Indonesia. VOA's stories air at 10 AM to 235 stations across Indonesia and at noon on 283 stations. KBR68H is a private Indonesian news and information network comprising over 500 local FM and AM stations.

VOA Ukrainian's Weekly Reach Continues To Soar

According to InterMedia research data released in January, VOA Ukrainian's weekly TV viewership has more than doubled in two years. In 2011, total weekly reach grew to 16.8 percent, up from 11.5 percent the previous year, and more than doubled from 2009 when it measured 7.6 percent.

VOA Indonesian Interviewing 2012 PPIA Fellowship Finalists

The Indonesian Service is now conducting interviews for the 5th year of the PPIA-VOA Broadcasting Fellowship Program. PPIA is an Indonesian-American Friendship Association based in Jakarta. Winners of the fellowship work with the Indonesian Service in Washington for up to 12 months.

Chinese Branch Chief's Cookbook Featured on NPR

VOA Chinese Branch Chief Sasha Gong was featured on NPR's Weekend Edition on January 23. Dr. Gong and her writing partner, Scott Seligman, were interviewed about their recent cookbook *The Cultural Revolution Cookbook: Simple, Healthy Recipes from China's Countryside*. The interview (with audio) can be found here:
<http://www.npr.org/2012/01/22/145468366/cultural-revolution-cookbook-a-taste-of-humanity>

Notable Interviews

Radio Ashna spoke with Representative Louie Gohmert of Texas about his meeting with Northern Alliance Mujahedin commanders in Berlin. Mr. Gohmert said he opposed talks with the Taliban and favored the devolution of power in Afghanistan.

Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Albert Ramdin, talked with the Creole Service about reconstruction efforts and governance in Haiti. In an interview with VOA Spanish TV, Ecuador's new ambassador to the United States, Nathalie Cely, answered questions about relations between the two countries and the Quito government's clampdown on the media.

The Urdu Service talked with Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, the first Pakistani filmmaker to earn an Oscar nomination, about her documentary *Saving Face*, which depicts the life of a British-Pakistani plastic surgeon who operates on the victims of acid attacks in Pakistan.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

VOA Russian Launches Social Media-Driven News Program, *Podelis* (Share)

Podelis (Share), VOA Russian Service's new social media based interactive talk show, debuted with a soft launch on February 1—VOA's 70th anniversary. The show chooses topics harvested

from the interaction between service moderators and online followers, and trending topics on social media sites. Soon, tweets will be displayed via



Yulia Savchenko (left) hosts *Podelis* - VOA Russian's new 30-minute weekly program

Chyron and these tweets will be the springboard for discussion throughout the show. The show will be broadcast on U-Stream until the [Never.no](#) product is fully integrated and available for use in Studio 52. The Russian staff in Washington and stringers in Russia will use these initial broadcasts to promote the show as well as to conduct informal “focus groups.” They will be asking for feedback from online Russian bloggers and other “plugged-in” Russians as a way to get instant feedback on topics to help improve the program before it heads into a hard launch. As soon as [Never.no](#) is fully operational, *Podelis* will be broadcast on satellite and streamed live on the *Podelis* and *Golos Ameriki* sites. The service is also working with OMPP to inquire about placement opportunities on the INTERNEWS satellite network in Central Asia (Yamal).

Middle East Voices Begins New Series on Syria

English to the Middle East has introduced a new series on its Middle East Voices website. Called “Syria Witness,” the series offers eyewitness accounts by Syrians of the revolutionary activity where they live.

VOA Khmer Offers Web TV on YouTube

VOA Khmer's new online television news program, Khmer WebTV, is now available on YouTube (youtube.com/voakhmerwebtv). The 8-9 minute Khmer-language program focuses on international news and analysis. The service produces the program four days a week, Monday to Thursday. VOA Khmer's original YouTube video page has surpassed two million views only six months after it surpassed the one-million view mark in mid-2011. Meanwhile, the service is also expanding its television presence on national TV. It has launched a daily business news TV program on CTN, the largest national television station in Cambodia. The fully branded program is aired on an evening prime-time slot Monday through Friday.

Boko Haram Crisis Helps Double Hausa Mobile Traffic

Relentless attacks by the anti-Western Islamic extremist group Boko Haram and turmoil over cuts in state subsidies for fuel helped boost VOA Hausa service mobile traffic from 203,000 visits in December to 442,000 visits in January, an increase of 118 percent. Nigerian audiences say they value VOA Hausa mobile programming for its fair and balanced news and analysis.

Learn English while Solving Your Relationship Issues

At the end of January, in plenty of time for Valentine's Day, Special English launched a crowd-sourced relationship blog. The new blog gives people an opportunity to seek advice as well as to offer it -- and practice their English at the same time. When a topic is sensitive, the site will also solicit advice from experts. The multiplatform blog is available on website, social media, and broadcast. Though very new, the blog has already gotten some heartfelt submissions, such as one from a young Russian woman who is "disappointed in love and guys" and another from a 75-year-old Spanish man whose wife hasn't spoken to him in "15 years more or less." For those in need of advice or eager to give it <http://bit.ly/yiDUcr> is the place to go.

VOA Mobile and Web Traffic, January 2012											
Language Service	Visits			Pageviews			Quality		Mobile Site Visits		
	January 2012	December 2011	Percent Change (%)	January 2012	December 2011	Percent Change (%)	Pages per visit	Avg Time on Site	January 2012	December 2011	Percent Change (%)
All VOA	14,534,761	15,107,471	-4	34,546,774	36,217,968	-5	2.38	3:49	2,887,579	1,485,018	94
English	3,521,665	3,568,908	-1	5,977,057	6,176,165	-3	1.70	2:02	1,458,244	831,845	75
Persian	2,653,249	2,392,234	1	6,217,749	5,704,667	9	2.34	4:30	68,912	48,799	41
Russian	1,547,425	1,790,427	-14	3,746,040	4,334,056	-14	2.42	4:09	53,733	15,680	243
Special English	1,543,196	1,607,070	-4	4,286,511	4,361,156	-2	2.78	4:47	96,192	56,138	71
Vietnamese	1,404,979	1,644,707	-15	4,678,724	5,577,899	-16	3.33	5:06	78,589	50,954	54
Burmese	791,745	777,130	2	1,868,594	1,907,107	-2	2.36	4:03	48,346	33,049	46
Chinese	513,646	614,552	-16	1,477,560	1,732,408	-15	2.88	4:52	560	432	30
Somali	487,574	419,300	16	1,003,600	896,608	12	2.06	4:02	86,390	69,790	24
Amharic	363,180	341,698	6	663,419	604,025	10	1.83	2:31	66,858	50,083	33
Spanish	265,071	232,106	14	422,021	367,385	15	1.59	1:23	233,820	1,795	1292
Tigrigna	175,137	192,319	-9	343,844	361,212	-5	1.96	3:03			
Indonesian	160,855	195,816	-18	305,336	345,066	-12	1.90	2:29	45,145	5,674	696
Albanian	139,132	135,322	3	335,123	327,665	2	2.41	3:04	5,456	3,022	81
Urdu	136,832	167,702	-18	372,797	490,202	-24	2.72	5:17	44,233	42,190	5
Hausa	135,118	83,420	62	319,121	184,170	73	2.36	5:25	442,536	202,818	118
Khmer	109,540	116,552	-6	229,912	247,564	-7	2.10	3:19	12,270	10,548	16
Ukrainian	105,249	136,787	-23	167,988	209,238	-20	1.60	1:39	3,659	666	449
Pashto	85,102	92,626	-8	163,344	179,639	-9	1.92	3:12	7,814	6,630	18
Turkish	70,785	64,336	10	125,160	106,397	18	1.77	1:46	3,865	1,142	238
Portuguese	69,397	68,172	2	160,905	157,316	2	2.32	4:10	5,357	1,553	245
Tibetan	68,660	65,989	4	153,533	143,054	7	2.24	3:51	4,795	3,056	57
Dari	67,952	71,940	-6	164,602	176,785	-7	2.42	3:30	5,517	3,501	58
Korean	65,795	72,541	-9	164,799	176,462	-7	2.50	2:54	37,468	2,336	1504
Tibetan - English	63,970	101,470	-37	107,269	141,533	-24	1.68	2:00			
Serbian	50,755	50,210	1	106,304	100,218	6	2.09	2:20	1,596	570	180
Zimbabwe - English	49,044	79,650	-38	76,626	117,889	-35	1.56	1:39	46,269	17,103	171
Khmer - English	47,975	52,158	-8	85,398	90,813	-6	1.78	2:19			
Lao	44,776	45,190	-1	152,643	156,892	-3	3.41	6:02			
French to Africa	37,939	64,796	-41	76,347	138,228	-45	2.01	2:35	5,982	8,915	-33
Central Africa	35,999	30,455	18	58,874	46,027	28	1.64	2:12			
Azerbaijani	31,247	30,827	1	53,834	51,962	4	1.72	2:15	1,277	484	164
Thai	30,039	26,587	13	45,889	41,070	12	1.53	1:49	1,276	312	309
Afaan Oromoo	27,768	19,882	40	66,929	47,726	40	2.41	3:41			
Kurdish	25,347	29,067	-13	50,968	57,299	-11	2.01	2:45	1,222	1,125	9
Macedonian	23,263	22,934	1	38,728	36,602	6	1.66	2:16	674	87	675
Uzbek	22,618	26,375	-14	49,545	56,428	-12	2.19	4:13	12,388	8,089	53
Deewa	17,939	15,499	16	41,540	37,651	10	2.32	4:01			

Swahili	16,964	19,114	-11	27,324	29,568	-8	1.61	2:16	4,436	4,404	1
Bangla	16,333	16,577	-1	27,407	28,233	-3	1.68	2:25	1,795	1,646	9
Armenian	16,108	14,404	12	33,636	28,586	18	2.09	2:43	436	345	26
Georgian	15,504	15,732	-1	30,859	27,637	12	1.99	3:02	249	143	74
Creole	14,258	13,818	3	23,881	20,929	14	1.67	2:36			
Cantonese	13,602	14,029	-3	26,287	26,962	-3	1.93	2:03			
Bosnian	13,306	14,345	-7	24,292	26,153	-7	1.83	2:27	220	94	134
Greek	10,481	8,248	27	18,304	14,701	25	1.75	1:24			
Kurdi	7,092	6,677	6	12,452	8,660	44	1.76	2:16			
Shona	4,558	8,168	-44	8,171	14,183	-42	1.79	2:27			
Ndebele	2,381	2,765	-14	3,640	4,434	-18	1.53	1:41			

VOA Social Media Report: Dec 16, 2011 – January 15, 2012

Service	YouTube	Twitter
	Video Views	Followers
Afghan	74,468	1,144
Albanian	265,499	1,422
Armenian	31,537	39
Azerbaijani	10,495	1,127
Bangla	33,474	na
Bosnian	25,111	115
Burmese	356,836	1,186
Cantonese	20,354	196
Central Africa	2,524	39
Chinese	166,382	11,784
Creole	770	4,713
Deewa	7,219	787
English	1,051,473	47,042
French	1,650	444
Georgian	17,902	174
Greek	3,684	746
Hausa	2,594	3,002
Horn	8,424	295
Indonesian	186,903	21,347
Khmer	179,696	2,651
Korean	2,024	35
Kurdish	32,081	1,945
Lao	218	na
Macedonian	2,088	168
Persian	391,818	11,550
Portuguese	363	213
Russian	921,457	29,758
Serbian	148,304	263
Somali	12,517	1,144
Spanish	Not available	6,829
Special English	744,620	26,300
Swahili	1,678	212
Thai	1,015	na
Tibetan	98,573	1,448
Turkish	19,288	2,335
Ukrainian	22,079	5,754
Urdu	223,278	1,931
Uzbek	56,576	564
Vietnamese	341,034	1,433
Zimbabwe	183	321

* Facebook metrics are not available for this report due to a change in how Facebook logs and reports page performance. These numbers will be reported in next month's report.

goEnglish.me

goEnglish Site	Registered Users	Visits	Average time on site (minutes)
Russian	7,100	46,327	5:46
Farsi	86,950	34,626	9:06
Chinese	23,530	9,854	6:39
Indonesian	1,840	2,739	8:57

E. DEVELOPMENT

Training Journalists in Abuja

Hausa Service chief Leo Keyen was in Abuja the end of January to conduct a digital media training session for journalists. Co-sponsored by VOA, USAID and the Nigerian Ministry of Education, the program identified obstacles to education faced by young people in Nigeria, particularly in the northern part of the country. On the technical side, journalists learned digital techniques for reporting on education in rural settings. During his trip to Nigeria, the Hausa service chief also opened a new reporting center in Maiduguri, capital of Borno state, considered the epicenter of Boko Haram.

F. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Media & outreach

- PBS interviewed VOA Director David Ensor and Jessica Beinecke for a report about Jessica's Chinese-language video blog *OMG! Meiyu*. The piece will profile Jessica and her work, and take note of VOA's 70th Anniversary. PBS will air the report next week.
- On February 1 (Canberra, Australia time), Alan Heil, former VOA Deputy Director and author of *Voice of America: A History*, was interviewed live about VOA's 70 years of broadcasting by Ross Solly of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.
- Bloomberg News interviewed Steve Redisch, VOA Executive Editor and Acting Director of VOA Persian, about its new programming.
- VOA Public Relations arranged interviews with Andre Mendes, Dave Shibben, and Gary Thatcher for *Radio World International*. The story was about how Iran's jamming of satellites is being done, and how it is affecting VOA's coverage of Iran.
- CBS News reporter Jack Renaud contacted VOA Public Relations to find out about VOA's local contacts in Burma for an upcoming report on whether or not Burma has eased restrictions on local journalists in Burma. We referred him to VOA Burmese Service Chief Than Lwin Htun who is now traveling in Burma.

VOA Studio Tour

- Students from Miami Dade College met with Spanish Service Internet Managing Editor Iscar Blanco. -- January 10

- Columbia University students met with Latin American Division Director Alberto Mascaro, Spanish Service Managing Editor Clara Dominquez, and Spanish Service Internet Managing Editor Iscar Blanco. -- January 11
- State Department personnel studying Romanian at the Foreign Service Institute took the tour; Ana Hontz Ward gave the tour in Romanian. -- January 12
- University of Miami students met with Spanish Service Internet Managing Editor Iscar Blanco and VOA White House correspondent Kent Klein. -- January 18
- Students from the John Glenn School of Public Affairs at Ohio State University met with VOA White House correspondent Kent Klein. -- January 20
- DOD officials learning Persian at LLC Language Services met with Parazit host Kambiiz Hosseini. -- January 30
- Mr. Ismaila Sisay, owner and manager of Taranga FM, met with Ashenafi Abedje in the English to Africa Hub and Erin Klein in Marketing and Program Placement. - January 31

Written Communications

- VOA's Deewa Radio Goes on Satellite TV to Pakistan - January 9
- VOA Expands Broadcasts to Iran - January 13
- VOA Reporter Killed in Pakistan - January 17
- VOA Pays Tribute to Reporter Slain in Pakistan - January 20
- New VOA Health Program Aims at Women in Tanzania - January 26
- VOA Looks to Future on 70th Anniversary - February 1

VOA Reports Used by Other News Organizations & Blogs

- Somalia: PM - I Don't Recognize the New Speaker, AllAfrica.com: Mogadishu — The prime minister of Somalia's transitional federal government TFG, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali, on Sunday announced that he doesn't recognize the newly elected parliament speaker Mudobe Nunow Mohamed. While speaking to the VOA Somali service, ..., <http://allafrica.com/stories/201201080004.html>
- Reporter Dies in Pakistan, and Taliban Warn Others, New York Times: In a statement, the director of the Voice of America, David Ensor, called on the Pakistani authorities to “bring his killers to justice. ..., http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/19/world/asia/reporter-dies-in-pakistan-and-taliban-warn-others.html?_r=1
- VOA steps up TV coverage in Burma, Center for International Media, By Andy Sennitt: The Voice of America (VOA) has added more news to its Burmese language TV news magazine. As from this morning at 7:00 ..., <http://cima.ned.org/voa-steps-tv-coverage-burma>

G. PERSONNEL

New Director of VOA Strategy

In early January, VOA Director Ensor announced the appointment of John Lennon as VOA's Associate Director of Strategy and Planning. Mr. Lennon will work closely with Mr. Ensor and with senior VOA and BBG management in planning and implementing VOA's strategic direction. Mr. Lennon has more than four decades of experience at VOA and IBB. For the past four years, he has served as Associate Director for Language Programming, overseeing

programming for VOA's 43 language services. Prior to this, he served as Director of the Office of Performance Review, and for extended periods as IBB's Acting Associate Director for Program Support. He also has been Deputy Director of the Latin American and European Divisions, Director of the South European Division, and Acting Director of WORLDNET Television. He served at the National Security Council in 1994-95 as a Director in the Office of Democracy. His early career included assignments as a radio producer, writer, reporter, and editor.

New Head of Language Programming

Mr. Ensor named Rebecca McMenemy as Acting Associate Director for Language Programming. Ms. McMenemy, who began her career at VOA 26 years ago, most recently served as Senior Advisor for Strategy to the VOA Director, working with the director and senior management on planning and implementing changes designed to strengthen VOA's position as a leading international broadcaster. Prior to that, she was responsible for leading Voice of America and other U.S. government funded international broadcasters in the increasing use of new and emerging digital technologies. She spearheaded VOA's initial digital product efforts, creating the Office of New Media and overseeing development of a robust mobile platform for BBG as well as creating new digital syndication tools and expanding use of social media. In the course of her career, she has worked in many different areas of VOA, including four years as Program Coordinator in the Language Programming Office, four years as Chief of the English to Africa Service, Acting Managing Editor of the East Asia and Pacific Division, and as a reporter and Duty Editor in the Newsroom.



February 14, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for February

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

VOA Rejects Chinese Allegations on Tibet Self-Immolations

VOA Director David Ensor has categorically denied allegations by Chinese state television that VOA broadcasts encourage self-immolations in Tibet. "We do report these tragic stories," Ensor said. "We do not encourage these self-immolations." The allegations were contained in a CCTV documentary in which a survivor of an attempted self-immolation said he set himself on fire after



watching VOA news broadcasts. While blaming the Dalai Lama and the exile Tibetan government for masterminding the self-immolations, the CCTV documentary accused VOA Tibetan TV of "sending code word messages from the 'Dalai Clique' to Tibetans in China." The CCTV program did not cite the source or evidence supporting the allegation. In his statement, Ensor dismissed the CCTV suggestion as "totally absurd." VOA Tibetan Service Chief Losang Gyatso said the tragic events in Tibet have been very difficult to report, but he said VOA broadcasts the facts "to the best of our abilities in a balanced and comprehensive manner." He noted VOA's news reports often included the views of Chinese officials. CCTV did not contact

VOA to get its response to the allegations it made. VOA Tibetan and Chinese programs, VOA's English website and other language services aired VOA's rebuttal of the allegations. The VOA rebuttal was reported by the *Wall Street Journal*, Associated Press, AFP, the *New York Times*, NBC.com, among others. Meanwhile, VOA, in particular its Chinese and Tibetan services, has continued to provide extensive coverage of events in Tibet and will not be deterred from covering self-immolations, if and when they occur.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

President Obama's Second Inauguration

Thanks to VOA, millions of people around the world had a ringside seat at President Obama's second inauguration on January 21. VOA's Persian Service covered the swearing-in and inauguration ceremonies with a live TV broadcast from the parade route. It was preceded by a 90-minute special profiling all 44 U.S. Presidents. VOA's Russian Service broadcast an hour-long TV-web program that was carried on Ustream, the VOA website, and on one of the leading



independent TV-web broadcasters in Russia. VOA correspondents along the inaugural parade route and around Washington took part in a two-hour English-language TV special that featured analysis by studio guests and panoramic images of the U.S. Capitol. Spanish Service reporters provided all-day radio and TV coverage, feeding live updates to affiliate stations and networks throughout Latin America. The Indonesian, Burmese, Korean, Khmer, Creole, Ukrainian, Urdu, Bosnian, Serbian, and Macedonian services also provided affiliates with live reporting. VOA services broadcasting throughout Africa carried special inauguration reports, and Central Asian services, including Uzbek, Armenian, Georgian, Kurdish, Turkish and Azerbaijan, brought their audiences live coverage. Building on the success of social media outreach during last year's political conventions, debates and election, VOA's Chinese Branch and other services added live-blogging to their coverage and special web features with information about past inaugurations. The English-language TV special was streamed on the main English website, VOANews.com, and most other VOA sites.

State of the Union

Just as they did for the Obama inauguration, VOA's 43 language services delivered live coverage of the President's State of the Union address and the Republican response to audiences worldwide. VOA's Persian Service produced a live special TV broadcast with simultaneous translation, along with follow-up reaction and analysis. VOA English had a 2 ½-hour live special multimedia program that carried the President's speech and the Republican response, followed

by immediate reaction and analysis from reporters on Capitol Hill and elsewhere. The live special report was followed by a Google+ hangout featuring students from Afghanistan, Gambia, Ghana, Zimbabwe and China. VOA Capitol Hill correspondent Cindy Saine, stationed in the Capitol's Statuary Hall, conducted live interviews with the following House members: Jim McDermott (D-Washington); Keith Ellison (D-Minnesota); Ami Bera (D-California); Tony Cardenas (D-California); Randy Forbes (R-Virginia); Judy Chu (D-California); Paul Broun (R-Georgia); Chris Van Hollen (D-Maryland); and Trent Franks (R-Arizona). VOA live-streamed the address across all of its 43 language services and provided live reporting via partnerships with local media in many countries, including Russia, Bosnia, Albania, Ukraine, Indonesia, Cambodia, as well as many countries in Latin America.

VOA's Exclusive Interview with Japan's Defense Minister after New North Korean Nuclear Test

Minutes after North Korea conducted a nuclear test on February 12, VOA's Northeast Asia bureau chief Steve Herman landed an exclusive interview with Japan's new defense minister, Itsunori Onodera. Onodera, who was appointed in December, told Herman that the North Korean test was "a big threat, not only to Japan, but also to the East Asia region, as a whole." He also said Japan will need to bolster its defenses, in coordination with the United States. "Due to our constitution," he said, "our country is in a very restricted situation when it comes to having nuclear weapons as well as increasing our (conventional) forces. Therefore it is very important to strengthen the U.S.-Japan security alliance." Onodera also called on China to toughen sanctions on North Korea. Herman was among the first journalists in the region to report the underground activity detected in North Korea. "This is not an area with a lot of earthquakes," said Herman, "so we suspected immediately it was some kind of underground explosion." The interview with Onodera is not the only big interview Herman has snagged. Last week, he interviewed Japan's chief cabinet secretary, Yoshihide Suga. Herman was interviewed by WTOP radio in Washington, and was a guest on ABC Radio's syndicated John Batchelor Show, which is heard in Washington on WMAL. In addition, Herman has been invited to participate on TV programs in South Korea (Araring TV) and Europe (Euronews). Many Asian government officials, diplomats and journalists are among the 22,000 followers of Steve Herman's Twitter feed @W7VOA.

VOA Correspondents Enter Mali War Zone and Provide Live Coverage

French to Africa reporter Idriss Fall was in Mali from January 15 to 27 covering the fighting between Islamist forces and the coalition of French and Malian troops. Working at first from Bamako, Fall travelled north to the once-besieged cities of Mopti and Sevare, interviewing combatants, refugees, and others whose lives had been affected by the fighting. Meanwhile, F2A's new radio magazine, *Sahel Plus*, had its debut on February 11. Hosted by Claire Gibrour-Guindre and Fernand Fouodzing, the daily, 15-minute program deals with all aspects of life in the sub-Saharan Sahel region, from politics to culture. The show pays special attention to the challenges posed by militant religious extremism and the alternatives to such extremism. Fall wasn't the only F2A reporter to take on a hazardous assignment during this reporting period. Nicholas Pinault was on a three-week trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo, where he worked with the service's most active and dependable citizen journalists in the DRC. While there, he also found time for reporting, obtaining interviews with leaders of the M23 rebel movement as well as with Denis Mukwege, a famous physician and human-rights activist

whose life was threatened because of his outspoken crusade against rape. Pinault has also been gathering material for a documentary on the M23 movement.

Idriss Fall wasn't the only VOA reporter in Mali. Anne Look, the central newsroom's West Africa correspondent, made two reporting trips there during this reporting period. She arrived in the country January 13, which made her among the first international journalists to arrive there after French air strikes began against the Islamists holding the north. Look did daily live shots via Skype with VOA's daily Africa TV show, *In Focus*. She also did numerous live debriefers for French and English radio. She returned to Mali at the end of January. Among the stories she filed were TV and radio on the visit of French President Francois Hollande to Mali on February 2nd and the logistical challenges faced by French forces in the country. Meanwhile, East Africa correspondent Gabe Joselow covered the African Union summit in Addis Ababa at the end of January, which resulted in pledges of more than \$455 million to assist an African-led military intervention in Mali.

Engagement with VOA Peaks at Times of Crisis in the Horn of Africa

If there was ever any doubt about the importance of the Horn of Africa Service as a trusted news source, it was put to rest in the early weeks of 2013. Two events – one in Eritrea and the other in Ethiopia – give cause to believe audiences are growing and engaged. The first was an apparent mutiny January 21st by disgruntled Eritrean soldiers who attempted to take over the state-run broadcasting service to air their grievances. But there was little or no official information from inside Eritrea about the incident, and rumors soon began circulating on the Internet about a military coup. VOA, however, with its network of contacts both inside Eritrea and in the diaspora, did not fall for coup rumors or other unsubstantiated reports, even when they appeared to be coming from multiple reliable sources. The service erred on the side of caution, and was not swept along in the tide of “wishful reporting” by diaspora media, hoping this might be the end of the Eritrean regime. Exactly what happened that day in Asmara is still not clear. What is clear is audiences in Eritrea and Ethiopia turned to VOA. Shortly after news of the attempted mutiny broke, the Horn Service's listenership indicators, including Audio Now reports and call-ins to our listener hotline, skyrocketed. Tweets posted by VOA staffers about the incident were repeatedly re-tweeted. A few days later, a source with “close Eritrean government ties” excoriated various news media for spreading false information about the event. VOA's name was conspicuous by its absence.

In Ethiopia, the government's attempt to hide information about the case of 29 Muslims now on trial for terrorism has helped deliver audiences for the Horn service. The case dates back to protests that began last year against alleged government interference in Islamic affairs. The government has actively discouraged news coverage of the protests, going so far as to detain

VOA reporters were at the scene of protests on two separate occasions. Ethiopian media have been mostly silent on the story. Even reporters for international news agencies have been reluctant to cover it. Meanwhile, the demonstrations have grown, and as other media have shied away, the Horn of Africa Service has continued covering the story. Audience feedback indicates people are increasingly depending on the service, which is seen as occupying the middle ground between the silence of the domestic media and the rabid government bashing of the diaspora media.

Leading Pakistani News Networks Rebroadcast VOA Interview with Pervez Musharraf

VOA interview with former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf at the beginning of February sparked widespread interest among Pakistani news channels. Several TV networks including Geo, Dunya, Express, Samaa and Aaj, rebroadcast parts of the interview. Musharraf



Former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf interviewed by VOA's Ayesha Tanzeem

appeared on the Urdu Service TV program *Access Point*, hosted by Ayesha Tanzeem. Perhaps the highlight of the interview was when Tanzeem asked Musharraf whether he would oppose a military coup if one were launched in Pakistan. Musharraf's answer: "One has to see when such things happen, these are not simple affairs which can be decided 'off the cuff' like this.... Whatever is in the interests of Pakistan, I will support that." The interview, which was conducted in both English and Urdu, was one of only two Musharraf granted during his visit to Washington.

Kurdish-Iranian Director Donates to VOA Exclusive Rights to Air Movie Banned by Iranian Regime

Rhino Season, an award-winning film by Kurdish-Iranian director Bahman Ghobadi, was broadcast into Iran by VOA's Persian Service early in February. The film, which has been banned by the Iranian government, won the 2012 Asia Pacific Screen Award and the Prize of the Jury at the 2012 San Sebastian International Film Festival. It was also nominated as Best International Feature at the Chicago International Film Festival. *Rhino Season* tells the story of an Iranian-Kurdish poet named Sahel, who was imprisoned during the Iranian revolution of 1979. The film follows Sahel in his quest to find his wife and children after years of imprisonment. The movie features Italian actress Monica Bellucci as Sahel's wife, and well-known Iranian actor Behrouz Vossoughi, who has been living in exile and makes a return to the cinema after more than 30 years. It is the first movie Ghobadi has made outside of Iran since he fled in 2009. He granted exclusive rights to VOA to broadcast it into Iran. He says it is important for the Voice of America to air the film in Iran because government censors are preventing it from being seen. The majority of the movie was shot on location in Istanbul, Turkey. The film aired first on VOA's direct-to-home satellite stream on the evening of February 8th in Iran. It can also be watched online on the [VOA Persian website](#). Satellite jamming of the program was reported to VOA Persian's social media pages just minutes after the movie started.

New Learning English Program

On January 27, the English Division's Learning English web page launched *As It Is*, a new daily magazine program in Special English. On Monday through Friday, the program takes an in-depth look at issues in the news through adaptations of house-generated material, original reporting and interviews, and debriefers with VOA's correspondents. On weekends, the program focuses on the arts, culture and society of the United States and countries around the world.

Deewa Radio on TV Broadcast Adds Video

VOA Deewa began airing video elements in its daily one hour "Radio on TV" broadcast. The service began adding originally shot video packages to the simulcast on the one-year anniversary of the show, which was launched in January 2012. Deewa plans to add more video elements to this broadcast in coming months.

Hausa Service Launches Polio Awareness Campaign

In January, VOA's Hausa Service started a campaign to help eliminate polio in Nigeria, one of the few countries in the world where the disease is still prevalent. As part of the campaign, the service has recruited 10 stringers for radio and five for TV with the specific mandate to cover all aspects of the polio story in Nigeria. What they produce will complement radio and TV stories the service is already doing about the dangers of the disease. In addition, the service has introduced a special feature, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control, focused on polio awareness. The feature airs Thursdays within the 0700 UTC broadcast.

VOA Serbian One on One with Serbian Prime Minister Dacic

In an exclusive interview, the VOA Serbian Service spoke with Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dacic, who was in Washington to participate in the national prayer breakfast. Prime Minister Dacic said improving bilateral relations with the United States has been one of his top priorities since the formation of his government last year. The prime minister said it is necessary for Serbia to overcome its belief that the United States is opposed to Serbia's national and state interests. The interview was widely republished by all major media in Serbia. The news agencies *Beta*, *Fonet* and *Tanjug* carried it almost in full, and major websites such as *Blic*, *B92* and *Naslovi* all published it with full attribution to VOA. *RTV Vojvodina*, a public service broadcaster reaching some 2 million people, asked VOA Serbian to FTP them the interview.

VOA Ukrainian Interviews Senator McCain



VOA Ukrainian's Myroslava Gongadze interviews US Senator John McCain

In an exclusive interview, VOA's Ukrainian Service spoke with Senator John McCain (R-AZ) who said the U.S. has serious concerns about what he called the gradual erosion of human rights in Ukraine, as well as what appears to be the increasing influence of Russia in Ukrainian affairs. "I know that new Secretary (of State John) Kerry has a very deep concern and knowledge about Ukraine," Senator McCain said. "We want to see democratization and freedom." The Republican senator from Arizona particularly emphasized the imprisonment of former Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko, calling it a political act of retribution, rather than an act of justice. "The imprisonment of political leaders has had a significant effect on public opinion and opinion here in the Congress. We do not believe that Ms. Tymoshenko received a fair trial, and that comes from conclusions of international observers, not just the U.S.," McCain said. "We'd like to see improvement of our (bilateral) relations, and we'd like to see the president of Ukraine come here. But it is very hard to have a welcoming for him as long as there is an abuse of human rights and lack of rule of law in Ukraine." McCain's remarks were echoed by Steven Pifer, a former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine who is currently a senior analyst at the Brookings Institution, in another interview with the Ukrainian Service. Pifer expressed concern about the imprisonment of former Prime Minister Tymoshenko and raised the possibility of U.S. sanctions against Ukrainian officials who are violating human rights. The interview was picked up by all major media outlets in Ukraine, including TVI, one of Ukraine's up and coming cable TV stations, the popular online news portal *Ukrayinska Pravda*, and a popular online economic newspaper *Liga.net*.

Additional Notable Interviews

- The Urdu Service interviewed Representative Andre Carson (D-IN), a senior whip for the House Democratic Caucus, who is one of two Muslims serving in Congress.
- Cuban blogger Yoani Sanchez was interviewed by the Spanish Service about her upcoming trip to Latin America, Europe and the United States. The story was picked up by affiliate websites in the region as well as major television networks, including Teleamazonas in Ecuador and Andina de Television in Peru.
- In an interview with the Kurdish Service, Iraq's deputy prime minister, Saleh al-Mutlaq, said the best step toward stability in Iraq would be for all sides to get back to the negotiating table for serious and comprehensive talks.
- In an interview with the Kurdish Service, Iraq's deputy prime minister, Saleh al-Mutlaq, said the best step toward stability in Iraq would be for all sides to get back to the negotiating table for serious and comprehensive talks.
- The Armenian Service spoke with the U.S. Ambassador to Armenia, John Heffern, about social, economic and political developments in Armenia.
- Colombia's ambassador to the United States, Carlos Urrutia, talked with the Spanish Service about the peace negotiations with the FARC guerrillas and Colombia's trade with the United States.
- A VOA Albanian interview with youth movement leader Albin Kurti was widely quoted in the Kosovo media. Kurti, whose views are deemed radical by the government, repeated calls for union with Albania. He also criticized the idea of holding talks with Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dacic. His remarks were carried by many TV outlets in Kosovo and reprinted in a number of local newspapers.
- The Armenian Service spoke with the U.S. Ambassador to Armenia, John Heffern, about social, economic and political developments in Armenia.

Zimbabwe Service Chief in Harare

VOA's new Zimbabwe Service chief, Jeremy Groce, visited Zimbabwe early in February. He met with U.S. Ambassador Bruce Wharton, an enthusiastic supporter of the service, as well as with the service's stringers. In addition, Groce delivered a one-day training session on radio journalism to 16 participants in the U.S. Embassy's Mentoring Women in Journalism program.

VOA and RFE/RL Cooperation, Content-Sharing and Cross-Promotion

Content-sharing and cross-promotion between Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and VOA's Balkan and Ukrainian services in January encompassed a broad spectrum of subjects, including stories on immigration reform, the gun control debate in the U.S., war crimes and human rights, in addition to cultural and feature stories. The two Ukrainian services share their web content weekly, with at least 30 RFE/RL materials republished by VOA Ukrainian and some 36 VOA Ukrainian materials republished by RFE/RL. The Albanian, Serbian, Bosnian and Macedonian Services republished at least six RFE/RL items, and RFE/RL republished six VOA reports, in addition to carrying VOA Bosnian's daily 60-second video web segment.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

VOA Chinese Makes Strides Inside the Great Firewall

Three months after launching her QQ microblog in one of China's top social media platforms, VOA Chinese Branch Chief Sasha Gong is reaching thousands of readers and viewers inside China who otherwise may not be able to scale the "Great Firewall" to visit the VOA website. On an average day, Sasha publishes 10-12 fully branded VOA Chinese reports or video segments on her microblog. In the past month, these VOA-branded posts received more than 3,828,000 views and were commented on thousands of times. Most of the posts are hard news on hot political topics such as official corruption, US-China relations and Sino-Japanese tensions. To illustrate the importance of being able to reach the Chinese audience from *inside* the firewall, the VOA Chinese website, which is blocked, got only 2,276,000 pageviews from around the world during the same time. The success of this inside-the-firewall initiative has demonstrated the attractiveness of VOA content and the great potential for VOA Chinese to reach more audience inside China.

VOA Spanish Mobile Traffic Soars to 1.2 Million

In January, the Spanish Service's online platform voanoticias.com recorded 1,209, 277 visits. Of these 981,000 are on the mobile site. On Inauguration Day 58,000 visits were logged to the service's online platforms. The service also provided live Tweets of the inauguration ceremony.

VOA Crowd-Sources Inauguration Coverage with Interactive Map

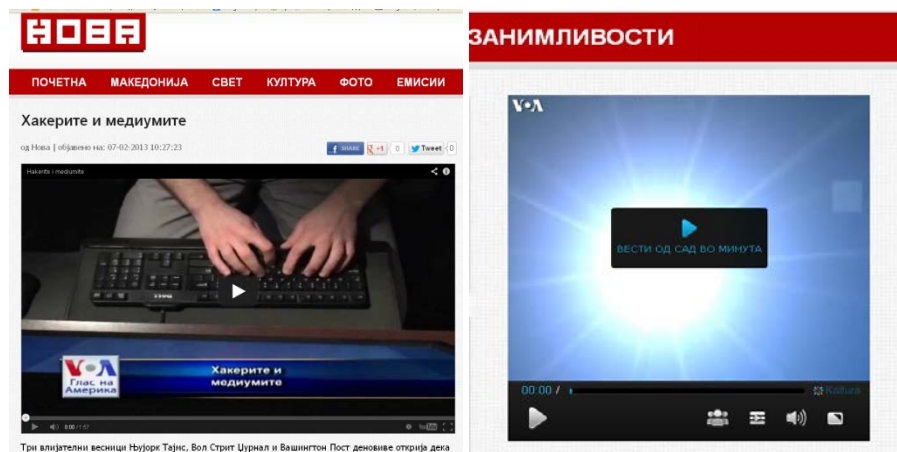
As President Obama was sworn in for a second term, the English website created an interactive that plotted Tweets, photos and videos submitted by VOA staff and audience members on a map of the mall. By the end of the day about 200 unique posts had been added to the map. The top story, both for the inauguration and the month, was Suzanne Presto's piece about Michelle Obama's Jason Wu ball gown. It received over 54,000 pageviews.

Obama Inauguration and Sihanouk Funeral Boost VOA Khmer Online Numbers

VOA Khmer's website had two major surges during this reporting period. The first was for its special coverage of President Obama's inauguration on January 21. The second was for the royal funeral of King Norodom Sihanouk, which lasted from February 1 to 7. The service's week-long online coverage of the royal funeral and cremation of the late king, who died in October, included extensive coverage on Facebook and Twitter, near-live curation on Storify and strong cross promotion with the radio coverage. Facebook fan numbers surged by 8,000 and surpassed 50,000 during this coverage (<http://goo.gl/wFuJi>) and audience interaction on Facebook increased to a record volume, including a viral original photo with over 5,000 likes (<http://goo.gl/1PQBF>).

Macedonian Service Expands Online Syndication

VOA Macedonian expanded its syndication with Macedonian websites by placing its content on [NOVA](#), an Internet-based portal that focuses on video content. Through the cost-free initiative, NOVA carries VOA TV stories on a daily basis and features the VOA Macedonian *US News in One Minute* widget.



NOVA portal features a VOA story on hacker attacks on the media (left), and the “US News in One Minute” widget (right)

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA AND OUTREACH

- On January 25, John Schaefer, host of *Soundcheck* on WNYC Radio in New York, interviewed Heather Maxwell, host of VOA's *Music Time in Africa*. The program focused on Malian music and the current situation in Mali.
- On February 1, BBC reporter Michael Gallagher came to VOA to interview Africa Division Director Gwen Dillard and Steve Ferri, Web managing editor of the Africa Division, about direct-to-mobile broadcasts to Africa. The interview is part of a larger report that will air on the BBC in the near future.
- On February 8, we received a request from New Tang Dynasty Television for comment on a press release issued the previous day titled, “VOA Rejects Chinese Allegations on Tibet Self-Immolations.” We provided them with a statement from the VOA Director.

- VOA posted an immediate response and press release denying Chinese allegations that VOA was encouraging Tibetans to use self-immolation as a protest. The VOA denial was covered by *Wall Street Journal*, AP, AFP, the *New York Times* and others.
- VOA issued a press release about VOA correspondent Steve Herman's exclusive interview on February 12 with Japanese Defense Minister Itsunon Onodera following the latest N. Korea nuke test. Herman appeared on the John Batchelor Show, WTOP, and Arirang TV in South Korea.
- Director David Ensor posted a new blog on "The State of America's Voice."
- VOA provided the State Department with photos for a presentation on Willis Conover.

PRESS RELEASES

- VOA Expanding Broadcasts to Mali – January 15
- VOA Covers Presidential Inauguration in 43 Languages – January 18
- Somali Youth Speak Out on New VOA Show – February 5
- VOA Rejects Chinese Allegations on Tibet Self-Immolation – February 6
- VOA Airs Banned Film "Rhino Season" in Iran – February 8
- Japan Defense Minister Tells VOA N. Korea Nuke Test a 'Big Threat' – February 12

SPECIAL TOURS

- Ohio State University Students– January 25
- Global Learning Center tour of the Persian Service. – February 4

F. PERSONNEL

New VOA Public Relations Director

Kyle King has been appointed the new VOA Director of Public Relations. In this role, Kyle will work with the VOA Director and the BBG communications team on an effective strategy to convey the vitally important role that Voice of America continues to play in the world.

Since joining the Public Relations office three years ago, Kyle has been instrumental in a number of successful and high-profile campaigns to highlight VOA's outstanding programs. As a direct result of his outreach efforts, the Washington Post, CNN, Fox News, NPR, and many other leading news agencies have publicized and written about VOA's accomplishments. He has also taken a leading role in the enhancement of the Public Relations website and the use of social media tools, and has built a record of engagement and cooperation with our BBG sister stations.

Prior to his work in public relations, Kyle was an Assignments Editor in VOA's News Division and National Coverage Coordinator, positions that involved working closely with our language services and correspondents around the world.

Kyle also has long experience in the field and has reported from many conflict zones. As VOA State Department Correspondent in the late 1990s, he traveled around the world with Secretary of State Madeline Albright. From 1995 to 1998, he was based in Europe, where he covered the conclusion of the War in Bosnia and the siege of Sarajevo, the outbreak of fighting in Croatia

and Kosovo, and the insurrection in Albania. Kyle is a U.S. Army veteran who served in West Berlin from 1980 to 1985.

New Chief for Learning English

Victor Morales has been named chief of Learning English. A native of Missouri, Morales is a 24-year veteran of VOA who started his broadcasting career as a News and English Broadcast Directorate Intern, which took him to every part of the agency. He later served as East European affairs reporter in the former Current Affairs Division, producing news analyses and documentaries, and hosting VOA's weekend public affairs programs -- *Encounter* and *Press Conference, USA*. He also moderated VOA's first daily English radio roundtable discussion on issues in the news for the *VOA Worldwide* program. Morales is intimately familiar with the needs of VOA's language services, having served several years as an analyst in the Office of Performance Review. More recently, he edited and anchored news programs for the Worldwide English Division, and led the former "Focus" News Analysis Unit in the Central News Division. For the past four years, he has been an assignments and story editor for Central News. Before coming to VOA, Victor resettled political refugees for the International Institute in St. Louis, after having conducted historical research as a Fulbright Scholar in Romania. A former high school teacher with a Lifetime Teacher's Certificate, Victor earned an MA in government at Cornell University, where he studied and taught international relations, American government, and Soviet affairs. More recently, he received an MBA at the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland, focusing on strategy and leadership.

New Internet Managing Editor for VOAnews.com

Mark Young has joined the English Division as Internet Managing Editor for VOAnews.com. He has over 15 years of experience working in online journalism and media, with a focus on web management, mobile, and social media. As managing editor of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* website (JSOnline.com), Young led the team that determined the daily news lineup, helped reporters become more comfortable using online tools, and monitored daily site usage to create reports for the newsroom. He was also an online editor and manager at the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, *Congressional Quarterly*, and Media General. Most recently, he was a senior web editor in the State Department's Bureau of International Information Programs, where he managed content on public and private websites, and developed strategy to engage international audiences via the web, mobile, and social media. Young has also taught online journalism at the University of Maryland. He has a BA in English and Philosophy from the University of Wisconsin and a MA in Journalism and Public Affairs from American University.

DATE: February 15, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for January 2013

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

New BBG SES Member: The selection for the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) position has been finalized. Ms. Mary Catherine Pleffner, currently holding an SES position at the Department of Commerce, has accepted the CFO position and will join the agency in March. Ms. Pleffner currently serves as the Director, Office of Administrative Services, for the Office of the Secretary of Commerce, where she manages a broad range of functions, including real property, acquisition and contracting, personal property, transportation and fleet. Prior to that, Ms. Pleffner was the Special Assistant to the Commander/Deputy Director for Resources Directorate for the U.S. Africa Command at the Department of Defense where she was responsible for resource planning, budgeting, finance, and human resources. In addition, she served for almost nine years as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer for the Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce. Ms. Pleffner has received numerous awards for her outstanding work, including a Presidential Rank Award for Sustained Extraordinary Accomplishment and Leadership. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Maryland and a Masters of Management degree from Purdue University.

Iran Sanctions: On February 7, the Treasury Department announced new sanctions against Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) for, among other things, jamming satellite transmissions. The head of IRIB, Ezzatollah Zargami, is now under sanctions. OSD worked closely with the Department of State as this issue progressed through the Congress and Administration.

SMART Build-Out: OSD is working with the broadcasters, TSI, and ODDI to stand up our “SMART” system (Strategic Management and Audience Research Tool). The SMART system will be a central repository for research data, affiliate information, and agreed-upon strategies for each country to which BBG broadcasts. For the first time, BBG will have country-specific strategies to drive individual language service performance, as well as related marketing, distribution, and development support. OSD will be discussing the strategies extensively with broadcasting management to ensure that market opportunities, content, and distribution all line up. These conversations will be in advance of Language Service Review (LSR) to achieve consensus to the extent possible before the LSR meetings with the Governors, allowing those sessions to focus on overriding policy and strategic issues.

OFFICE OF THE IBB DIRECTOR

Expanded BBG Health and Wellness Program: Several improvements were made to BBG's Health and Wellness Program Fitness Center, including renovating the Fitness Center, installing new equipment, enhancing security and safety measures, and providing a wide range of exercise and stress reduction classes. These enhancements, initiated through the Union-Management Forum, were celebrated at an Open House on January 23 attended by more than 140 employees, along with senior IBB and VOA managers. Use of the Center already has increased by more than 50 percent.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: We have supplied the necessary license application data for the project to the Far East Broadcasting Corporation (FEBC). FEBC will file the modified license application at the appropriate time. FEBC has asked for additional information on the expected antenna system performance and has suggested an auxiliary antenna system. We are evaluating the implications of the request in terms of cost and performance as well as regulatory and safety issues.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

- The last (currently funded) new BBG FM facility in **Afghanistan at Nuristan** should be completed in March. When completed, a total of 15 BBG FM facilities will be on the air in Afghanistan.
- On February 10, our contractor in **Iraq** forwarded a request from Iraq Ministry of Communications to pay frequency license bills for 2011, 2012, and probably 2013 at the rate of \$17,000/frequency/year. BBG has 13 sites in Iraq, two FMs each, so this would be \$442,000/year. If these fees are not paid, our broadcasts may be closed down. Our contractor is having his technical and legal people in Iraq challenge this. ALL broadcasters in Iraq are affected by this new decree. Our contractor also warned us that the fees may be increased further based on power and antenna elevation and number of antenna dipoles (or effective radiated power).
- An agreement was signed on November 2 with VOA affiliate FM Liberté in **N'Djamena, Chad**, to host a BBG 24/7 FM facility. We are working on the station implementation plans to ensure that there will be a reliable source of electrical power for the station.
- While traveling to Juba in February to oversee final installation activities, TSI Engineer Ken Claerbout will also make trips to **Kinshasa, DRC**, and **Nouakchott, Mauritania**, to conduct preliminary site surveys for possible BBG FM facilities in those locations.

IBB Information Technology (IT):

- Annual Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) certification and accreditation (C&A) has been completed for the agency financial system (Momentum), and an Authority to Operate (ATO) has been issued by the CIO. FISMA C&As are being conducted for several other BBG systems including the agency ID card system (PIV cards), the agency content management system (Pangea), and the agency's public web services.
- The MPLS connection between the Cohen Building and RFA in Washington is in operation. The RFA link was used for a special seven-day, live TV broadcast by RFA's Tibetan

Service, which began on January 16. The link has been used daily for the RFA Burmese TV broadcast and for distribution of four RFA radio broadcast channels since January 23. Circuits to Tinang and Prague have also been deployed and are pending testing before they are put into full service.

- We are installing, testing, and configuring several network devices and tools to enhance our capability to deal with anomalous network traffic and security threats to agency systems.
- IT is preparing to implement a file sharing system for all BBG entities and affiliates. We hope to launch the system in March.

IBB Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities: The IAC Team is finalizing the annual report to Congress.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION (ODDI)

In January ODDI distributed its 2013 plan of action to improve core digital platforms and product offerings. The plan details four goals for the next year:

1. Integrate Digital Platforms.
2. Grow Mobile platforms and services.
3. Improve Audience Engagement.
4. Increase Digital Affiliates.

As resources become available, we will be adding additional capabilities to the office, technical development/programmers, user experience design and storytelling support and increased services for doing digital data analysis in support of product development and strategy.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT (OSD)

Mali Transmission and Programming Expansion:

- On February 11 VOA launched its “Crisis in the Sahel” with \$600,000 of funding secured by OSD from Africom. The Africom grant provides funding for programming in French for the Sahel region as a whole, as well as in Bambara for Mali. Bambara is spoken by approximately 80% of the population of Mali.
- The new 24/7 FM in Bamako, on air since mid-January, will have its official launch on March 6-7, when David Ensor is scheduled to visit. OSD is coordinating several events including a town hall meeting, a ceremony with press and local officials, media interview with Director Ensor, and a reception hosted by the U.S. Ambassador to Mali.
- OSD is providing funding to long-time affiliate Kledu FM to purchase new FM transmitters that will give this valuable affiliate coverage for 80% of the Malian population. In return for the one-time grant of BBG broadcasting equipment, Kledu will broadcast VOA programs in French and Bambara on all of its stations, adding significantly to VOA’s significant potential audience reach.

DRC FMs: Paula Caffey of OSD is traveling to Kinshasa, DRC in a week to meet with regulators and arrange a preliminary site survey for a 24/7 FM the capital. BBG will likely

receive a license for the entire DRC, which will allow us to ramp up FMs in important secondary cities.

Nigeria Polio Eradication: OSD staff is helping VOA to launch a campaign to eradicate polio in Northern Nigeria in February. The campaign involves reporting, PSAs and Town Hall meetings.

Teamwork Salvages Key Kosovo Affiliation: OSD-Prague was informed by the head of the RFE/RL South Slavic Service that long-time affiliate, Radio Dukagjini, was under new management and had decided to cancel their placement as it had sold the time to an advertiser. Within 24 hours, the South Slavic Service developed a contingency broadcast plan for the affiliate and OSD Prague modified the current agreement with the new broadcast schedule. This great example of entity teamwork resulted in continuation of a key RFE/RL placement.

Additional Funding on Existing Inter-Agency Agreements:

- South Sudan: State Department notified BBG it will continue funding the South Sudan program in 2014 with \$1 million.
- Nigeria, Tanzania and Bangladesh: USAID has committed additional money for health coverage and other topics.

Upcoming Media Training: OSD continues to execute media training on such topics as health related journalism, citizen journalism, and tips for female journalists in areas around the world: Indonesia, Vietnam, Cuba, and Zimbabwe. In Moldova, , and Moldova, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Bay Fang will make a keynote address at a training on citizen journalism planned for February 21-24.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: In an effort to provide context, and in coordination with Communications and Outreach Committee members, we contacted key Hill staff about the OIG and GAO reports issued in late January on the day that each report was released, answered immediate questions and offered briefings or responded to additional staffers' requests for briefings as appropriate. Those briefings were to continue through February, including a meeting between Governors Meehan and Ashe and staffers for the House Foreign Affairs Committee majority and minority. When the leadership of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) became known, letters of congratulations were prepared for the full Board's review and signatures. Similarly, a letter was sent to Secretary Clinton and a congratulatory letter to Secretary Kerry upon his confirmation, urging that he meet with the Board at the earliest possible date.

Requests for Board members to meet with new House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce were renewed with his chief of staff and lead foreign policy aide.

Jeff Shell was re-nominated to be BBG chairman; work continued with the White House Office of Confirmations to update his paperwork and submit it to the Hill. Additional courtesy visits were coordinated through our offices when Mr. Shell came to town in late January, and we began setting up more of the same for his next visit, in early March.

BBG and VOA congressional staff met with staffers for Senators Rubio and McCain, who is new to the SFRC, to discuss general BBG issues. At our invitation, they were to visit the Cohen Building and attend a briefing focused on Internet anti-censorship in mid-February.

BBG staff met with staffers for Senators Leahy and Harkin at their request to discuss hiring decisions related to contractors. The opportunity to discuss innovation at the BBG arose, and we are now working to schedule an ODDI-focused briefing for Harkin staff in mid-February.

BBG and VOA staff did outreach to key Hill staffers regarding intended programming changes for service to Mali, notified the State Department and conducted the drafting, clearance, and submission of required Congressional Notification (CN), which was approved on February 14.

We also coordinated and drafted Congressional Notifications related to VOA and TSI for BBG's Program Plan – which, we learned after the departure of the previous CFO, was overdue. BBG coordinated with RFA to respond to a mid-January news release by Rep. Dana Rohrabacher highlighting his sustained inquiries regarding matters concerning a personnel action regarding the leadership of RFA's Tibetan service and a series of requests for information regarding coverage by RFA and VOA on forced organ-harvesting in China.

BBG coordinated with RFE/RL to answer questions from the offices of Senators Leahy and Durbin regarding the current situation with Radio Svoboda, including a request for a meeting with Kevin Klose at the earliest opportunity when he is in Washington.

We worked with OCB to set up Hill meetings for Carlos Garcia in late February.

Media: We drafted and cleared responses by the Board to the OIG and GAO reports, as well as public remarks by Secretary of State Clinton, which were of immediate use as stories were written by *The Washington Post*, the New York Daily News, the Huffington Post and Fox News. Other releases of note during this period: Agency activities in response to the crisis in Mali, reflections on World Radio Day, interviews via Skype for OCB's *Avanza Cuba* live program, and the hiring of a new CFO.

We met several times with ODDI leadership and developed supporting public information materials to showcase innovation across the BBG as well as the Internet Anti-Censorship program in preparation for pitching stories on innovation to specialty and mainstream media starting in late February.

Pitching coverage of broadcast industry outlets to feature Richard Lobo is in progress.

A public roll-out of the VOA and BBG developments in Mali was planned on the heels of congressional approval of the two new language services.

Work continued on compiling and editing materials for the 2012 BBG annual report.

Outreach: Lynne Weil participated via Skype in a USC class on public diplomacy in late January and provided an in-person briefing to a George Washington University class on Feb. 11.

Training under TSI staff, BBG PA staff has developed a info-graphic that informs web users about threats to our journalists with geographic references. The map is being submitted for possible exhibition at a technical mapping conference.

Graphics: Design and production work continued on the Language Service Review book. Layout was completed for the 2012 BBG annual report in coordination with BBG PA. Artwork was completed for a wall-size display of the agency-wide 2012 Medal Awards winners. The bulk of the 2013 VOA calendars produced via the Graphic Department were distributed to language services and embassies abroad, where they are very popular and useful marketing tools. The department created more attractive exterior banners for outside the Cohen Building to advertise the VOA studio tours, and artwork and a vendor manual were in production. Materials were in development for citywide advertising campaigns in Juba and Bamako, an Office of Strategy and Development program catalog, a series of Africa Health Network reports, and three upcoming trade shows.

Internal Communications: In late January in the newly renovated Health and Wellness Center, located in the basement of the Switzer Building, was inaugurated with an open house planned and marketed by BBG PA that drew a lively crowd of approximately 150 employees and contractors. The new class offerings have generated heightened interest in the Fitness Center and continue to garner positive feedback.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW (OPR)

OIG-GAO Inspections: On February 11, the BBG submitted its initial response to the *OIG Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors* issued on January 10, 2013. Subject to the OIG's ongoing compliance process, we expect further correspondence with the OIG, as the Board refines its views and proposed actions on the recommendations.

Performance Review worked with VOA and relevant IBB offices in responding to the OIG's compliance analysis regarding its *Inspection of the BBG Operations in Nairobi, Kenya*. Of the six recommendations issued, two already have been closed by the OIG. The agency response was submitted electronically by OPR to the OIG on February 11 for the first time using the new Open Net system, with the assistance of TSI.

The *OIG Inspection of the VOA Russian Service* is ongoing, with the OIG team scheduling interviews with key personnel in both VOA and IBB. OPR appreciates the cooperation and flexibility of all individuals contacted by the OIG for interviews.

Performance Review is coordinating with GAO as it prepares a summary of its report on Broadcast Duplication for inclusion in GAO's 2013 Duplication Mandate report. GAO is required by statute to summarize all of its efforts to identify duplication and overlap throughout the government. The 2013 report will be GAO's third annual report to congress.

VOA Reach in Niger, Chad and Mali: Performance Review just received results from questions placed by IBB Research on Gallup's World Poll in several Sahelian countries. VOA remains a market leader in *Niger* with 31% weekly reach, mostly in Hausa and over FM via local stations. VOA is second only to the BBC, which has 44% weekly reach. A quarter of the respondents surveyed cited VOA as one of their top three news sources.

VOA also does well in *Chad*, with 16% weekly reach. As only about one-third of the population listen to French language radio at all, VOA is reaching about half of the available potential audience.

VOA English, January 24, 2013: Performance Review analysts conducted a broad review of VOA English programming and found it to be journalistically sound, but in need of an updated look and presentation style. Recommendations included clearly defining some news products that lack focus, building programs around established personalities, strengthening the brand identity of VOA's signature newscasts, and establishing a database-driven program guide for the website to make it easier for the VOA English audience to find the programming.

OCB Radio Marti, January 31, 2013: OPR analysts conducted the annual review of OCB Radio Marti, noting improvements in the use of trained stringers to provide news coverage from the island and suggested improvements in the execution of the station's hourly newscasts. IBB Research is working with OCB managers to review recent immigrant focus groups, a monitoring panel and 2011 phone survey data on radio use to help inform development of options for new formats for Radio Martí, including better integration of its new media activities.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES (OHR)

SES Performance Appraisal Certification: Under federal regulations, each agency's performance appraisal system for SES members must be certified by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) with concurrence by the Office of Management and Budget. The BBG's SES appraisal certification expired on December 31, 2012. As a result, the maximum amount that a new agency SES member can be paid is \$165,300 (the rate of pay of level III of the Executive Schedule) instead of \$179,700, the maximum rate allowed under a certified system. The agency has submitted its recertification request to OPM.

OPR Review of the OHR Training Division: The Office of Performance Review completed a review of the OHR Training Division in February. Nine goals and corresponding action items were agreed upon, including that the Training Division will function as the coordinator of scheduling and publicity for all training at the Agency; the Training Division will assume responsibility as the centralized electronic repository for employee training records; the Training Division will develop and post on the Agency's SharePoint site a coordinated schedule of training to be offered for the remainder of the 2013 fiscal year; and the Training Division will meet with entities conducting training at the Agency to assess which courses can use in-house trainers, which courses can be put on-line, and which outside courses can be brought in-house; among other goals.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Black History Month Events:

- On February 19, at 11:00 a.m., BBG along with the Southwest Interagency Committee will sponsor a program, featuring Mr. Carrol R. Gibbs, award-winning author/historian and international lecturer, and Mr. Kevin Q. Jackson, spiritual & motivational speaker, to commemorate Black History Month.
- On February 26, BBG is sponsoring a presentation by Mr. Phillip Tibbs, author, lecturer and son of a Tuskegee Airman. The presentation will include letters written by a member of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen, along with other real-life accounts of World War II.

OFFICE OF POLICY

Teleconference with AFRICOM: On January 20, Policy Office Director Goolsby and Policy Office editorial writer/producer Winston Wood had a telephone conference on the Somali project with Maj. William Donahue and Maj. Mark Laskoski of AFRICOM in Djibouti. We discussed the process of producing editorials for VOA, the requirements of VOA services to carry editorials, the role of State Department in clearing editorials, and the kind of information and materials we need to make broadcast-worthy editorials concerning the goal of the MOA – a series of editorials aimed at combating violent extremism in Somalia. AFRICOM agreed to share with IBB Policy any information or guidance it has on the subject.

DATE: February 11, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: Interim Management Team

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for January 2014

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

- On February 6, the working group on contracting reform published a Request for Information (RFI) to gather market research about a new contracting structure. The RFI will be posted for one month, allowing private sector firms to ask questions and provide details about their capability to provide BBG's needed services. While the RFI is posted, the working group will develop a plan for evaluating the RFI responses, create an implementation and funding plan for this new contracting structure, and craft a Statement of Work that clearly defines BBG's needs and identifies performance metrics for a potential contract award using this new structure.
- IBB staff is finalizing a new policy on the employee meal period. Most agency employees currently have a 45-minute lunch period; under this new policy, staff will be able to choose a 30-minute or 60-minute lunch period. The change will also include a pilot program where staff can choose not to take a meal period.
- Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI) arranged delivery of a new transmitter to replace the BBG FM transmitter in N'Djamena (Chad) that failed in November after a fire. Installation is scheduled for later this month. Major repair and renovation efforts continue for FM sites in Freetown (Sierra Leone), Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), and Ajloun (Jordan).
- TSI has completed an audit and consolidation of agency mobile communications devices. The number of mobile phones has been reduced from 450 to 350 leading to savings of over \$70,000 per year.
- The Office of Digital and Design Innovation (ODDI) shipped BBG's first Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems to the U.S. Embassy / VOA FM team in Bangui to assist with programming distribution in CAR to mobile phone users.
- ODDI supported Radio Free Asia's mobile application launch for phones and tablets on both Android and iOS platforms – apps for all five entities are now available on both major mobile platforms.
- ODDI assisted with the release of a new version of MBN's Alhurra mobile application for Android and iOS, which includes support for live video streaming. Alhurra is the first BBG entity to offer live video streaming in a mobile application.



February 11, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for February

KEY ISSUES/CHALLENGES

- The VOA bureau chief in Cairo, Elizabeth Arrott, says the government press office has become increasingly hostile to members of the foreign media. No foreign correspondents have had their credentials renewed for 2014, but she has managed to secure temporary accreditation, good for one month. Arrott says the police are also cracking down on the media, telling reporters they are not allowed to shoot video on the streets. Even those reporters who shoot with a smart phone or record for radio, Arrott says, risk being detained. The government isn't the only problem, she says, as reporters are also at risk of attack by angry crowds. The Committee to Protect Journalists puts Egypt, along with Syria and Iraq, in its list of the three most dangerous countries for journalists, calling it worse than Pakistan or even Somalia.
- In a directive issued on one of its Facebook pages, al Shabab in Somalia has banned the use of mobile phones and the Internet in the areas of Somalia that it controls – 25 to 30 percent of the country. The directive gives companies 15 days to shut down their mobile and Internet services and warns that those companies that don't comply will be dealt with according to Islamic law. VOA Somali has a large audience through its mobile site, and much of its audience listens to its programs through its website.
- In Beijing January 22, several police officers pushed around VOA Mandarin Correspondent Fred Wang while he was taking photos and shooting video on the street outside the court house during the trial of dissident Xu Zhirong. Wang was not injured and filed a TV package and radio report that included details about the police harassment. Police also roughed up the BBC and CNN reporters and damaged the CNN's reporter's equipment. Meanwhile, Chinese Branch Chief Sasha Gong's IP address has been blocked in China and she is no longer able to create new blogging accounts. Sasha was notified on January 3 that her original blogging site was suspended. She created new accounts but they were quickly shut down.
- In mid-January, a spokesman for the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo in Nord-Kivu, Colonel Olivier Amuli, publicly made more than one threat to Swahili Service stringer Austere Malivika and two other reporters (DW and Reuters), accusing them of "sticking their noses into the army's business" for the coverage they did of the murder of an army colonel, Mamadou Ndala. VOA has been in contact with Reporters Without Borders over Colonel Amuli's remarks, and the group issued a statement condemning "the threats that civilian and military officials have made against journalists covering [Colonel] Ndala's

murder and the ongoing investigation. The media must,” the statement continued, “be allowed to do investigative reporting and to talk freely about this case without being constantly harassed.” On January 30, the chief of the armed forces in North Kivu met with Malivika and other reporters to assure them of their safety. As a result of the meeting, the Swahili Service stringer now considers the matter resolved. VOA remains in contact with Reporters Without Borders, which continues to follow the media situation in the DRC.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim Management Team
DATE: February 11, 2015
SUBJECT: IBB Monthly Report for January 2015

GLOBAL STRATEGY:

Office of Digital & Design Innovation

The VOA News Mobile Application has been nominated in the 'Best Mobile Media & Publishing App' category for the Global Mobile Awards* at the 2015 Mobile World Congress. Additionally, our new Radio SAWA mobile app is nominated in the 'Best Mobile Music App' category. Winners will be announced at the Mobile World Congress event in Barcelona in March.

(*Global Mobile Awards are the 'Oscars' of the mobile application development world)

GLOBAL OPERATIONS:

Technology Services and Innovation (TSI)

- With very short notice, the General Services Administration (GSA) demanded that the remaining BBG occupants (more than 60 individuals) of the fourth floor of the Switzer Building vacate their office spaces by the end of January. Various TSI elements successfully helped to arrange the physical move and to support the relocation of essential computer, telecommunications, and other services before the deadline. The IBB Office of Workforce Support and Development was able to move into their new open work spaces on the fourth floor of the Cohen Building but other elements formerly housed on the fourth floor of Switzer will have to work from temporary accommodations in the basement of Switzer and in a number of temporary locations throughout the Cohen Building until final office renovations have been completed.
- Station employees of the Philippines Transmitting Station undertake weekly food distributions to needy recipients in the five surrounding barangays as part of the station's civic action program. In mid-December, an additional bag of groceries and fruit were delivered to the recipients as part of the early Christmas gift-giving program.

DATE: January 12, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for December, 2011

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

“Beyond The Headlines” Moves Affiliation: VOA’s Urdu-Language television program, “Beyond The Headlines,” switched affiliates on December 1, moving from Pakistan’s GEO News Channel to Express News. The switch occurred smoothly. The Office of Marketing and Program Placement continues to work with VOA, the Office of Contracts and the General Counsel toward a new placement agreement, with a target of June 1.

New BBG FM Transmitters in Libya: The new BBG FM installation in **Benghazi, Libya**, broadcasting Radio Sawa programs, continues to operate successfully. For a planned second BBG FM station in **Tripoli**, TSI has delivered all needed equipment to Tunis for shipment on to Tripoli. The equipment is now being held in Tunis because the Tunisia-Libya border has been closed, but the contractor is arranging for ship transport to Tripoli on or about January 10. If the shipment arrives successfully, the station could be on-air by the end of January.

Social Media Newsroom: The Office of New Media has been working closely with a number of entities on the introduction of new audience engagement tools, workflows and activities. Our greatest areas of concentration has been with MBN, OCB and VOA Russian.

At MBN, we started our collaboration by helping them introduce audience engagement into two broadcasts with two Egyptian celebrities. The outcome was stellar with over 10,000 audience members voting on questions to ask the guests and an increase of over 5,000 new, engaged Facebook followers. Activities included audience-generated interviews, a live Skype interview with a blogger on-air, behind-the-scenes photographs and a post interview feature called “5 More Questions with...”

With VOA Russian, we have started working with individual staff members to provide coaching, training and support in expanding the use of social media to source new content, invite the audience to enhance VOA media and drive more viral distribution. We have contracted with a social media monitoring service that will work closely with Russian, as well as four other newsrooms, to provide powerful analytical support for journalists to query what the audience is discussing and sharing around daily editorial topics.

We have also started a project to work closely with OCB on their new *Avanza Cuba* series of special live programs. In the past few weeks, we have assisted them in growing their audience through directed social media campaigns. In the near future, we will be assisting them in assessing new social media tools, platforms and workflows before, during and after the program.

Contractor Issues: The IBB Director's Office has taken several steps in an ongoing effort to address issues surrounding the Agency's use of individual contractors. So far, this effort has included a full census of federal contractors to understand how many contractors contribute to our workforce and what services they provide. Additionally, we sent out the first ever survey asking contractors about how their contracts are managed. Nearly 200 respondents presented key issues that the Director's Office will explore in greater detail in a series of upcoming brownbag forums specifically for contractors. We will use the information presented to identify steps that the Agency might take, consistent with our legal responsibility to maintain distinctions between government employees and contractors, to address those concerns.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

Jamming of BBG Satellite Transmissions to Iran: The most recent incident of interference suspected to be intentional jamming of BBG satellite transmissions to Iran began on December 28 against the Arabsat/EB2 satellite and continues in effect. The jamming of the Arabsat/EB2 satellite is intermittent, but each episode is of long enough duration to disrupt programming significantly. Even though VOA PNN and BBC Persian broadcasts appear to be the targets of this jamming, the source of the jamming interference appears to be outside of Iran. We are working closely with the State Department, BBC, Eutelsat, and other organizations to focus international attention on this intentional jamming of satellite transmissions.

Our satellite service provider replaced the Nilesat/AB4 satellite, which had been carrying PNN, with the AB7 satellite on October 23. Unfortunately, this replacement satellite provided degraded signal performance in Iran making it nearly unusable for us. We transferred this service to the Eutelsat W3A satellite on December 16, but at a different frequency configuration from those that had been previously subject to interference.

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: TSI is working with a broadcast engineering consultant to design, as expeditiously as possible, the new BBG transmission system that will be located at an existing site of the Far East Broadcasting Company (FEBC) in South Korea. The consultant's final report on non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation at the FEBC site has been received and is currently being translated into Korean for distribution and discussion. A statement of work for the antenna system design has been drafted and submitted for a cost estimate. A statement of work for a site visit by an architectural and engineering firm to help FEBC prepare building renovation and civil works bid packages has also been drafted.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

- TSI continues to work on the installation of seven additional BBG FM facilities in **Afghanistan**. The installation at **Lashkar Gah in Helmand Province**, should be on-air in January, and the installation in **Ghazni** should be on-air around the end of February. The remaining five sites could be operational at a rate of one installation every 4-6 weeks starting in April depending on the resolution of various shipping, customs, storage, and security issues. TSI is working with the installation and shipping contractors to firm up the schedule. TSI continues to analyze and discuss possible arrangements with BBC for joint FM installations at various sites in Afghanistan.

- We still await more information from the embassy in **Juba, South Sudan**, on options to locate a BBG FM transmitting facility within the embassy compound.

IBB Information Technology (IT)

- On December 18, the cutover to Office 365 email and calendaring cloud-based service was successfully completed for BBG and IBB users in Washington.
- The CIO Project Management Office is supplying project management services to the Offices of the CFO and Human Resources as they plan a migration of the BBG payroll, time and attendance, and human resources systems to a hosted, consolidated offering from the National Finance Center (NFC).

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities

- BBG's latest circumvention tool, Psiphon 3, has now been deployed for both Radio Farda and VOA PNN. At the end of December, about 200,000 daily sessions were active. In January, the Psiphon 3 tool will be rolled out to VOA and RFA Mandarin and Tibetan services.
- Washington software has now reached its target contract goal of about 10 million daily emails to China.
- A 90 day contract extension was awarded to Ultrareach with the agreement that they will aggressively pursue their work with the University of California Berkeley test lab to address potential security vulnerabilities highlighted by an independent researcher. The lab work was supported by the Department of State and its Internet Freedom Program. State Department has also tied its funding of Ultrareach to a successful security review. RFA President Libby Liu was present at the initial meeting at the lab.
- IAC staff met with MBN managers and discussed the use of various circumvention tools in the Middle East. A mockup of a Radio Sawa landing page has been prepared.

Cybersecurity Report: The Security and Business Continuity Division has launched a two factor authentication security project. This project is a security priority that will greatly enhance our security posture and make it much more difficult for "bad actors" to roam the BBG network. Two factor authentications will provide the Agency with non-persistent passwords to further strengthen our defenses against password cracking.

OFFICE OF NEW MEDIA

Arabic Translation Hub Prototype: We have received proposals for this project and will be pursuing a final partnership with BBC and Deutsche Welle in early January with an eye towards the Egyptian Presidential election.

OFFICE OF MARKETING AND EXTERNAL LIAISON

"The Platform" Ends a Successful Run: VOA's English-Language TV program, "The Platform," carried by Pakistan's Express 24/7 Channel, ended its run in December. The network's operator ceased operations, citing the network's continued unprofitability.

OMPP arranges for continuation of “Karwan”: Pending the State Department’s funding, OMPP has arranged for VOA’s youth-focused Dari/Pashto “Karwan” program to continue on Radio-Television Afghanistan’s nationwide TV network.

IPTV Agreement Signed: OMPP has signed an agreement with Media 21, a company that distributes IPTV set-top boxes throughout Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia. Media 21 intends to expand its marketing area, has been licensed to carry VOA’s Persian News Network, TV Marti, and a “Best of VOA” package, with all of VOA’s original content. MBN is considering an offer from Media 21 to carry Alhurra’s 24-hour content at no charge as well.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW

English to Africa Review, November 22, 2011: Comments from English-speaking respondents in May 2011 focus groups in Juba, Sudan suggest there are clear niches for VOA programming in Southern Sudan, especially in the radio market—highlighting VOA’s role in helping the Sudanese improve the country themselves and in facilitating communications between the people and the government to increase awareness of and solve key problems (health, North-South relations and education). Almost all said they would miss VOA if it were no longer available. The Action Plan discussion for English focused on increasing the number of high-value affiliates in the coming year, and on developing more content relevant to African audiences. Identification of resources for newsgathering and programming efforts is also critical.

Deewa Review, December 1, 2011: A July 2011 survey of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas/NW Frontier Province of Pakistan estimated that VOA led other international broadcasters in that region, with a weekly radio reach of 14.1% in any language (11.1% for BBC, 8.7% for RFE), with VOA’s Radio Deewa alone reaching 10.5% of adults. On all media/in any language, VOA leads as well, reaching about one fifth adults (19.6%) there. Deewa’s weekly audience is 90% male, a quarter with higher education (vs. 6% of adults). Participants in focus groups held with VOA Deewa listeners highlighted the station for its comprehensive coverage of the region (both NW Pakistan and Afghanistan) and appreciated Deewa’s willingness to critically interview key officials (playing an advocacy role for FATA’s people); they also wanted to hear detailed analysis and debate about U.S. policy in Pakistan and Afghanistan. VOA is launching a Deewa radio on television product for satellite delivery in early January 2012, and requires assistance from VOA Operations and TSI in obtaining a Skype connection in its radio studio, as well as a soundproof booth in the division.

Urdu Review, December 8, 2011: The August 2011 national survey of Pakistan shows radio listening is declining at the national level and the TV market is growing and highly competitive. Relatedly, VOA’s Urdu content reaches more audience (and a largely distinct audience) on TV (3% weekly) than radio (1.2%), with a 4.1% weekly any-media reach that makes VOA the leading international news broadcaster in Urdu (BBC’s radio/internet audience in Urdu is 2.6% of the adult population). While VOA has made use of TV’s advantages at reaching large national audiences, less-than-ideal broadcast times for its most successful show *Beyond the Headlines (BTH)* on Geo News (at the time of the survey) and the small audience of the affiliate for VOA’s English-language program “The Platform” remain obstacles to growth. A new, long-term successor affiliate station is being sought by VOA for its updated BTH product within the

coming months, and the service requires assistance from OMPP and VOA in placing this and other products, and in launching a publicity campaign to promote VOA Urdu products in the target markets.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Transit Benefits: Congress did not extend the temporary cap of \$230 a month on tax-exempt transit benefits included in the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act before their January adjournment. As a result, the maximum transit benefit payable to employees reverted to \$125 per month effective January 1, 2012. When Congress reconvenes in February 2012, they will consider the Commuter Benefits Equity Act, which, if enacted, would make a \$230 monthly transit subsidy permanent.



January 4, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for January

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

Potential for Affiliation Agreement with Burmese State TV/Radio

As mentioned in the last report, VOA Burmese chief Than Lwin Htun visited Burma early in December for meetings with senior government officials about placing VOA news and educational products on Burmese stations. But the report went to press before there was any news from those meetings. Now there is news. According to Mr. Htun, Burmese officials agreed in principle to let FM stations in Burma broadcast VOA programming, including international news, English teaching programs, science features, and health reports. VOA is in the process of sending sample MOUs to the Burmese information ministry in response to a request for them. The Burmese information minister also told Mr. Htun that Burma would consider requests for VOA reporters to enter Burma to cover news events.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

The Death of Kim Jong Il

VOA Korean mobilized all its resources at the news that North Korean leader Kim Jong Il had died. Besides covering the outpouring of grief by North Koreans to the death of their long-time leader, the service also examined the challenges facing his son and successor, Kim Jung Un. The former U.S. director of national intelligence, Dennis C. Blair, told the service that he does not believe Kim Jung Un has the experience and skills his father had when he came to power in 1994. Mr. Blair speculated that there could be splits and rivalries within the ruling elites in North Korea in the coming years. Discussing how Washington should deal with the change in

leadership in Pyongyang, former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage told the service that the United States should coordinate closely with South Korea, especially concerning high level talks with North Korea. The U.S. diplomat responsible for negotiating the 1994 nuclear agreement with North Korea, Robert Gallucci, told the service the situation is more complicated now than it was in 1994 for two reasons. This time, he said, North Korea already is in possession of a nuclear weapon and Kim Jung Un has less experience and control than his father had when he took power, which makes the situation less stable.

From Hostile to Neutral, Pyongyang's Shifting Attitude toward VOA Korean

VOA Korean reports a significant change is under way in the stance of North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) toward the Korean Service. In the past, KCNA would routinely condemn VOA and the Korean Service whenever it had cause to mention them. But starting about a year ago, KCNA began toning down its rhetoric. South Korean media have also noted the change and have suggested that VOA Korean has a strong impact in North Korea, in particular among the elites, and the North Korean leadership is addressing that impact by referring to VOA's reports. One recent example, translated into English, of the new attitude of KCNA is below. Since it appeared January 2, well after Kim Jong Il's death, the trend is apparently continuing under the new leadership:

Pyongyang, January 2 (KCNA) -- A spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry expressed belief that the DPRK would continue pushing forward socialist construction. Answering a question by VOA over the demise of leader Kim Jong Il on Dec. 29, the spokesperson said: China and the DPRK are friendly neighbors. After the demise of Kim Jong Il, the supreme leader of the DPRK, the Chinese side expressed deep condolences in various forms. What I want to emphasize is our belief that the Korean people would continue pushing forward the socialist cause by turning sorrow into strength under the leadership of the Workers' Party of Korea and Comrade Kim Jong Un. China and the DPRK are states of traditional good-neighborly and friendly ties. We will make joint efforts with the DPRK side to steadily consolidate the friendship between the two parties, countries and peoples and defend peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula and the region.

Deewa TV Project Ready for Launch

January 9 has been set as the launch date for the new Deewa TV initiative. Four Producers and seven show hosts have been selected and all have been training for their assignments since early December. A promo for the new program began airing on satellite, radio and web January 2. While radio remains the best way of reaching audiences in Pakistan's rural areas, television is making strong inroads. The goal of Deewa TV is to reach this growing market.

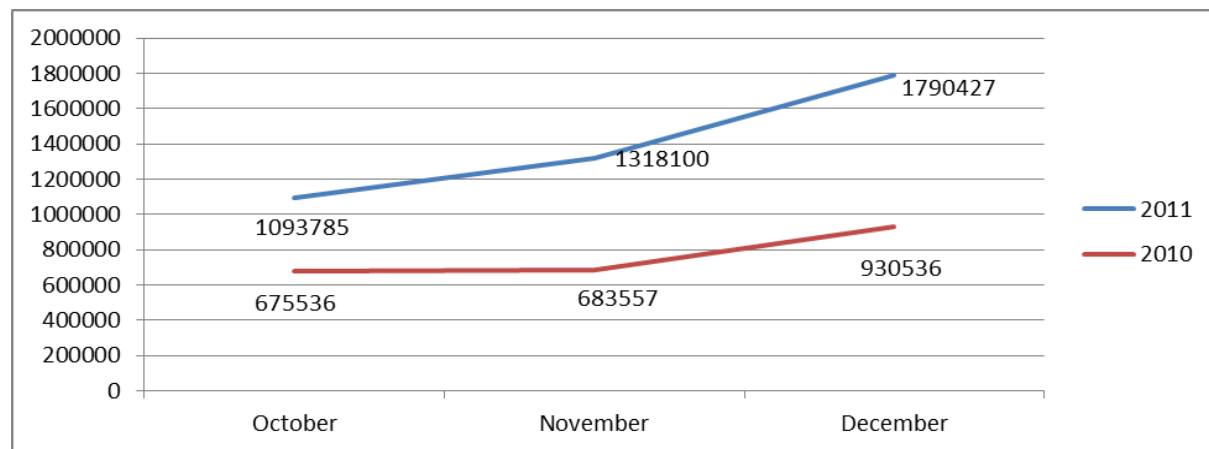
Leaving Iraq

Central News joined with other parts of VOA and the BBG to cover the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. Sharon Behn and Luis Ramirez of Central teamed up with video journalist Ilyas Khan of the Urdu service and PNN reporter Arash Arabasadi. And while in Baghdad, they worked closely with Alhurra. The results included a string of TV, radio and Internet packages that followed U.S. troops as they left Iraq, as well as packages revealing the concerns of Iraqis about the U.S. withdrawal. PNN and VOA's Kurdish Service also interviewed Iraq's vice president, Tariq al-Hashimi, who went on the run after Iraq's Judicial Council issued a warrant for his arrest, accusing him of orchestrating bombing attacks and running a hit squad and killing

Shi'ite government officials. Hashimi sought protection in the Kurdish part of Iraq, where he was interviewed by VOA. Hashimi accused Iraqi President Nouri al-Maliki of undermining the country's Sunnis and playing into the hands of Iran. He also criticized the Obama's administration for what he called "a precarious withdrawal" from Iraq.

Post-election Unrest Continues to Generate New Interest in VOA Russian

The protests following Russia's parliamentary elections in early December are continuing to drive new visitors to VOA Russian's website. According to the Google Analytics, 1,790,427 visits were recorded in December, the highest month of traffic ever for VOA Russian and more than 30 percent higher than November's traffic and almost 100 percent higher than traffic recorded during the same period last year.



The increases in web traffic were matched by higher audience engagement. Blog entries and analyses related to the election aftermath drew 100 to 500 comments. Higher interest for VOA Russian content was also registered on the service's social media and video sharing platforms. And VOA Russian has been adding more than 150 Twitter followers every day. Currently, more than 25,000 people follow VOA Russian content on Twitter, an increase of about 25 percent since last month. In addition, the VOA Russian YouTube channel recorded its highest traffic ever with more than 1,003,603 video views.

Murder of Prominent Journalist in Dagestan

VOA Russian's Fatima Tlisova was among the first to report on the mid-December murder of Gadzhimurat Kamalov, a prominent journalist who reported on corruption and police abuses in Russia's southern republic of Dagestan. Kamalov founded *Chernovik*, a local newspaper, and was murdered outside the paper's offices in the Dagestan capital of Makhachkala. A few weeks before his death he had provided comments on VOA Russian's pre-election Facebook forum. He predicted widespread electoral fraud in favor of United Russia and stated that he would not participate in the vote.

Central Africa Service Prepares for Two New Kirundi Programs

The senior editor of the Central Africa Service, Frederic Nkundikije, traveled to Burundi in December to lay the groundwork for two new Kirundi-language programs — one on HIV/AIDS, the second on entrepreneurship and job creation. While in Burundi, Nkundikije also searched for

potential office space, met with executives at possible partner stations, and interviewed contractor candidates. The weekly half-hour shows, targeting a general audience with a particular emphasis on youth, are set to launch early this year. They will be made possible by separate USAID grants, for a total of \$162,000.

Portuguese to Africa Is First to Report on Guinea Bissau Coup Attempt

VOA's Portuguese radio broadcasts and website were first in the target area with breaking news during the December 26 coup attempt by disgruntled military officers.

Bissau-based stringer Lassana Cassama beat the competition with a stream of updates on the Portuguese-to-Africa website. VOA was also first to report the identity of the uprising leaders and their capture. Luanda stringer Venancio Rodrigues was first to record an on-the-record statement from an Angolan official, confirming that Angolan troops in Bissau had rescued Prime-minister Carlos Gomes Junior, who temporarily took refuge in the Angolan embassy.



Portuguese website photo of rebel weapons by stringer Lassana Cassama

Coverage of Delay in Serbia's EU Candidacy Gets Big Audience for VOA Serbian

The in-depth coverage the Serbian Service gave to the EU's decision to delay Serbia's candidacy was a big hit in the Balkans. Dozens of TV stations, news agencies, newspapers, magazines and scores of web portals carried, with full credit to VOA, the service's programming on the EU's decision. The service also broadcast an exclusive interview with the U.S. ambassador to Serbia, Mary Warlick, who said that Washington continued to support Serbia's EU aspirations. She also expressed support for the appeal by Serbian President Boris Tadic to local Serbs in Northern Kosovo to lift the road blockades and allow free movement of people and merchandise.

Honoring Havel

The death of playwright, human rights leader and former Czech President Vaclav Havel on December 18 sparked reflections on the state of democracy around the world.



Congressman Chris Smith, chair of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, speaks to VOA about Vaclav Havel's legacy and impact he had on global human rights movement

In an interview with VOA, Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ), chair of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, called Havel one of the greatest men of the 20th century: "He was a selfless man, a wonderful human being, and we mourn his passing." The TV interview with Congressman Smith was aired by a number of nationwide affiliates in Balkans and Ukraine and was

republished by major news websites in the Eurasia Division's region, including Newsru.com in Russia. VOA Ukrainian interviewed Carl Gershman, president of the National Endowment for Democracy, who discussed Havel's impact on human rights and explored democratic trends in China, Cuba, and Burma.

Happy Anniversaries, Lots of Them

Governor Victor Ashe and VOA Director David Ensor dropped by several services in December to join them in celebrating their anniversaries and to thank them for their dedicated service to their audiences. Three of the anniversaries – for Bosnian, Central Africa, and Tigrigna and Afan Oromo – were for 15 years of broadcasting on VOA. Portuguese to Africa celebrated its 35th anniversary, while the Armenian Service marked 60 years on the air, which is only ten years less than VOA Chinese. On December 28 the service marked 70 years of U.S. international broadcasting to China.



Governor Ashe and VOA Director Ensor, joined by members of the Bosnian Service, mark 15 years of uninterrupted broadcasts to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Notable Interviews

- In an interview with VOA Albanian, the president of Kosovo, Atifete Jahjaga, said that Kosovo's independence is an accomplished fact that cannot be reversed and asked Serbian authorities in Belgrade to stop supporting illegal parallel government structures in Northern Kosovo.
- Senator Richard Lugar told the Urdu Service that the U.S. is not freezing its aid to Pakistan but has established new conditions for future aid. The interview was used on television, radio and web. Dunya TV in Pakistan broadcast the Lugar interview with attribution to VOA.
- Ambassador Marc Grossman, U.S. Special Envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, told VOA's Afghanistan Service that "Afghans should play a greater role in solving their post-2014 economic problems."
- Making Haiti attractive to investors and improving the economy are some of the challenges facing the government. Haiti's Minister of Commerce, Wilson Leleau, spoke to VOA Creole about the newly created committee to coordinate investment procedures for investment in the country.
- Economist Hernando de Soto, an adviser to several Latin American presidents, spoke to the Spanish Service about the U.S. economy, Occupy Wall Street, the Euro crisis and economic outlook for the Americas.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

OMG! Meiyu Host in Beijing with Will.i.am

Jessica Beinecke, the host of VOA's hit Chinese language video blog, OMG! Meiyu, was on location in Beijing in December, where she enlisted the help of internationally known entertainer

Will.i.am, the Black Eyed Peas producer and frontman for her weekly English teaching blog. Beinecke, whose daily OMG! videos have gone viral on Chinese social media sites, was invited to Beijing to take part in an “Education For All” event featuring Will.i.am and special performances from Chinese university students. Beinecke’s show became a sensation in September, with the release of a segment called [Yucky Gunk](#). Since then OMG! Meiyu has been viewed more than 6 million times by its loyal fans, who also supply Beinecke with questions and ideas for her show.

200,000 Nigerians Turn to VOA Hausa Mobile Phone Service for News of Crisis

The VOA Hausa Service’s newly invigorated mobile phone site drew an all-time high 200,000 visitors in December. The record-breaking month came as the Hausa Service covered the outbreak of sectarian violence in northern Nigeria blamed on the radical Muslim group Boko Haram.

VOA Khmer Makes Beeline Connection

After three months of informal discussions between VOA Khmer and the Beeline Telecom Company in Phnom Penh, one of the leading mobile phone providers in Cambodia, Beeline has agreed in principle to distribute VOA Khmer news content on its new Beeline Android Phones, which are expected to debut in Cambodia in late January or February.

Khmer Service Interns in Phnom Penh

To help with its online publishing of international news, VOA Khmer has recruited four Cambodian international affairs students to be interns for the service in Phnom Penh. In addition to helping VOA Khmer, the initiative gives the students a vital career development opportunity in the Cambodian news market.

VOA Web and Mobile Traffic Report, December 2011											
Language Service	Site Visits (sessions)			Pages Viewed			Quality Metrics (December 2011)		Mobile Visits		
	December 2011	November 2011	Change	December 2011	November 2011	Change	Pages Per Visit	Average time spent (min)	December 2011	November 2011	Change
All VOA	15,107,471	14,228,603	3%	36,217,968	34,297,027	2%	2.40	03:51	1,485,018	109,640	124%
English	3,568,908	3,616,146	-4%	6,176,165	6,339,504	-6%	1.73	02:14	831,845	109,640	634%
Persian	2,392,234	2,174,005	6%	5,704,667	5,146,429	7%	2.38	04:34	48,799	47,349	0%
Russian	1,790,427	1,318,100	31%	4,334,056	2,931,109	43%	2.42	04:03	15,680	15,150	0%
Vietnamese	1,644,707	1,512,467	5%	5,577,899	5,109,306	6%	3.39	05:22	50,954	45,707	8%
Special English	1,607,070	1,755,192	-11%	4,361,156	4,892,978	-14%	2.71	04:40	56,138	58,379	-7%
Burmese	777,130	728,664	3%	1,907,107	1,774,147	4%	2.45	04:20	33,049	25,557	25%
Chinese	614,552	732,198	-19%	1,732,408	2,231,369	-25%	2.82	04:43	18,018	17,102	2%
Somali	419,300	389,987	4%	896,608	796,909	9%	2.14	03:59	69,790	61,023	11%
Amharic	341,698	335,344	-1%	604,025	602,683	-3%	1.77	02:30	50,083	40,126	21%
Spanish	232,106	274,403	-18%	367,385	418,647	-15%	1.58	01:23	1,795	1,537	13%
Indonesian	195,816	148,236	28%	345,066	264,513	26%	1.76	02:16	5,674	4,953	11%
Tigrigna	192,319	170,642	9%	361,212	312,458	12%	1.88	02:57	na	na	na
Urdu	167,702	140,901	15%	490,202	410,434	16%	2.92	05:56	42,190	32,874	24%
Ukrainian	136,787	86,953	52%	209,238	151,428	34%	1.53	01:35	666	675	-5%
Albanian	135,322	125,079	5%	327,665	303,076	5%	2.42	03:07	3,022	2,672	9%
Khmer	116,552	111,016	2%	247,564	234,321	2%	2.12	03:40	10,548	10,224	0%
Tibetan - English	101,470	63,780	54%	141,533	107,118	28%	1.39	01:17	na	na	na
Pashto	92,626	84,154	7%	179,639	169,962	2%	1.94	03:11	6,630	6,402	0%
Hausa	83,420	87,403	-8%	184,170	191,644	-7%	2.21	05:06	202,818	143,403	37%
Zimbabwe - English	79,650	65,955	17%	117,889	98,792	15%	1.48	01:28	17,103	19,592	-16%
Korean	72,541	61,125	15%	176,462	157,944	8%	2.43	02:53	2,336	2,010	12%

Dari	71,940	64,222	8%	176,785	152,896	12%	2.46	03:38	3,501	2,887	17%
Portuguese	68,172	63,452	4%	157,316	132,474	15%	2.31	04:20	1,553	1,011	49%
Tibetan	65,989	75,272	-15%	143,054	165,720	-16%	2.17	03:56	3,056	3,002	-1%
French to Africa	64,796	32,234	95%	138,228	66,814	100%	2.13	04:09	8,915	2,751	214%
Turkish	64,336	52,464	19%	106,397	85,865	20%	1.65	01:35	1,142	797	39%
Khmer - English	52,158	58,549	-14%	90,813	95,044	-8%	1.74	02:12	na	na	na
Serbian	50,210	44,005	10%	100,218	91,032	7%	2.00	02:17	570	552	0%
Lao	45,190	46,034	-5%	156,892	161,002	-6%	3.47	06:08	na	na	na
Azerbaijani	30,827	27,284	9%	51,962	46,226	9%	1.69	02:13	484	311	51%
Central Africa	30,455	30,678	-4%	46,027	48,945	-9%	1.51	01:50	na	na	na
Kurdish	29,067	25,640	10%	57,299	50,335	10%	1.97	02:51	1,125	867	26%
Thai	26,587	26,692	-4%	41,070	41,145	-3%	1.54	01:46	312	290	4%
Uzbek	26,375	24,096	6%	56,428	50,982	7%	2.14	04:20	8,089	6,972	12%
Macedonian	22,934	22,215	0%	36,602	39,584	-11%	1.60	02:12	87	168	-50%
Afaan Oromoo	19,882	20,529	-6%	47,726	49,647	-7%	2.40	03:39	na	na	na
Swahili	19,114	15,183	22%	29,568	24,391	17%	1.55	02:10	4,404	4,339	-2%
Bangla	16,577	17,033	-6%	28,233	27,764	-2%	1.70	02:30	1,646	1,542	3%
Georgian	15,732	15,328	-1%	27,637	28,552	-6%	1.76	02:29	143	150	-8%
Deewa	15,499	13,902	8%	37,651	33,473	9%	2.43	04:09	na	na	na
Armenian	14,404	13,690	2%	28,586	25,754	7%	1.98	02:24	345	378	-12%
Bosnian	14,345	14,770	-6%	26,153	28,150	-10%	1.82	02:02	94	145	-37%
Cantonese	14,029	11,894	14%	26,962	24,025	9%	1.92	02:03	na	na	na
Creole	13,818	17,455	-23%	20,929	27,766	-27%	1.51	02:18	na	na	na
Greek	8,248	9,385	-15%	14,701	16,008	-11%	1.78	01:25	na	na	na
Shona	8,168	5,685	39%	14,183	10,494	31%	1.74	02:18	na	na	na
Kurdi	6,677	6,104	6%	8,660	8,066	4%	2.05	02:30	na	na	na
Ndebele	2,765	2,709	-1%	4,434	4,549	-6%	1.60	01:54	na	na	na

Traffic for sites with less than 15,000 visits traffic is reported from that site's unique Google Analytics account, unless that site also has blogs on the blog network. Other sites are reported from the main VOA Google Analytics account.

VOA Social Media Report: Nov 16-Dec 15 2011

Language Service (listed in alphabetical order)	Youtube	Facebook				Twitter
	Video Views	Likes & Comments on Page Content	Pages views by logged in users (total)	# of Facebook Pages	Sum of Page Likes (includes all pages)	Twitter followers
Afghan	79,526	7,767	37,664	3	64,119	1,067
Albanian	261,483	21,813	16,180	1	26,613	1,209
Armenian	19,512	-	37	1	374	35
Azerbaijani	9,226	654	437	2	3,944	1,061
Bangla	19,665	772	1,495	1	1,314	na
Bosnian	19,939	**	**	1	2,438	111
Burmese	**	na	na	1 profile	4,910	1,138
Cantonese	20,568	**	**	1	66	183
Central Africa	3,162	21	244	1	392	26
Chinese	187,546	154	2,506	1	3,786	11,418
Creole	1,190	6	64	1	199	4,644
Deewa	6,324	264	1,576	2	2,488	255
English	886,927	7,957	20,248	12	73,656	44,368
French	2,913	2,627	3,370	2	4,210	372
Georgian	16,568	112	363	1	2,303	157
Greek	3,592	**	**	1	293	661
Hausa	2,649	7,056	2,909	2	21,829	2,089
Horn	10,846	596	5,974	4	13,729	243
Indonesian	159,677	76,230	31,269	2	507,849	19,877
Khmer	190,981	4,004	4,466	1	13,616	2,036
Korean	674	na	na	na	na	27
Kurdish	16,547	480	1,336	1	4,396	1,778
Lao	na	57	633	1	267	na
Macedonian	2,047	1,606	11,411	1	8,149	140
Persian	611,016	143,872	569,147	12	909,582	10,750
Portuguese	362	600	970	1	2,997	178
Russian	1,003,603	4,681	6,850	2	5,316	25,847
Serbian	129,636	244	2,702	1	4,232	251
Somali	12,449	1,433	3,646	1	9,561	866
Spanish	**	715	986	1	1,748	6,127

Special English	863,771	98,418	129,421	1	113,069	25,882
Swahili	2,617	249	353	1	2,203	185
Thai	3,104	1,103	816	1	1,301	na
Tibetan	75,249	**	**	1	6,794	1,287
Turkish	13,619	200	820	1	1,088	1,973
Ukrainian	20,884	3,341	3,322	1	6,105	5,238
Urdu	225,953	424	1,179	2	939	1,725
Uzbek	47,439	72	123	1	398	533
Vietnamese	357,171	2,774	7,046	1	12,340	1,346
Zimbabwe	411	179	908	1	652	283

** Data was not available at the time of reporting.

GOENGLISH.ME

goEnglish.me, an interactive “learning English” website, is currently available in Indonesian, Chinese, Russian, and Persian versions. A Vietnamese version is currently in development and will launch in winter 2012. The data below is for the month of December, 2011.

goEnglish site	Registered Users	Visits	Average Time on Site (minutes)
Russian	6,360	25,526	7:33
Farsi	85,190	28,156	10:26
Chinese	22,810	7,336	8:29
Indonesian	1,620	2,740	9:22

E. DEVELOPMENT

Portuguese to Africa Conducts Town Hall Meetings/Journalist Training

The managing editor of the Portuguese to Africa Service, Luis Costa Ribas, traveled to Angola and anchored two *Angola Fala So* call-in shows in town hall format. The first was a youth forum with three political party leaders; the second the only debate between the main opposition party candidates seeking to run for president. Ribas also addressed several hundred journalism students who packed an auditorium at Agostinho Neto State University for a lecture and Q & A. He also delivered a lecture to journalism and political science students at Independent University. The Portuguese to Africa managing editor also conducted a half-day workshop for radio journalists at Cefojor, the Angola government-run journalists' training center; a half-day workshop at Ecclesia Radio; a half-day workshop for Despertar Radio; and a half-day workshop at the Web portal SAPO.

F. PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA & OUTREACH

- *Boston Globe* reporter Noy Thrupkaew wrote a piece on *Parazit* and its host Kambiz Hosseini and executive producer Saman Arbabi, which was printed in the newspaper on December 25. Part of the article featured an interview with Arbabi.
(http://articles.boston.com/2011-12-25/ideas/30550170_1_iranian-protesters-iranian-audiences-iranian-diplomats)

- VOA Public Relations is arranging interviews with Andre Mendes, Dave Shiben, and Gary Thatcher for *Radio World International*. The story is about how Iran's jamming of satellites is being done, and how it is affecting VOA's coverage of Iran.
- Germany's leading news magazine, *Der Spiegel*, is doing a report and video on Jessica Beinecke and her show OMG! Meiyu.
- The *Diplomatic Courier* magazine will publish a feature on VOA in its January issue. Reporter Chrisella Sagers did a series of interviews at VOA for the piece.

PROJECTS

- The VOA 2012 calendars were delivered and distributed to the language services and other Agency elements.

VOA STUDIO TOUR

- VOA National Correspondent Jim Malone and host of *Digital Frontiers* Doug Bernard Johnson met with two editors from the Danish Broadcasting Corporation to discuss VOA's election coverage. – December 5
- The Institute of International Education sent a group of interns and staff from China and the United States to take the VOA Studio Tour. – December 9
- English Now students from the countries of Georgia, Japan, Colombia, Peru, Ukraine, and the United States took the VOA Studio Tour. – December 16

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- VOA's "*South Sudan in Focus*" Now on Bentiu Radio – December 13
- VOA's 'OMG! Meiyu' on Location in Beijing with Will.i.am of Black Eyed Peas – December 20
- VOA Marks 70th Year of U.S. Broadcasts to China – December 27



January 17, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for January

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

VOA in the USA

Early in January, President Obama signed legislation that will make VOA programs available to people in the United States. The legislation, part of the National Defense Authorization Act, eliminates the longstanding ban on domestic distribution of VOA programs that was part of the original U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (known as Smith-Mundt). In the coming months, VOA and other U.S. international broadcasters will work with the BBG to draft regulations governing how they will fulfill domestic requests for release of original programs and materials. The new rules will only affect programs broadcast after July 1, 2013.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

VOA Expands Broadcasts to Mali

Audiences in Mali can now get the latest news from VOA on an FM transmitter that powered up on January 15 as part of a stepped-up response to the Malian crisis by the BBG. The new transmitter blankets Mali's capital of Bamako with a crisp signal of VOA French news and information programs 24/7. VOA is responding to the crisis in Mali with more on-the-ground reporting and additional news and information on the new *Mali1* mobile platform. *Mali1* debuted in August to take advantage of the growing number of mobile phone users, getting news to regions where extremists have shut down independent media. VOA is also testing a pilot program that, since September, has been providing mobile newscasts in the Songhai language, which is commonly used in areas of northern Mali that are now controlled by Islamist extremists. The agency is consulting with Congress as the results of this pilot project come in to discuss its expansion and additional broadcast options for the rest of Mali.

Two New Shows from Africa Division

VOA's Africa Division sent the old year out with a bang by introducing two new shows. On December 7, the Swahili Service launched *Live Talk*, a weekly 30-minute call-in program. Listeners are invited to participate by calling in or sending questions through Facebook. Much of the conversation revolves around the political scene in Kenya, but regional issues are also discussed, such as the turmoil in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A tribute to the popularity of *Live Talk* is that it is already attracting important guests, including Jean-Marie Runiga, leader of the M-23 rebels in the DRC. On December 25, the Somali Service launched *Your Call*. The target of this weekly one-hour show is the soaring population of young people in Somalia. As its name suggests, a call-in segment is a regular feature of *Your Call*, but it also focuses on topics of concern to young audiences, such as unemployment and combatting the influence of extremist groups.

New Persian Show Targets Artists and Activists



A new VOA Persian program allows artists and activists in Iran and the rest of the world to connect. Called *ZirZameen* (*Underground*), the twice-monthly TV and web program is available in Farsi and English. The show premiered in December and is available on social media sites, the VOA Persian satellite stream and on Livestation, a 24/7 Internet streaming platform. Executive Producer and creator Sahar

Sarshar says he developed *ZirZameen* to give underground artists and activists a place to share their stories and passions. "I want there to be a connection," Sarshar says, "between the people I film and the audience." Each show features two or three artists whose work brings greater awareness to social issues. *ZirZameen* has been quickly gaining attention and an audience on social media, including the program's YouTube channel, which has attracted more than 10,000 views. One Facebook fan urged Iranians to stop watching government TV, and to "start watching this [*ZirZameen*] on VOA!"

Zimbabwe Service Loses – and Gains – Some Audience

VOA's Zimbabwe Service learned in December that MultiChoice, the South African company that operates the main satellite TV service in sub-Saharan Africa, discontinued providing the VOA audio channel to DSTV satellite subscribers in Zimbabwe. MultiChoice acted, the service learned, after receiving a "complaint" about VOA from the Zimbabwean government. The action cost the service several thousand listeners. But a new partnership with a U.S.-based company may help recoup some of the lost audience and attract new listeners among the diaspora who previously may have had difficulty accessing its broadcasts. The company, AudioNow, has developed a technology that lets users of any kind of phone system listen to broadcasts and streams. Under its arrangement with the Zimbabwe Service, AudioNow links to podcasts of programs and makes them available shortly after they are broadcast. For example, the Shona program, which airs live 1700 to 1730 UTC, is available on AudioNow no later than 1800 UTC. All told, AudioNow provides three hours of Zimbabwe Service Monday to Friday and one hour on Saturday and Sunday. Word about the service's new partnership has spread rapidly. It is now getting hundreds of calls per week from people in South Africa, the UK, and Canada who listen via AudioNow. VOA's Somali Service has been using AudioNow since

March. Portuguese-to-Africa began using it in December. In addition to VOA, other partners include RFI, BBC, and Al Jazeera, C-SPAN Radio and the PBS NewsHour.

End of Year Has No End of Major Stories

Central News had a busy six weeks this reporting period. In the U.S., the focus was on the shooting rampage at a Newtown, Connecticut school, efforts to avoid the “fiscal cliff,” and the visit of Afghan President Hamid Karzai. New York correspondent Peter Fedynsky traveled to Newtown to interview families and law enforcement officials. White House correspondents Dan Robinson and Kent Klein filed on President Obama’s visit to Newtown. Jeff Swicord filed a TV report about U.S. gun sales being at record levels because of fears tougher gun restrictions are on the way. In separate TV packages Suzanne Presto and Mike O’Sullivan examined whether violence in video games and movies could promote violent action in some people. The web desk provided fact boxes about the history of mass shootings in the U.S. Meanwhile, beat reporters in Washington filed stories about the fiscal cliff – the massive budget cuts and tax increases that analysts warned would have kicked in if Congress and the White House didn’t reach a budget deal. Once there was an agreement, political and economic reporters filed on reaction from the White House and Capitol Hill and Wall Street. As the reporting period was coming to a close, Afghan President Hamid Karzai was wrapping up a week-long visit to Washington. Correspondents at the White House, Capitol Hill, State and Defense Departments collaborated with the Afghan Service on coverage. One other note on coverage: On December 5, Transparency International issued its annual corruption perception index at a news conference at VOA. Central covered for the house and worked with language services to produce a 12-part series looking at corruption in various countries.

VOA Uzbek Has Big Fan in Bishkek



Roza Otunbayeva

Roza Otunbayeva, former interim president of Kyrgyzstan from 2010 to 2011, was in Washington in December to receive an award from the Eurasia Foundation. The group honored her for assuming responsibility for Kyrgyzstan’s government at a crucial point in the nation’s history. After receiving the award, the first female head of state in Central Asia and the only leader in the region to have left office voluntarily gave an interview to VOA’s Uzbek Service. Before she was even asked a question, she said: “I end my day listening to your shows on Almaz FM!” Almaz

FM is the VOA Uzbek affiliate in Bishkek that broadcasts VOA Uzbek’s daily radio shows at 11pm local time. Otunbayeva called VOA Uzbek “the necessary voice” in her country.

500th *Exploring America* Gets Attention from All Over, Even the BBC

On December 24, the Uzbek Service aired its 500th edition of its weekly show *Exploring America*. On the air since December 2003, *Exploring America* has a broad mandate, covering American life and politics and U.S. foreign policy issues, especially those that affect the Central Asian region. It also features educational and cultural stories that the staff gathers by traveling across the country and speaking with immigrants from Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries. In a recent program, show host and producer Navbahor Imamova looked back at *Exploring America*’s nine years and shared feedback, through video dispatches from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan, from some of the show’s many fans. Omorbek Abdiraimov,

director of Keremet TV in Kyrgyzstan, one of the affiliates that carries *Exploring America*, sent a video message. He thanked VOA for offering “truly professional and unique content” and said the show is so popular that the station constantly gets requests for reruns. The Keremet director followed up the video with a long letter praising Imamova and the other staff members involved in *Exploring America*. The letter concluded: “It’s easy to say that this show has been on the air since 2003 but we, your colleagues, understand how much work it takes to produce something like this. We find your work inspiring and wish VOA Uzbek all the best things in this coming year. We are very happy and grateful to have you as our partner.” But perhaps the most surprising indication of the popularity of *Exploring America* and its host-producer is the attention they just received from one of their main competitors. BBC’s Uzbek Service conducted an hour-long interview with Imamova on its show *BBC Mehmoni* (BBC Guest), a discussion program in which personalities from Uzbek society, politics, art, and culture answer questions from a worldwide audience of listeners. Many of the callers praised *Exploring America* for helping them to understand the United States and its relations with Uzbekistan and the rest of Central Asia. One young Uzbek told Imamova, “Watching your shows, I got not only news but learned about the American political system. I should thank you for getting excellent grades in political science.” Taking full advantage of its brilliant programming idea, BBC Uzbek promoted the interview for several days (and also provided links to VOA Uzbek’s website and TV show).

Unhappy Anniversary in Belarus

VOA Russian covered the second anniversary of the crackdown on the opposition by the Belarus government, interviewing two former Belarusian presidential candidates, Ales Mikhakevich and Andrey Sannikov. Mikhakevich noted that “the opposition in this country is becoming more and more dissident,” while Sannikov, who now resides in Britain, blamed the outside world for not showing enough support and imposing soft sanctions. The Russian Service also interviewed Congressman Chris Smith, chairman of the Congressional Helsinki Commission, and Freedom House President David Kramer. Smith said Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko should be brought to trial at The Hague for violations of human rights. Kramer said that Russia is responsible for saving Mr. Lukashenko’s government in 2011, and that the U.S. must continue economic sanctions against Belarus because, in his words, “they are the only language [Lukashenko] understands.” In another interview, VOA Russian spoke with Garry Kasparov, the retired chess grand master who now, as chairman of the United Civil Front, devotes himself to efforts to preserve democracy in Russia. Kasparov suggested the United States and other Western countries are following a double standard in their policies toward the leaders of Belarus and Russia. “One cannot,” he said, “call Lukashenko a dictator while saying that Putin is a strategic ally.”

Another TV Program for Bangla

VOA Bangla launched a fourth TV show in December, *Straight from America*. The five-minute program features an interview and a story about life in America. ATN Bangla is carrying the broadcast every Friday at 9 PM, local time.

VOA Bosnian Secures Prime Time Slot on Major Affiliate

VOA Bosnian brought in the new year for its major affiliate, BHT1, with a special 10-minute program of the big U.S. stories of 2012. The program included reports on the U.S. presidential

election and the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre. The special was aired prime time on BHT1 on January 1.

President of Albania Honors Albanian Staffer

Congratulations to Ilir Ikonimi of the Albanian Service. He was recently honored with the Medal of Gratitude by Albania's President Bujar Nishani. Ilir is the author of a new book titled *Independence: The Unforgettable Journey of Ismail Kemal*. The book, which came out late last year on the 100th anniversary of Albania, traces the life of the country's founding father. In his remarks at the award ceremony, President Nishani said "the book, by the well-known (VOA) journalist reveals previously unknown details about the life of the most distinguished personality of Albania's Independence." All of the major TV stations in Albania covered the event.

Colin Powell on Ukraine

Former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell told a U.S.-Ukrainian Foundation conference in Washington that Ukraine must continue to adhere to the democratic choice it made during the Orange Revolution in 2004. The Ukrainian Service's TV story on his remarks included archival footage of then-Secretary of State Powell declaring that the United States would not accept the falsified presidential election results, which sparked mass protests in Kyiv and led to a re-vote and the coming to power of Western-oriented leaders. The VOA story was republished in Ukraine, with attribution, by the popular news website *Ukrayinska Pravda*.

Kosovo Prime Minister One on One With VOA



Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi

VOA's Albanian Service conducted an exclusive interview with Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi. Mr. Thaci said his government will reject a Serbian plan for Kosovo, which he called "nothing more than noise." The prime minister spoke in a year-end interview, before an upcoming round of talks with Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Daci. The Serbian plan, which has yet to be revealed in its entirety, is said to demand the broadest possible autonomy for the mainly Serbian northern areas of Kosovo. Mr. Thaçi said that the "territorial integrity

of Kosovo is not up for negotiations." The upcoming talks are scheduled for January 17 in Brussels under the auspices of EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton.

Additional Notable Interviews

- Ashna TV conducted an interview with Marc Grossman, the State Department's outgoing Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. The interview focused on the status of the Afghan-U.S. security agreement, the U.S. exit strategy and Afghan's "fear of abandonment." The ambassador strongly emphasized "the commitment of the U.S. and the international community to the people of Afghanistan." Grossman also spoke with the Urdu Service, which shared its interview with many media outlets in Pakistan, including GEO TV, Dunya TV, Express News, Dawn TV, Dawn newspaper, Express Tribune newspaper, The News, and the Associated Press of Pakistan. All carried the interview with full attribution.
- VOA Mandarin interviewed Ambassador Richard Armitage, former Deputy Secretary of the State, who said the U.S. cannot be neutral and is "biased towards Japan" on the

Diaoyu/Senkaku Island disputes. He said: "Of course we are biased towards Japan. Japan is a treaty ally, this is a sacred obligation."

- The Armenian Service interviewed Armenia's Prime Minister, Tigran Sargsyan. Talking from his office in Yerevan, Sargsyan said his government is establishing programs to help Syrian-Armenians settle in Armenia, find jobs and open businesses.
- VOA Tibetan interviewed Jetsun Pema, younger sister of the Dalai Lama, on her being awarded an honorary degree from the University of San Francisco for her 40 years of service to exile Tibetan education.
- In an interview broadcast live from VOA Serbian's Open Studio, Serbian Defense Minister Aleksandar Vucic discussed his visit with U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and other senior U.S. officials. Vucic confirmed that he requested that the U.S. troops deployed in Kosovo extend their stay as a security guarantee for the Kosovo Serb population.
- VOA Russian interviewed Alexei Ratmansk, a former director of the Bolshoi Ballet who is currently an artist in residence at the American Ballet Theatre in New York City.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

VOA Russian Broadens Online Reach

VOA Russian has expanded its online presence to include the Russian website *Grani.ru*, which publishes a wide selection of VOA Russian's content. About 50 percent of the quotes on the site's home page are from VOA Russian. This is significant given continuous actions by the Russian government aimed at silencing critical voices and limiting freedom of information on the Internet. Also in December, VOA Russian began providing exclusive coverage from the New York Stock Exchange to the Russian Business Channel (RBC) (www.rbc.ru). The service currently provides four reports per week, reaching an audience of almost 70 million people. VOA Russian continues providing coverage of the U.S. news for the Russian independent TV channel *Dozhd*, whose website receives more than 1 million hits a day.

Media Attention for English Website

MSNBC's Rachel Maddow marked the start of the 113th Congress by featuring a screenshot from the VOA English website on her program.



The reporting on VOAnews.com was also featured in Time Magazine's online feature – Must-Reads from Around the World.

Numbers Keep Climbing for VOA Khmer on YouTube

Video views on VOA Khmer's main channel (youtube.com/voakhmerservice) passed the five million view mark in early December. That's a jump of one million views in less than two months. To give you an idea of the channel's soaring popularity: It took six months for it to reach three million views, three-and-a-half months to reach four million and less than two months to reach five million.

Award Nomination for Learning English

VOA Learning English has been nominated for the annual Macmillan Dictionary Love English Awards for 2012. The award honors the best websites devoted primarily to the English language or language-related issues. Macmillan Education has been publishing English Language teaching, school curriculum, digital and online materials worldwide for more than 150 years.

Facebook Gains by VOA Tibetan

VOA Tibetan reached more than 11,000 fans on Facebook, a number that reflects about 25 percent of all Tibetans in exile who have ready access to the Internet. Facebook remains blocked to Tibetans inside Tibet.

Hausa News Headlines Distributed by SMS in Nigeria

Under an agreement between the Hausa Service and 70th Precinct, a content aggregator, Hausa mobile content will soon be distributed on SMS in Nigeria. The agreement involves delivering VOA Hausa news headlines to all mobile phones in Nigeria. As there are over 109 million mobile phone users in Nigeria, the Hausa Service is expecting its mobile traffic statistics to soar.

VOA60 Africa in Hausa

The Hausa Service has recently launched a Hausa-language version of VOA60 Africa, the one-minute news headline video produced by VOA's media lab team. The new show – here's a sample: <http://www.voahausa.com/media/video/1577354.html> – has already generated an enthusiastic response from the Hausa audience, and has prompted calls for more video uploads by the service.

Impressive Debut for *Anglais Tele*

Since it was put up on its own Facebook page on December 5, French to Africa's pilot web video *Anglais Tele* has drawn as many as 21,000 viewers weekly. The lively, interactive approach to teaching English to French speakers goes into regular production on January 17 and will be posted on the F2A website.

***Mali1* – News and Music**

When Islamist militants took over northern Mali, they issued an order banning musical performances. French to Africa's daily newscast for web and mobile, *Mali1*, has recently added music to its website so music fans in the region can once again hear the musicians they love.

English Division Programming for International Migrants Day

In recognition of the UN-sponsored International Migrants Day (December 18th), the English Division produced more than a dozen multi-platform reports targeting issues of interest to our audiences in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Iranian-Azeri Exile Interview

On December 6th, the Azerbaijani Service conducted a video interview with Mahmudeli Chohreganli, a political activist from Iranian-Azerbaijan now living in exile in the United States. Mr. Chohreganli spoke about the violations of the Iranian-Azeris' cultural and political rights and called for greater international support for the millions of Azeris living in Iran. The interview was widely watched on VOA/Azerbaijani YouTube page and online social networks. The story received 371 Facebook recommends on the VOA/Azerbaijani website alone.

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Media and Outreach

- Reporter Richard Harris interviewed Leo Sarkisian, creator of VOA's *Music Time in Africa* program, for a piece on Public Radio International.
- VOA Director David Ensor delivered a speech entitled "An Essential Voice for America" at the Washington Institute for Foreign Affairs on December 17.
- VOA Public Relations provided guidance to CPJ for its report on threats to journalists.

Press Releases

- Audiences in Iran Get New Breakfast Shows on VOA Satellite – December 19
- New Shows Build on VOA Music Legacy – December 20
- New Law Allows Domestic Use of VOA Reports – January 4
- VOA Show 'ZirZameen' Explores Art and Activism – January 11
- VOA Expanding Broadcasts to Mali – January 15

VOA Studio Tour

- Three State Department officials met with representatives from VOA's Learning English, the Afghanistan Service, and the Bangla Service to learn how we reach our audience. – December 13.
- The Questers organization brought a group of women to VOA to see the Ben Shahn murals and to meet with Nancy Coviello for a discussion of women's issues. – January 9
- Five Libyan journalists met with Jack Payton, Senior Editor on VOA's web desk. – January 10
- U.S. Foreign Service Officers who will be posted to Haiti in the near future took the VOA Studio Tour and met with Creole Service Chief Ronald Cesar and other staff. – January 15
- Washington Center interns took the VOA Studio Tour and met with Spanish Service Managing Editor Iscar Blanco. – January 15

F. PERSONNEL

New Leader of Persian Service

Director Ensor has announced the appointment of Billy Otwell as the new VOA Persian News Network Division Director and General Manager. Otwell, a seasoned award-winning television executive producer, has extensive experience as a TV news director and consultant. While news director of WTNH-TV in New Haven, he restructured and revitalized the ABC affiliate, which went on to win multiple Emmys for investigative and public service reporting. At Gannett's WXIA-TV in Atlanta, he was part of a management team that moved the station from third to first place in the market in less than two years. For nearly two years, he has worked in the IBB's Office of Performance Review, analyzing programming and recommending improvements in television, radio and web-based products from VOA and OCB. A major focus was analyzing the Persian News Network, where he also spent a three-month detail working closely with PNN staff to help improve television programming. His appointment completes the VOA Persian leadership team. The new Deputy Director is Setareh Derakhshesh, a respected television anchor, and a manager at VOA. Executive Editor is Kaveh Basmenji, whose resume includes senior jobs at Reuters, Radio Farda and BBC Persian. The new Senior Executive Producer is Cal Perry, who joined VOA from Al-Jazeera, where he was Jerusalem correspondent, following a stint as CNN's Baghdad bureau chief. Jim Kennedy is PNN's Staff Director, responsible for administrative matters.

DATE: January 15, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Jeff Trimble, Deputy Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for December 2013

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

- Staff in the Office of the IBB Director coordinated with Agency managers to evaluate options for large scale contracting reforms to address both administrative concerns and potential legal liabilities. The management team identified a short term plan for addressing these concerns that allows for further evaluation of contracting reforms as part of a large scale human capital assessment. The initial reform proposal will be discussed at the January Advisory Committee meeting.
- The Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) is working with VOA and other interested federal agencies to coordinate and carry out a crisis broadcasting response to ongoing violence in the Central African Republic (CAR). Since early December, OSD has entirely reformatted the Bangui, CAR FM transmitter, turning it from a relay station of regional programming into a more local radio station with essential information about the crisis. Public service announcements and promotional spots on topics including health, non-violence, and religious dialogue run many times a day, in addition to VOA French news and information programming and popular music. VOA is poised to begin more frequent newscasts, building to hourly newscasts 24 hours per day. OSD is providing daily updates on VOA news coverage, developments on the ground, and special programming initiatives to the BBG community, as well as to a substantial list of interested government parties (the list includes contacts at the Department of State, National Security Staff at the White House, Department of Defense, and in the intelligence community).



January 15, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for January

KEY ISSUES/CHALLENGES

- Authorities in Ukraine have repeatedly tried to intimidate VOA Ukrainian Service TV reporter Ruslan Deynichenko following his coverage of a protest at President Viktor Yanukovich's residence in late December. State Auto Inspection officials have visited Deynichenko's parents and in-laws numerous times, asking them to sign papers about alleged traffic violations. If he is declared guilty of these violations, he faces suspension of his driver's license for up to six months. Deynichenko says that he was not involved in any traffic violations while covering the protests and has instructed his relatives not to sign any papers, which they have not done. His reports can be seen nationally in the prime-time VOA Ukrainian TV news program *Chas-Time*.
- VOA French-to-Africa reporter Idrissa Fall survived a harrowing ordeal in Bangui in December when a mob, armed with machetes and stones, attacked the car he was in. Fall, his fixer and the driver of the car escaped unharmed thanks to quick action by French soldiers. The incident didn't keep him from reporting. He provided daily debriefs, along with dozens of photos and audio clips of interviews with political and religious leaders, humanitarian workers, and Central Africans affected by the crisis. Fall has returned to Washington and reporter Nick Long is now in Bangui.
- Starting January 3, Chinese government officials ordered social media websites in the People's Republic of China to block all social media accounts carrying VOA news blogs. Efforts to establish new blogging sites have been quickly censored, along with postings by the New York Times and other foreign media. Beijing has blocked VOA's Chinese website for years, but, until the January 3rd crackdown, VOA's blogging efforts have been able to make inroads into Chinese social media, with one single blogger earning more than 500,000 followers and millions of views each month.
- Setareh Derakhshesh has been selected as the new Director of VOA's Persian Division. An award-winning journalist, Derakhshesh has been Acting Director of VOA Persian since September. Prior to this, she was Deputy Director, Executive Editor, and Managing Editor of the Division. She played a key role in the launching of VOA Persian television to Iran, serving as the lead anchor and managing editor of its flagship news show. Earlier in her VOA career, she worked as an editor, reporter and airshow talent for radio broadcasts to Iran, as well as a news writer in Central News and broadcaster for the former VOA English News Now program. She graduated summa cum laude from the Sorbonne in Paris, with a Ph.D. in political science and a Master's degree in law and political science. She is fluent in Persian, French and English, and has taught at Georgetown University and American University in Washington, D.C.

Derakhshesh's appointment completes the VOA Persian leadership team. The Executive Editor is Mohammad Manzarpour, who served as the Washington bureau chief for BBC Persian, Middle East correspondent for the BBC and economics editor of the *Tehran Times* (Iran). The Senior Executive Producer is Cal Perry, who joined VOA from Al-Jazeera, where he was Jerusalem correspondent, following a stint as CNN's Baghdad bureau chief. Jim Kennedy is VOA Persian's Staff Director, responsible for administrative matters.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim Management Team
DATE: January 14, 2015
SUBJECT: IBB Monthly Report for December 2014

GLOBAL STRATEGY:

Office of Digital & Design Innovation (ODDI)

- The BBG has partnered with Hub Accra, a Ghana-based tech incubator, to develop mobile solutions to promote civic engagement in West Africa. The partnership will create fellowships to provide local members of the tech and entrepreneurial communities with practical experience designing and developing mobile applications and services in collaboration with ODDI. This partnership will help provide Hub Accra program participants with media training, as well as mentoring in areas related to media development and local sustainability. This initiative is part of the BBG's significant investment for expanding content creation and distribution to the Sahel, with a focus on promoting original high-quality journalism and providing digital media for next-generation audiences.
- A Beta version of the Dandalin VOA mobile web application has been released at, <http://beta.dandalinvoa.com/#!/>. A joint effort between VOA's Hausa Service and ODDI, this release completely updates the user experience and introduces new live and on-demand audio listening features, and more relevant content offerings, to increase engagement among young(er) Hausa speakers throughout Nigeria and the diaspora.

Office of Research & Assessments (ORA)

- ORA held a series of fact finding sessions with various stakeholders to solicit input into planned enhancements of the Impact Model. Feedback from OSD, OPR, and ODDI led to several modified and newly added indicators to be further refined in consultation with the entity Research Directors.
- ORA is hosting a 3 day meeting for the Research Directors of all entities January 12-14, 2015 in DC. Agenda topics include "Impact Model 2.0" and revisions to the digital section of the BBG's survey instrument.
- ORA Research Director Sonja Gloeckle and RFE/RL's Research Director Paul Tibbitts are scheduled to do presentation on media use in Afghanistan at a Gallup Research Series Briefing event on January 15.

GLOBAL OPERATIONS:

- The new BBG FM station in Dakar, Senegal, began test broadcasts on December 22. TSI Engineer Ken Claerbout is traveling to Bujumbura, Burundi, in early January to assist the contractor in completing the installation of a new BBG FM station in that city. Work is continuing to restore full power transmissions from the BBG FM station in Ajloun, Jordan. Our contractor installed a new satellite receiving dish at the BBG FM station in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, to improve reception because of weather deterioration of the existing dish.
- Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation's contractor successfully completed a site survey in Kuwait prior to starting design work on the Kuwait Transmitting Station building expansion. This expansion will accommodate the installation of additional shortwave transmitters to be economically relocated from other BBG stations.



January 15, 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for January

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- On Friday, January 9, the Indonesian Service received a bomb threat in a posted response to a VOA story on Facebook about the Paris terror attack on *Charlie Hebdo*. The response read, "Soon the VOA office will also be BOMBED. Watch out you sons of bitches." The posting included a photo and name of a person who allegedly made the threat. The threat was first seen by the Indonesian Service web team and immediately shared with the VOA Jakarta office, the IBB Security Office, and the Regional Security Office at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta. On advice from the IBB Security Office, VOA Jakarta Office Director Frans Demon contacted the Jakarta police department, and it immediately sent a 10-member bomb squad to the VOA office to sweep for bombs. The squad found nothing. Several TV and online media outlets covered the story. In one report, by TVOne, a national TV news station and affiliate of VOA, Norm Goodman, the Indonesian Service Chief, was mistakenly identified as the source of the bomb threat. The police are continuing to investigate the actual source of the bomb threat.
- Central News' ability to travel with the President and Secretary of State has been seriously affected by skyrocketing costs of traveling with the White House travel pool. The cost of accompanying President Obama to Asia for the APEC and ASEAN meetings in October was initially estimated at \$30-35,000. The trip was undersubscribed and the estimated cost leaped to \$60,000. Since at that point it would cost Central close to \$20,000 to cancel, it decided to go ahead anyway. Several weeks after the trip, it received a bill for \$100,000. That comes out of a total budget of \$200,000 for all White House, State and Pentagon travel for the fiscal year. Central is now being forced to be very selective about when its reporters travel with these officials and is looking at alternatives, including commercial travel and coverage with correspondents on the ground. The drawback is that it will lose access to in-flight briefings and the ability to develop well-placed contacts for future stories.

DATE: July 13, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for June, 2012

JUNE HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

BBG-Gallup Research Briefings: BBG and Gallup launched the public Research Briefing Series, presenting recent data from Iran to a capacity crowd representing think tanks, government agencies, legislative offices, the Iranian-American community, and BBG broadcast services. Moreover, New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof cited the BBG-Gallup Iran study in his June 21 column. The briefing series will continue in July with new research from Tibet.

Africa FMs: BBG's proposal to install FM transmitters on embassy grounds in Africa has received extraordinary support. Pending the approval of funding, new FMs are possible in priority locations such as Mali, Chad, DRC, and Guinea, in addition to the current efforts in Central African Republic and South Sudan.

OFFICE OF THE IBB DIRECTOR

Contracting: The contractor working group, created by the IBB Director, developed a comprehensive action plan to address the highest priority concerns: payments, strategy, clarification of responsibilities, training, and process improvement. Currently, we are evaluating different models for contracting that could improve the relationship between BBG and contractors and may ultimately save resources.

Morale: Staff in the Office of the IBB Director has been working closely with VOA senior staff and the Morale Working Group (a joint union-management group) to develop an action plan for improving agency morale. We are drafting a statement of work to contract with a qualified expert to help us implement steps for substantive improvement in our workplace environment.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

Distribution Projects:

- TSI is proceeding with the technical plan for the **Korea MW** and planning a test through the ITU interference model to assess the likelihood of any regulatory objections.
- Seven additional BBG FM stations have been funded for **Afghanistan**. Three are on air already, but the other four are dependent on when deliveries can be made.
- TSI is coordinating with the Embassy in **Juba, South Sudan** to assemble the new FM transmitter while awaiting the frequency license.
- TSI is coordinating the installation of an FM in **Misratah, Libya**, which will give approximately 90% of the Libyan population access to Radio SAWA.

- Several BBG facilities are at risk of being shut down by the Interior Ministry in **Iraq**. TSI is working to file new licensing applications to prevent shutdown.
- The BBG FM facility in **Ajloun, Jordan**, a key asset for broadcasting to Syria, remains off-air because of major vandalism and theft. The TSI contractor is working to improve security on site before any further work is done to restore the site to operation.
- TSI will complete the restoration and upgrade the **14 FM affiliates in Haiti** that were damaged in the earthquake last year. A separate trip for training of the technical staff will be scheduled in August.

IBB Information Technology (IT):

- TSI continues work to upgrade the audio and video broadcast systems for VOA, with the first pilot scheduled for late July.
- TSI deployed a new beta Intranet site. The newer version has enhanced features to improve efficiency and collaboration.

Pangaea Content Management System: Rollouts of Pangaea to VOA language services continued in June. 23 of 46 sites successfully migrated to the new Pangaea by the end of June.

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities:

- The IAC team awarded a contract to Tor Solutions Corp. on June 18 for a network to allow users to share digital video and audio content with increased anonymity.
- The IAC team met with representatives of Defense's Research Project Agency (DARPA); State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL); USAID; and RFA Freedom2Connect (F2C) to discuss current state of our various Internet censorship circumvention programs and techniques.
- The IAC team worked with BBG Public Affairs to respond to a Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA) study on U.S. funded Internet anti-censorship programs. CIMA revised the report based on IAC/BBG concerns. A personal briefing for CIMA on the BBG's IAC program has been scheduled for mid-July. USG cohorts (DRL, USAID and F2C) have been invited to participate.
- A rough draft of the BBG-contracted mobile information security study was delivered by Freedom House. The IAC team plans to share the study's findings with mobile app developers and other stakeholders in the information security arena.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION (ODDI)

Mobile Growth: BBG mobile websites have experienced strong growth recently, increasing from an average 600,000 visitors per month to over 4 million visitors per month for all 53 sites in the past 8 months. Building on this growth, ODDI deployed a new version of the mobile websites and hired Will Sullivan, an experienced journalist and technology manager, as its Mobile Products Lead.

Innovation@BBG Blog: ODDI redesigned and relaunched the Innovation@BBG blog, publishing several articles per week that highlight innovative people and projects within U.S. international media. The blog can be found at: www.innovation-series.com.

Digital Media Infrastructure: ODDI, working with TSI and the entities, is overhauling all of BBG's digital media infrastructure. This project will be completed by the end of the year, offering improved services and achieving an estimated savings of more than \$3 million in the next four years.

One-Year Review: July marks the one-year of new leadership in ODDI. Memo in Attachment 1 outlines ODDI's progress over the past year.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT (OSD)

Affiliations:

- A new partnership with TV Azteca, the 3rd largest network in **Latin America**, is the latest VOA Latin American affiliate. TV Azteca has a presence in 13 Latin American countries and huge market share in Mexico.
- OSD has brokered an affiliation for VOA with Moscow-based Dozhd TV, a leading independent TV channel, that has the potential to re-establish BBG presence on domestic media in **Russia**.
- BBG is working on next steps for the affiliation with MRTV in **Burma**, including multiple entry visas for journalists, journalism training, and possible placement of VOA and RFA programming with private broadcasters.
- The government of **Algeria** reached out to the BBG to begin discussions on a broad program of media cooperation. Negotiations focused on media and journalism training, technical assistance, FM broadcast licenses, and content in Arabic and English.
- BBG has been invited to **Bahrain** to discuss forging closer ties, particularly through journalism training.
- OSD is working on greater distribution of VOA programming in **Malawi** by giving equipment to a current affiliate in exchange for more placement, and by working on a distribution deal with the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation.
- VOA service will launch in **Madagascar** – on radio, TV, and mobile – in the next few weeks.
- A VOA French-language health show, funded by USAID and State, focusing on **DRC** is now available on the national radio network, which reaches more than 80 percent of the country's 68 million people. As part of the grant funding for that program, Joan Mower also coordinated training for local journalists on covering HIV/AIDs.
- OSD is helping VOA make inroads in **South Africa**: a large South African social networking company is considering VOA content related to health, employment, and English learning. South Africa Broadcasting Corporation and Primedia's Talk Radio in Johannesburg are both assessing VOA international news content, including live interactives, for their channels.
- OSD launched VOA content on a major **Internet-based TV** player. They are currently carrying VOA's Persian Stream, content for Eastern Europe, some English, and the VOA-24 stream to Ethiopia.

Tanzania Maternal Health Town Hall: With the support of USAID, and in partnership with L'Agence Exterieur de la France, RFI, Deutsche Welle, Population Reference Bureau and local VOA Affiliates, more than 30 reporters discussed a wide range of issues pertaining to Maternal

and Child Health. The two day event also included a Town Hall meeting that was widely attended by more than 100 representatives from all media houses in Tanzania and opened by the Deputy Minister of Health of Tanzania and the diplomatic representatives of France, Germany and the USA.

South Sudan Reporting Workshop: A reporting training workshop took place with 19 trainees on hand, including reporters from VOA's *South Sudan in Focus*, the Voice of the People, Radio Miraya and South Sudan Radio. The training focused heavily on practical field exercises.

Global Research Program: There are 41 funded research projects underway or recently completed, including studies in such high priority areas as China, Russia, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, DRC and Korea. We also have funded consulting work around Performance and Impact Measurement and Reporting. Current studies will support programming decisions and help evaluate performance at all five BBG networks.

Syria: OSD is actively advancing crisis contingency proposals at State to fund specific Syria-focused Radio Sawa and Alhurra TV programs to augment already strong MBN reporting.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: Efforts are focused on Senate consideration of the Smith-Mundt Modernization Act championed by Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX) and co-sponsored by Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA), which had passed the House as part of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). It was dropped during the Senate markup process of the NDAA in late May. BBG congressional staff subsequently met with staffers for Senators Lieberman, Kerry, and Gillibrand to urge support for the measure, and Governor Meehan contacted key former Senate colleagues to make the case. As of July 16, it was not clear when the NDAA will go to the Senate floor, and thereafter to conference; BBG congressional staff continues outreach to key Senate stakeholders.

OCB Director Carlos Garcia and TSI Director Andre Mendes met with Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) in early June to discuss ways to provide Internet access to Cubans. Also attending were representatives from Google and several of the Senator's staffers. The Senator showed interest in providing Web access for Cubans to give them a forum to talk with each other. He supports existing radio and TV programs to Cuba, but believes we can also provide access to the Web for its own sake to generate free discussion and the flow of information. Carlos indicated that mobile phones are the fastest-growing communications technology in Cuba, and stressed that any new methods should be implemented "in volume" so individual users would not be prosecuted by the government. Additional technological options were discussed, and BBG staff followed up on the Senator's requests for further information.

In mid-June the House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) marked up its slimmed-down authorization legislation in lieu of a broader bill that the Committee adopted in 2010, but that did not reach the House floor. The Committee dropped some provisions, including the one supported by the Board to create a BBG CEO. Committee staff stressed that this was not due to unwillingness on the part of members to carry it, but to their uncertainty over the depth of the Senate's commitment to the provision at this time. They said HFAC remains supportive of the

CEO idea and is willing to consider it in the future as part of a larger reform bill when the BBG has language to offer. Also left out was a provision that clarified the BBG's authority to hire non-U.S. citizens; lack of clarity in current statute has led to lawsuits within the agency. This section was dropped when Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA) sought to add language requiring the BBG to conduct counterintelligence monitoring of agency programming. The legislation includes two provisions sought by the BBG: one extending the agency's current authority to employ a limited number of personal services contractors, and one to clarify the Board's immunity from liability when acting as members of the Board of Directors of MBN.

The House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, chaired by Elton Gallegly (R-CA), held a hearing on June 20th focused on issues raised in HR, 2899, the Chinese Media Reciprocity Act. The legislation would enforce one-to-one reciprocity between the number of visas the U.S. issues to Chinese media workers and the number that the Chinese government issues to U.S. nationals employed by the BBG in China. Specifically, the bill provides that the Attorney General may only issue a visa to a Chinese media worker on the basis of reciprocity with visas issued to BBG employees. The bill also requires the Secretary of State to revoke visas of Chinese media workers so that the remaining visas do not exceed the number issued to BBG employees working in China.

Incoming congressional correspondence in June focused on agency policy and proposals for long-term reform. An answer was drafted to a letter signed by Rep. Rohrabacher about the confidentiality policy that the Board unanimously adopted in June; Board members provided edits to the draft, and the final version was sent in mid-July. And the Communications Committee was considering a draft answer to a letter signed by Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) raising concerns about the proposed streamlining of back-office functions among the three grantees.

Media: Major media queries handled by BBG Public Affairs in June resulted in reportage by Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on Radio Canada International's move to close its shortwave operation and by [The Economist](#) on shortwave broadcasts. A previous Federal News Radio interview generated some positive coverage about career opportunities at the BBG, including an item in the [Washington Post](#). Other coverage by well-recognized media included [Radio World](#) on the new transmitter for Radio Sawa, the [Huffington Post](#) on Chinese visa reciprocity and [Reason](#) on efforts to ease Smith-Mundt restrictions.

Social media outreach was stepped up throughout the spring, resulting in a doubling of Twitter followers and Facebook fans by the end of the second quarter; users showed particular interest in dynamic content, including strategic tweets on media freedom and weekly features on historic moments in international broadcasting.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW (OPR)

OCB/TV Marti Review: The recent review of TV Marti and martinoticias.com programming found many improvements to the news programming and execution; however, the review found that sources did not bring a variety of viewpoints, particularly "contrarian" viewpoints, to TV Marti.

VOA Persian News Network Review: Latest survey results from Iran indicate a significant re-bound in the VOA audience. Significant majorities of VOA users agreed that the service's programming had increased their understanding of current events and American foreign policy. The survey also provided dramatic evidence of the changes in the Iranian media environment in the past few years: a third of the population acknowledges regular use of satellite TV, and nearly 40% report having used the Internet in the previous week.

VOA Music Mix Review: A first-ever review of VOA Music Mix, the 24-hour English language music stream, recommended a research-driven "rebranding" of the programming. OPR analysts suggested taking advantage of technology to create multiple music channels with various language and genre options. The Office of Strategy and Development will survey potential affiliates and OPR's Research Office will conduct music tests in several major markets as a follow-up to the review.

Update on OIG Inspections: OPR has been involved in 15 inspections or follow-up inspections of various BBG operations since taking over the OIG-GAO liaison function. The proposed FY 2013 OIG Inspection Schedule (Attachment 2) includes an inspection of more than 10 bureaus, some major services like VOA Russian and VOA Latin America, and an inspection of the BBG.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES (OHR)

Feds Feed Families: OHR is participating in the annual Feds Feed Families food drive, which generated more than 5.7 million pounds of food and other essentials in 2011. Boxes have been placed at the C and 3rd Street entrances of the Cohen Building and at the main entrance of the Switzer Building for employees to drop off nonperishable canned food and household items

Detail Opportunities: OHR announced detail opportunities in the Eurasia Division, the VOA Public Relations Unit, and English Language Division. A *detail* is a temporary assignment of an employee to a different position or set of duties for a specified period with the employee returning to his or her position at the end of the detail.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS (OCR)

Diversity and Inclusion Plan: OCR worked closely with the Office of Human Resources to draft a Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan. OCR and OHR met with the Office of Personnel Management on July 10, 2012, to discuss the Diversity and Inclusion draft strategic plan.

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND SECRETARIAT OPERATIONS

Partnerships Policy: The IBB Director recently approved a new agency policy governing partnerships to carry out the Broadcasting Board of Governor's mission. It applies to all of the BBG's Federal entities: the IBB, VOA, and OCB and their activities.

This policy is being incorporated in the agency's intranet under the Broadcasting Administrative Manual (BAM), and can be found in Part 600, Section 610 of the BAM (<http://inside.bbg.gov/library/TITLE%206%20%20CFO/6-610%20Partnership%20Policy.pdf>).

ATTACHMENT 1



Memorandum

To: Richard Lobo, Director

Fr: Robert Bole, Director of Innovation
Raina Kumra, Director of Innovation

Date: June 15, 2012

Re: Year 1 - The Office of Digital & Design Innovation, Embracing the Future and Gaining Speed.

Digital media leadership is a mandate in a time when developments in digital technology have significant effects on the way individuals interact with communications and media services. Each and every media organization understands that in 2012 organizing and re-structuring around the prioritization of digital media (social, mobile and web) is the only way to keep up with the rate of change occurring in journalism today. The current model of news gathering, news creation and news delivery is at this very moment in a new ever-changing hybrid space where it will exist in constant flux, and constant innovation. If we wish to remain a strong and reputable information source we must be ahead of the competition in utilizing digital media on new and emerging platforms.

The Office of Digital & Design Innovation (ODDI)

ODDI has been set up with that specific goal in mind: innovate further and faster. This past year we have spent a considerable amount of time and resources in systemic ‘catch up’ in bringing our operations, platforms and resource allocation to a competitive point. We have been maximizing BBG’s current digital performance with great strides in efficiency. We have also done considerable work in getting the BBG on the new digital stakeholder map and will continue to help grow dominance in a field that will be critical to the existence of the BBG itself. Beyond expanding and scouting the ‘digital opportunity,’ we are also mandated to “see the future faster” and make the investments that enable us to anticipate the future of digital journalism and the future of interacting with our most important future partners: our audience.

Our role in US international media (USIM) digital strategy has several dimensions:

1. **Digitize USIM:** Consider the entities as a whole to enable, resource and lead the growth of enterprise-class digital media platforms and products that enhance the power of our journalism and improve engagement with audiences.
2. **Scale Through Partnerships:** We can more effectively and efficiently increase the scope and quality of USIM to build positive relationships with leading technology, mobile and social companies that enable the distribution of our content.
3. **Increase Quality and Set New Standards:** Scale new processes and workflows that set best in class examples of digital products and services that make BBG a leader in the global journalism. ODDI's role is a convener and a center of expertise.
4. **Investing for Innovation:** Making smart investments in cutting edge products and services that we think we will change the way that news is gathered, presented and distributed is a key component to keeping an organization in line with the state of change happening outside its walls.

Perhaps most importantly is the **expertise of our staff** - as any organization can attest - investment in talent is critical to the success of any goal. Our staff has had digital media product and strategy leadership positions within major companies such as Discovery, NPR, Lee Enterprises (400 publication holding company), Newsweek and others. We are using this expertise to build a coherent vision and roadmaps for critical digital media products and platforms across USIM.

ODDI's Strategic Investments

Based on many discussions with USIM corporate and newsroom leadership, a first-of-its-kind survey of USIM digital media activities and a thorough review of media consumption patterns around the globe have taken places. We are using this information to take a strong step in expanding USIM's investment on what we consider "the big four" of the next generation of global digital media channels: mobile, social media, online audio/video and syndication.

- **Mobile:** There are approximately 6 billion mobile subscriptions worldwide, with little over 4.5 billion in the developing world. We are investing into three layers: rich mobile websites for high-bandwidth markets (i.e. Russia), simple mobile websites and mobile applications for mid-bandwidth markets (i.e. Indonesia) and client-based feature phone streaming ("mobile radio"), SIM apps, IVR, and SMS for low-bandwidth markets (i.e. Africa). We are also forming a mobile application strategy that will cover the iOS, Android and Blackberry platforms.
- **Social Media:** The focus is to expand the usage of social media to help journalists create relevant and timely content that embraces the opportunity for the audience to become engaged. We believe we can provide the most value by focusing on three key areas: 1) help social media producers to collaborate on best practices; 2) provide enterprise tools and services that are "force multipliers" to identify new sources, create easier ways to

solicit user generated content and improve the publishing process; and 3) work directly with individual services to create strong integration of social media in their content.

- **Online Video/Audio:** Approximately two years ago US international broadcasting was creating approximately 500 individual videos or audio pieces every week. By the end of the calendar year, we will likely be creating 4,000 per week. Over the next eighteen month ODDI has two focus areas for audio and video content. The first focus is to rebuild the platform that is scaled for our explosive growth and will bring more reliability and support the wide-range of different devices--desktop, mobile, tablets, and Internet TV. The second focus is delivering more robust video and audio experiences that drive audience interest and loyalty. ODDI will be collaborating with the language services to create a more engaging viewing and listening experiences, complete with commenting functionality, rich and contextual playlists and compatibility with mobile devices, as well as exploring new and innovative interactive video presentations.
- **Syndication:** while USIM has popular (and growing more popular) desktop and mobile websites, there are other digital environments in which our target audience gathers. Our focus on digital syndication is to work in partnership with services, the Office of Marketing and Program Placement and others to expand the number and sophistication of our digital syndication to key hubs like Google and Yahoo News, iTunes, Facebook, mobile portals, as well as important regional and local news and content syndicators. We have established a prioritized USIM-wide syndication grid with the entities and are steadily executing against it in forming new partnerships and delivering the technical capabilities to enable them to be successful.

Accomplishments to Date

ODDI has achieved a lot in the past year, but we need to acknowledge the work that was done before through the Office of New Media. We have taken that strong foundation and have started to build the next generation of products and services. Below is a partial list of our accomplishments:

Rebranding VOA Kickoff & global competitive brand review; provided creative design and direction with VOA staff in rebranding VOA on the web and television

Lead the development of the migration strategy and vendor management of VOA/OCB websites to Pangea; lead migration and improvement of sites

Executed the Global Pitchfest (internal) that solicited 83 proposals from staff and contractors on new programming; judged 16 semi-finalists to entity heads for pilot projects

ODDI re-organization, implement a project management system and complete office operational strategy and hiring plan

Service by service digital capability reviews and digital channel strategic review

Launching mobile website version 2.0 and increasing traffic from 600,000 to nearly 4,000,000 unique users per month in the last eight months; redesign of VOA/OCB/RFA/MBN mobile websites; migration of all mobile websites to Pangea (Q3)

Launched the Innovation@BBG blog (www.innovation-series.com) bringing best practices, project highlights and discussing innovation efforts; brought in a series of world-class entrepreneurs and technologists to help expand BBG digital media perspective

Commission on Innovation formed with three events that have brought together influential digital media technologists, including founders of Twitter, Facebook, Real Networks

Established high-level contacts for USIM with Facebook (head of international public policy), Twitter (head of international public policy), YouTube (head of news), Google (head of news and Google Currents), Apple (Senior Partnership Manager)

PopTech! remote site and the PopTech! DC event and ongoing relationship

Assisted in launching a crowd-sourced design project with RFERL Azeri service

Launch of weaponsofmousedestruction.org and securing of pro bono media placements (online and print) of up to \$45,000.00 in Spin and Vice Magazine - introducing the issue of government internet censorship and journalism in closed societies to a new youthful audience; assisted VOA PNN to present at SXSW

Redesign and re-launch of BBG.gov with new platform, new look-and-feel

Redesign and launch of Middle East Voices as first mobile-first/“responsive design” for USIM

Assisting MBN’s Al Youm program introduce new social media segments & workflow; development of new integrations between Facebook and Al Youm websites

Assisting VOA Russia to design & launch Podelis, their Social Media TV program

Assisting OCB’s Avanza Cuba program develop a live-streaming capability and social media strategy

Demonstrated new crowd-sourced translation technology with PNN; secured \$50,000 investment from BBC into new translation technology; publishing RFP for “Translation Hub” in July

Media placements for BBG programs and talent in the Economist & Fast Company Magazine (New audiences to BBG)

Support the integration of social TV software, Never.No, for VOA Russian Podelis and MBN; provide technical and strategic consultation to social TV projects

Executed USIM-wide agreement with iTunes, including assisting RFA to be featured on iTunes Chinese app store

Completed research and design exercise that has led to improved web site features and appropriate presentations for the types of VOA services, such as “news intensive” versus “program intensive”

Hosted a series of innovation speakers open and available to all of USIM; provided support on a series of “best practice” meetings focused on social media, video and working in closed countries

BBG Partnerships, Sponsorships and Advertising Strategy Policy Initial Draft

Reorganized the office to reflect future directions, rewrote job descriptions and hired staff with critical external experience and skills when spots were available

Content Bundling and Tagging - creating the future of a digitally ready syndication tool and readying mobile first content

Established framework syndication agreements with Nethope and Intel Content to distribute USIM content directly to devices

Established a partnership with GSMA/GSMA Development Fund leading to new connections and opportunities with mobile operators all over the world

BBG Mobile Strategy and Africa specific mobile research and business model alignment for content, advertising and 360 approach to access

Created Global News Network prototype; delivering production-level application (Q4)

And we have a number of projects and products that are soon ready to be shipped:

Launch a new Online Video/Audio Platform (OVAP) that will bring best-in-class video and audio players and distribution (Q4, calendar)

Launch a new service to provide affiliates with broadcast quality files, a service available for all USIM entities (Q4, calendar)

Launch a new USIM-wide web analytics and tag management service (Q3)

Launch new video and social media metrics services across all of USIM (Q4/1, 2013)

Upgrade our mobile websites with new features and functions with a quarterly release roadmap (Q4/1)

Executing USIM-wide agreements with Google Currents, Google News, Skype, UStream and YouTube (Q3); execution of new syndication agreements with content partners (Q4/1/ongoing)

Relaunch of VOA Russian and Chinese iPhone applications configured for Pangea (Q3)

Launching Global News Network application (Q4/1)

Development of an “umbrella smartphone/feature phone” application for entities and services (Q4/1)

Development of new digital metrics reporting of key performance indicators on engagement and audience development (Q3/4)

Launch of new application programming interface (API) to enable new dynamic technology partnerships and products (business strategy Q3, API (phase 1) Q4)

Launch of a geo-aware mobile tool set to allow geo-location of USIM content (Q3); development of future “skunkworks” projects on a quarterly basis

Enhancement of BBG.gov site with 2.0+ design & functionality (Q3)

Launch of a new video annotation tool to improve video presentations (Q3/4)

Launch of BBG Digital Advertising Working Group - enhancing our offering.

ATTACHMENT 2

United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General

July 3, 2012

Mr. Richard M. Lobo
Director
International Broadcasting Bureau
330 Independence Avenue SW, room 3300
Washington, DC 20237

Dear Mr. Lobo:

The Office of Inspector General sent out a cable this week with its proposed schedule of inspections to be conducted in FY 2013. The tag line for the cable included the Broadcasting Board of Governors. For your convenience, we are sending you the information that applies to your organization as well as the planned audits for FY 2013.

OIG Domestic Inspections

- Inspection of the Board of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (October-November 2012)
- Inspection of Voice of America's Russian Language Service (February-March 2013)
- Inspection of Voice of America's Latin America Language Service (May-June 2013)

In addition, the proposed schedule for embassy inspections includes some locations where BBG has a presence. An inspection team may visit BBG operations in some or all of these places.

OIG Overseas Inspections

October-November 2012

- Nigeria – Regional Marketing Satellite Office
- Philippines – Transmitting sites
- Germany – Transmitting sites

February-March 2013

- Iraq – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Middle East Broadcasting Networks

May-June 2013

- Russia – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Voice of America, Regional Marketing Satellite Office
- Ukraine – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Regional Marketing Office

OIG Audits

- Audit of BBG FY 2012 financial statements (carryover)
- Audit of BBG FY 2013 financial statements
- Audit of BBG's compliance with the Improper Payments Information Act
- FISMA audit of BBG's information security program
- Audit of premium travel at BBG
- OMB Circular A-133 – quality control review of single audits – selected Single Audit Act desk reviews for domestic and overseas bureaus of the Department of State and BBG

If you have any questions, please contact Assistant Inspector General for Inspections Robert B. Peterson at (202) 663-0373 or petersonR@state.gov or have your staff contact Robert Torres, Coordinator for International Broadcasting for the Office of Inspections, at torresR2@state.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Harold W. Geisel
Deputy Inspector General

cc: IBB – Jeffrey Trimble, Deputy Director
IBB – Kelu Chao, Office of Performance Review



July 13, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for July

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

VOA Khmer Censored and Owner of VOA Affiliate Arrested

The Cambodian Ministry of Information prohibited five affiliate stations in Cambodia from running Khmer-language programs by RFA and VOA on June 2nd and 3rd, the day of Cambodia's national commune elections. The shows were all taken off the air without notice. Two VOA Khmer Radio programs on June 3 were broadcast as normal on an AM frequency, via short wave and online. In addition, the government of Cambodia arrested Mam Sonando, the owner of the independent "Beehive" radio station, for allegedly leading a secession movement. In an interview with VOA widely picked up by local media, Sonando denied knowledge of any such movement. "Beehive" is a VOA affiliate in Cambodia.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

VOA Soon To Be on Air in Burma



David Ensor and Thein Aung, director general of Myanmar State Radio and Television

VOA English teaching programs will soon air on Burmese state radio under the terms of an agreement VOA has reached with Burmese officials. Director Ensor, who traveled to Burma early in June for the official signing ceremony, described the agreement with the long-isolated government as "a small step, but one that is symbolically important." Under the

agreement, Burma's radio network will carry feature reports by Learning English (see: <http://learningenglish.voanews.com/podcast.html>) three times weekly. During his visit, Ensor also held talks with Burma's minister of information, Kyaw San, who expressed his support for greater VOA access to the country. That support was warmly welcomed by VOA Burmese Service Chief Than Lwin Htun, who said he appreciated the "opportunity to provide our audience with firsthand, eyewitness reporting."

Bigger, Better: VOA Mandarin TV Program Is Launched

VOA Wei Shi, VOA Mandarin's new live television program, expanded to two hours on July 1. The fast-paced daily program consists of newscasts, live interviews with news-makers around the world and features on American politics and U.S.-China relations, as well as English-learning programs designed for young audiences. *VOA Wei Shi* (VOA Satellite TV) reaches out to Chinese viewers with such programs as "Error 404," which examines how politically sensitive stories are covered, or censored, by media on both sides of the Chinese firewall, and "History's Mysteries," which reveals historical facts long distorted in official Chinese narratives. The program consists of short news and information segments that are modular for dissemination via VOA websites and mobile apps and social media platforms.

VOA Numbers Up in Iran

Research released in June shows VOA Persian's audience in Iran is growing sharply this year. A Gallup survey, conducted in March, says VOA's TV weekly audience grew to 21.4 percent, up from 6.5 percent in 2011. With the addition of radio and the Internet, VOA's total audience reach in Iran is now estimated at 22.1 percent. The new figures indicate the importance of the Hotbird satellite to VOA Persian. Its programs were taken off Hotbird in mid-2010 because Iran's jamming of the VOA signal caused collateral damage to other broadcasters on the satellite, including other BBG broadcasters. The removal is blamed for a sharp dip in audience figures from the previously estimated 20 percent. VOA service resumed on Hotbird shortly before the new Gallup survey, and researchers say this played a role in restoring VOA's audience. The Gallup poll re-enforced the importance of television in the Iranian market, as well as the importance of VOA Persian. It found that while 86 percent of Iranians get news and information from domestic television, only 49 percent found the broadcasts "very trustworthy."

French to Africa Reporter Goes where Few Others Dare

Ever since Tuareg rebels and Islamist militants gained control of northern Mali early this year, few reporters have gone to what is now very dangerous territory. French to Africa reporter Idriss Fall went there in June. Even getting there wasn't easy. From Mali's capital, Bamako, he traveled first to Burkina Faso and then to Niger, from where he crossed into northern Mali and made his way to Gao, the major city in the region. Fall spent several days in Gao, conducting interviews with many residents; all the interviews were done in secret because he couldn't risk falling into the hands of either the Tuaregs or Islamists. The citizens of Gao made it clear to him that they accepted neither the occupation of their region nor the kind of Islam the militants brought with them. After several days in the north, Fall made his way back to southern Mali and was able to file his reports on the situation in the north. Accompanied by pictures and videos, they provided a vivid account of life in northern Mali under its new rulers. Fall also filed reports on life in southern Mali, where many people are demanding a military solution to the rebellion in the north. While in Mali, Fall participated via Skype in a discussion on French to Africa's TV show, *Washington Forum*, about developments in northern Mali. He also did a special 25-minute

Images of Gao by Idriss Fall



report on life in Gao that has been posted on the French to Africa website. In addition, Central News shared the riveting reports Fall did for VOA with the other BBG elements.

For Central News, Sharing Is Now ... Central

Fall's reporting was extraordinary, but there was nothing extraordinary in the fact that Central News shared it with the other BBG elements. The VOA newsroom shares what it has with the other elements virtually every day. In recent weeks, for example, it shared the work of the Burmese Service as it covered opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi on her first international trip in 24 years. (The Burmese Service was the only broadcaster to provide a complete Burmese translation of her speech to the British parliament, a speech that Burma's state media did not cover.) More recently, thanks to VOA's Bangla, Russian and Afghan Services, Central shared original interviews with high-ranking newsmakers, among them the foreign minister of Bangladesh and the information minister of Afghanistan.

New VOA Show Gives Pakistanis Access to U.S. Views

Access Point, a new Urdu and English language program, enables VOA's online audience in Pakistan to ask tough questions about the sometimes-tense relationship between Washington and Islamabad. Ayesha Tanzeem, host of the interactive weekly program, says it offers something unavailable on any other media in Pakistan: a place for honest and direct discussion with U.S.

policy experts and officials. “On other VOA programs, Tanzeem says, “we noticed that even when we had well known Pakistani guests, the audience was often more interested in discussing issues directly with Americans. This show gives them a way to do that.”

The audience poses questions to a live studio guest in Washington via Facebook and Twitter. The 15-minute program airs Thursday evenings in Pakistan and is streamed live from the VOA television studios in Washington. It is also available on-demand on Facebook and the Urdu Service Ustream channel.



The Many Voices of America

Americans from all walks of life are sharing their compelling stories on a new weekly VOA series called *Voices of America*. The two-minute television and web feature offers a unique perspective on life in the United States by letting people speak in their own words about the successes and challenges they face, and to reflect on the qualities, character and values that help make the country what it is today. The series debuted July 2, right before Independence Day, with profiles of some of the newest Americans who had just taken the oath of citizenship. Other individuals who will share their stories on *Voices of America* include: Greg Louganis, the Olympic gold medal diver who has been living with HIV for more than two decades; Vietnam veteran Jan Scruggs, founder of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which marks its 30th anniversary this year; and Bruce Laingen, the charge d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran who was among the hostages seized at the compound in 1979 and held in Iran for 444 days. “People around the world are fascinated and curious about Americans,” says the show’s creator and executive producer Deborah Tate. “This series focuses on Americans with compelling stories that speak to American values.”

Egypt Decides

VOA’s Middle East Hub, in conjunction with Central News and the Middle East Broadcasting Network (MBN), provided unprecedented multi-media coverage of Egypt’s presidential runoff election. One team focused on generating daily news radio, TV and web reports while tweeting real-time updates. The second team focused blog posts and online video documentaries with real-time updates. A third Washington-based “curation team” assembled news elements and “social streams” from the wider online Egyptian populace and posted them on VOANews.com. VOA’s Middle East Hub coordinated with MBN to promote the editorial campaign online on Al Hurra and Radio Sawa, showcasing the power of inter-agency cooperation. The initiative successfully established a Twitter hashtag - #egyptdecides – that allowed election followers to share their observations, and generated often ironic discussions about the political process. The three teams can point to some remarkable achievements:

- VOA and MBN reporters and contributors tweeted 2,844 times using #egyptdecides, reaching more than 3,090,000 Twitter followers in eight days, according to hashttracking.com.

- VOA’s targeted Facebook advertising campaign spurred real engagement among Egyptians under age 40 on a dedicated event page that attracted 5,200 unique visitors – a first-ever for VOA in Egypt.
- MBN’s targeted Facebook advertising campaign reached 213,513 people. Its Twitter ad campaign reached 11,157 people.
- Traffic from Egypt increased by 76 percent on MiddleEastVoices.com and 37 percent on VOANews.com.
- According to Ahmad AbouAmmou, social media director at MBN, Al Hurra’s Facebook page had more than 25% participation among around 430,000 Facebook fans (using the “talking about this” metric). This exceeded engagement on Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera during the same period of election coverage.

Busy Times Don’t Stop for VOA’s Cairo Correspondent

Ever since last year’s Arab Spring, VOA Cairo Correspondent Elizabeth Arrott has been hopping from hotspot to hotspot in the Middle East and North Africa. She also is busy back home in Cairo. On June 2, former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was sentenced to life in prison for his role in the killings of protesters. Arrott reported that a crowd outside the courtroom was initially jubilant after the verdict. But, she tweeted, the mood changed when people learned the former president, his sons and another official had been acquitted of some charges. In the following days, Arrott was back at Tahrir Square after reports Mubarak was near death. Then in mid-June the focus switched to Egypt’s elections. Earlier, Arrott had identified Muslim Brotherhood candidate Mohammed Morsi as a leading contender for president and had travelled to his home village to follow him campaigning. Thanks to her news instincts, Arrott had original video and material for a profile of Morsi that was released to VOA Language Services and shared with the entities on the day he was announced the winner.

VOA and Google Ideas Give Somalis a Voice

Over the past three months, VOA’s Somali Service, using open source software from Google Ideas, has polled more than 3,000 Somalis about key provisions of the country’s draft constitution and the kind of government they want. The survey asked questions about citizenship, freedom of expression, the role of women, the powers of the states, and religious law. A data analysis of the results, published on www.voanews.com, shows that those surveyed, men and women, young and old, overwhelmingly favor a direct vote on the constitution. Plans call for the document to be considered by a Constituent Assembly and eventually by Somalia’s new permanent parliament. The survey found 87 percent of those polled want Islamic law, or Sharia, to be the foundation of the country’s civil and criminal code. Asked what kind of powers the central government should have, 83 percent said they want a strong central government. Questioned about the proposed constitutional protection for freedom of expression, 68 percent said it should include freedom of the press and media. More than three-quarters (78 percent) said they supported the proposed constitution. The survey was conducted in three parts and polled Somalis around the country and in the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. In addition to the poll, VOA’s Somali Service has published key segments of the proposed constitution on its website. Every Sunday evening VOA’s Somali audience is invited to debate the issues on the radio call-in program, *Constitution Square*.

Ashna First with News of Hotel Attack

VOA's Ashna Radio was the first international broadcaster to report the news of the June 22 attack on a hotel in the outskirts of Kabul. A group of insurgents broke into the Spozhmai Hotel in Qargha Lake and started shooting at guests. Ashna spoke live with Ayub Salangi, chief of Kabul police, who was at the scene of the attack and gave updates to Ashna on what was happening.

VOA Russian Back on Russian TV

After an absence of four years, VOA Russian is once again available on television in Russia, thanks to an independent Russian television channel called Dozhd (Rain). The inaugural broadcast occurred June 26, when Dozhd carried a live report by Russian Service reporter Igor Riskin from VOA's rooftop via Streambox. Riskin discussed developments on the Magnitsky Act, a Senate bill that would penalize Russian officials for human rights violations. He did a second live shot on *Dozhd* two days later about Attorney General Eric Holder, found in contempt of Congress over the gun-running operation Fast and Furious. Both segments took place during Russia's prime time. The Russian Service plans to continue doing live shots with *Dozhd*, which was one of the first TV channels in Russia to openly cover the 2011 protests against Russia's disputed parliamentary elections. The Dozhd connection is another example of the rapidly expanding reach of VOA's Russian Service. Its website had almost twice as much traffic in 2011-- 13,896,143 visits -- as in 2010, and is this year expected to easily surpass the figures for 2011.

'VOA Has Been Doing Extremely Well,' Says Ugandan Media Mogul

Sir Gordon Wavamunno, the chairman of WBS television in Uganda, was a recent guest on *Straight Talk Africa* with Shaka Ssali. Explaining his relationship with VOA, the man who is probably the most successful businessman in Uganda said, "I look at who is doing good work and who can be a good partner... and the VOA has been doing extremely well." According to Wavamunno, "Voice of America's *Straight Talk* is the only balanced news source that brings out the issues." Sir Wavamunno also talked with Shaka Ssali about recently being knighted by Queen Elizabeth, and his prominence in the auto, textile, radio, and agriculture industries. His station, which can be seen all over the country, airs *Straight Talk Africa* Thursday mornings at 11A.M. WBS TV (Wavah Broadcasting services) is a privately owned, free-to-air Station.

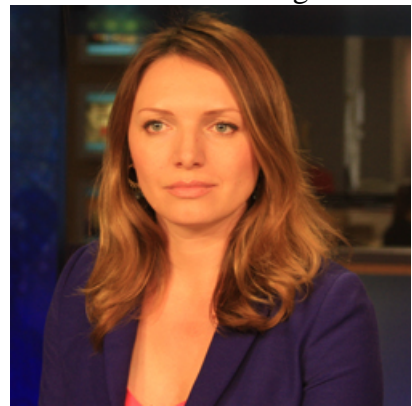
VOA Urdu's *My Story* – Literally – Helps the Blind to See

The weekly Urdu language radio program *My Story*, which debuted in February, lets ordinary people describe experiences that have shaped their lives. In early June, a 22-year-old woman in Punjab Province called the show to talk about the plight of her father-in-law, who had lost his sight because of cataracts and was unable to afford eye surgery. Following the program, Urdu producers contacted a well-known surgeon who offered to perform the operation free of charge. Near the end of June, the daughter-in-law called the show to say the surgery was a success and her father-in-law's vision is now restored. She relayed this quote from him: "I have no words to praise the station that gave me my eyesight back and show everyone how we could help each other." *My Story*, which airs every Thursday in Pakistan, uses Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to engage and interact with its audience. Since March, the show's Facebook page has reached more than 213,000 people in Pakistan, India and the Middle East, and the program has received thousands of e-mails and letters with new story ideas. In the few months the Urdu Service has

aired the program, *My Story* has helped a villager in Baluchistan find employment after a long job search, assisted in getting a scholarship for a student who lost his mother, brother and home in an earthquake, and reconnected a Muslim family with a kind Hindu doctor who helped the family in Indian Kashmir nearly three decades ago.

Myroslava Gongadze, Journalist and Ukrainian Rights Activist

In addition to being the anchor of VOA Ukrainian's TV show *Chas-Time*, Myroslava Gongadze is a tireless campaigner for human rights and press freedom in her native Ukraine. Her fight for human rights has been profiled in a new documentary, *A Whisper to a Roar*, which tells the stories of democracy activists in five countries around the world -- Egypt, Malaysia, Ukraine, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. Gongadze, who fled Ukraine in 2001 following the murder of her husband, investigative reporter Georgy Gongadze, says she is proud to be among the activists that are featured in the documentary. Her personal story became a rallying cry during the democracy movement that later grew into the 2004 Orange revolution in Ukraine. She has won numerous awards for her accomplishments as a journalist, including her reporting on the eve of the Orange Revolution, and as a champion of democracy and independent media.



Myroslava Gongadze

By Way of China, VOA Korean Gets Feedback from North Korean

In late May, a North Korean in Jilin, China sent a letter to VOA Korean's Seoul bureau offering feedback on the service's programs. The writer, who described herself as a 45-year-old female listener, said she left North Korea six years ago. She told VOA that she listens to VOA's nightly broadcasts on shortwave radio and that the reception is good. "Listening to VOA," she said, "is the only pleasure in my life." The program she likes best is *Looking for Freedom*, a weekly show that tells the stories of people who have fled North Korea and resettled in South Korea.

Let's Play Elections Mixes Politics and Soccer

The U.S. presidential election campaign and the world of soccer are combined in the VOA video program *Let's Play Elections*. Designed to appeal to younger viewers, the program offers the latest soccer news as well as the latest news about the U.S. presidential campaign, explaining the sometimes complicated process in simplified terms. LatAm division director Alberto Mascaro, who anchors the show, says "we're giving something to the audience that makes them understand the process a little better." In addition to the English version, the three to four minute show is also translated into Spanish and Swahili. Translations are also offered to affiliate TV stations in other languages.

Streets of Life Profiles Lives of Iranians Not Supposed To Exist

President Ahmadinejad says they don't exist, but Iranian homosexuals, at least those living outside the country, are starting to speak out. VOA Persian's *Streets of Life*, in five comprehensive packages, profiled the lives of gay Iranian men and women and their search to find a place where they could lead a simple life without facing discrimination. In one program, Farid, a gay Iranian now living in Turkey, described how it felt to live as a gay man in Iran, where being homosexual is crime. Another program told the story of Arash and Nima, an Iranian gay couple who left Iran and are now living in Turkey. Turning to America, *Streets of Life*

interviewed Mali Kigasari from Rasht, Iran, the first Iranian lesbian to be legally married in California.

New Affiliates for Spanish Service

Mexico's second largest television station, Azteca, is placing VOA packages on its daily newscasts, as is Paraguay's leading radio station, Radio Nanduti, and Comercial 1010 in the Dominican Republic.

Portuguese Service Staffer Holds Town Halls in Angola

The managing editor of the Portuguese Service, Luis Costa Ribas, travelled to Angola in June to bring the service's popular call-in show *Angola Fala So* (*Angola Just Say It!*) directly to its audience. Using a town hall format, he hosted three shows in three cities. Ribas also had several live interviews with radio stations in Angola and gave three lectures on election reporting.



Portuguese Service Staffer Luis Costa Ribas holds the mic for town hall participants

A one-hour summary of his election lecture was broadcast on national radio. While in Angola, Ribas also met with the U.S. ambassador to Angola, Christopher McMullen, who praised *Fala So* for the positive impact it is having in the country.

Freedom House Official Worried about Ukraine

In June, VOA's Ukrainian Service spoke with Freedom House president David Kramer about a report the organization just released on what it called "a persistent decline in democratic principles and human rights in Ukraine." In the interview, Kramer said President Yanukovych's government was not respecting the basic freedoms that are the underpinnings of a democracy and that Ukrainian authorities are demonstrating an unwillingness to answer international concerns about the prosecution of opposition leaders. The interview was broadcast on the service's *Chas-Time* TV program and was also republished by *Ukrayinska Pravda*, one of the leading news websites in Ukraine.

For Uzbeks, Chicago Is Their Kind of Town

Exploring America, VOA Uzbek's TV newsmagazine, made a trip to Chicago to report on the Windy City and the thriving Uzbek community that now calls it home. The first program in what will be a series on Chicago featured interviews, magnificent lakeside views and snippets of life in the Midwest. Host Navbahor Imamova and cameraman Umid Uzokov went to an Uzbek picnic and talked with families about the challenges and opportunities of life in the United States. The show also told how young students and professionals from Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are

merging their Central Asian backgrounds with their new life in America. The first installment of the series aired June 25th and generated good feedback:

- “We have watched your latest report from Chicago. We loved, loved, and loved it very much!!!! It is very nicely done. It is natural, informative and very interesting. You showed us the real life of immigrants in the US. It really tells that life in America may not always be wonderful since it is full of ups and downs, but you can achieve your dreams through hard work and determination. I love how you deliver that true meaning to the audience. Great respect!” (Rahima Rahmonova, Uzbekistan)
- “I felt like I’ve been to Chicago now... It’s like you took us to America through your reporting for half an hour. Thank you!” (Sher Abdugapirov, Kyrgyzstan via Twitter)

Story on Haunting 9/11 Picture Wins Award for VOA

Three VOA journalists -- TV reporter Carolyn Presutti, photographer/editor Michael Burke and photographer Mike Kornely -- have won this year’s Chesapeake Associated Press Broadcasting Award for Outstanding Enterprise Reporting and a Clarion Award from the Association for Women in Communications for Television feature Story/Segment. Both awards are for their report *The Falling Man*, which is based on one of the most controversial images from the September 11th attack in New York. “We wanted,” said Presutti, “to find unique angles of 9/11 that haven’t been covered. I found a picture that really spoke to me. It was a photo of a man who had jumped from the World Trade Center.” Presutti then managed to interview people close to the victim, including his sister, and capture the powerful story of the photo. The Chesapeake Associated Press Broadcasters Association presents annual awards to radio and television stations in Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia with outstanding work in different categories. This is the fourth consecutive year that VOA has won an award from the association.

Milestone for VOA Mandarin’s Email Newsletter

In early July, VOA Mandarin’s news distribution list for email addresses inside China reached 10 million members. The daily newsletter also contains updated proxy server information so readers can circumvent the Chinese government’s firewall to visit VOA Chinese.

Notable Interviews

- In Washington to speak at a USAID conference, Kosovo President Atifete Jahjaga came to VOA headquarters and gave an interview to *Ditari*, the Albanian Service’s flagship television newscast. Jahjaga spoke about U.S.-Kosovo relations and the challenge her state faces in receiving international recognition because of the opposition by Serbia.
- The vice president of Ghana, Dramani Mahami, was a guest of Shaka Ssali on *Straight Talk Africa*. The vice president provided insights into Ghanaian politics and also discussed his new book, *My First Coup d’Etat*, which focuses on his coming of age during a 1966 coup in post-independence Ghana.
- VOA’s Kurdish Service is giving events in Syria its highest priority. Among the most prominent Syrian leaders interviewed by the service: Abdul Basit Sayda, the newly elected president of the Syrian National Council, Faisal Youssef, the head of Kurdish Reform Movement in Syria and Mustafa Jumaa, general secretary of Syria’s Freedom Party.

- The foreign minister of Tanzania, Bernard Membe, came to VOA in June for an interview with the Swahili Service. Topics included the International Criminal Court's warrant against Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir.
- The Bangla Service spoke with the U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh, Dan Mozena, about U.S.-Bangladesh relations and the cooperation between the two governments in the fight against terrorism.
- Bing West, former assistant secretary of defense in the Reagan administration, told VOA Dari that President Obama did the right thing by setting a deadline to withdraw troops from Afghanistan. West expressed concern that the announcement will embolden the Taliban, but said it was still justified because of public frustration with the war.
- *Jazz America* host Russ Davis interviewed legendary jazz guitarist Pat Metheny, who said he left the world of rock and roll as a young man. What did it was hearing a recording of a Miles Davis concert.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

VOA TV to Iran Streaming on Livestation

Iranians can now watch all of their favorite VOA Persian TV shows online with [Livestation](http://www.livestation.com), a 24 hour a day streaming platform that brings together news programs from around the world. Viewers in Iran and elsewhere can simply go to www.livestation.com and select VOA Persian from the list of regional channels. The site is free and can also be accessed on smart phones as well as an iPhone app. Livestation aggregates dozens of television news programs from around the world in different languages. The channels can be watched for free via the Livestation website. There is also a free smartphone app that presents all the channels on one interface, or through other mobile phone apps.



VOA Persian Newcomer already a Facebook Hit

Introduced in May, VOA Persian's *OnTen* (*Antenna*), which provides an off-beat look at the Iranian political scene with a mix of satire, comedy and news, is already the third most interactive page in the VOA Persian service -- and it's only eight shows young. More proof of *OnTen*'s appeal: GLWiZ, which describes itself as the largest source of Iranian Television entertainment worldwide, has begun archiving the show for public view.

Persian Service Journalist Wins International Award

Arash Sigarchi, a journalist for VOA's Persian Service, has won top prize at the 2012 Deutsche Welle International Blog Awards – known as the BOBs. Sigarchi's personal blog, *Window of Anguish*, was selected by a panel of media experts who considered entries in 11 languages. The award honors blogs that champion the open exchange of ideas and freedom of expression. Born in Iran, Sigarchi started blogging in 2002, but was arrested two years later for criticizing the regime. After serving two years of a three year prison sentence, surviving cancer, and losing his brother to a car accident, he was granted a visa to travel United States and left Iran in 2008. The Deutsche Welle Blog Awards website says "*Window of Anguish* provides readers with an even-

handed perspective of the Iranian regime's actions." One member of the selection panel said, "Arash has maintained an objective view of events despite the personal attacks and tragedy he suffered at the hands of the government."

Over a Million Fans for VOA Indonesian

VOA Indonesian's Facebook page now has 908,000 fans and the Service's *Dunia Kita* Facebook program page has 118,000 fans.

Learning English App for iPhone and iPad

VOA Learning English has released its first mobile app, the VOA Wordbook, for the iPhone and iPad. The VOA mobile wordbook contains nearly 1000 words, has rich dynamic images, sample sentences and audio. What's more, it's free. Since its opening on the iTunes app store July 1, there have been close to 1200 downloads. This is the first of a suite of mobile wordbooks Learning English plans to release. The Android version is expected in August.

VOA Social Media Project in Haiti

Citizen journalists in Haiti are now sharing their stories through a new social media project that links VOA's Creole Service website with Facebook and Twitter. The project began last October, when two members of the Creole staff, joined by a member of the English web team and a VOA technician, traveled to Haiti to train 15 citizen journalists. Each of the journalists was loaned an iPhone and instructed how to shoot video, record audio and conduct interviews. After three days of intense training, the journalists were ready to begin filing. In the months since then, they have filed reports on Haitian culture, border issues, education, sports and other local and regional concerns. Their reports are linked to a Citizen Journalist page on the Creole Service website (<http://www.voanouvel.com/>). In addition to providing on-site training, VOA also teamed up with the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince to bring 10 journalists from Haiti for a week-long training program in Washington. The journalists received instruction and special briefings, visited the State Department, and attended a White House press briefing where they were given a special welcome by White House press spokesman Jay Carney.

VOA Russian First to Tweet U.S. Senate Approval of Magnitsky Act

VOA's Russian Service was the first media organization to tweet that the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations had approved the Magnitsky Act, a bill that would penalize Russian officials for human rights violations. The Russian Service covered the event using the entire spectrum of new media tools, combined with traditional coverage by reporter Fatima Tlisova. In addition to its coverage on Twitter, the Service used its Facebook site to send pictures, updates and video interviews directly from the Senate. Those interviewed included former Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, who himself retweeted the video, as did more than 100 Twitter bloggers in Russia. After the vote, Fatima followed up with a full-length report that included video and social media elements. She also participated in VOA Russian's *Podelis (Share)* show and wrote a blog *Pressa pod Pressom (The Press under Pressure)* for the VOA website on the coverage the Magnitsky legislation received in U.S. mainstream media.

E. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

VOANews.com Web and Mobile Traffic June 2012											
	Visits			Pages Viewed			Quality Metrics (June 2012)		Mobile Visits		
Language Service	June 2012	May 2012	Change	June 2012	May 2012	Change	Pages per Visit	Avg. Time Spent (min)	June 2012	May 2012	Change
All VOA	11,903,537	14,040,925	-12%	30,230,000	34,157,634	-9%	2.54	03:58	3,145,889	2,971,270	9%
English	2,529,391	3,144,418	-17%	4,706,894	5,776,113	-16%	1.86	02:23	1,364,169	1,216,781	16%
Vietnamese	1,545,083	1,640,000	-3%	5,423,013	5,031,364	11%	3.51	05:01	175,049	150,039	21%
Persian	1,452,847	1,741,325	-14%	3,920,344	4,132,677	-2%	2.70	08:21	63,244	57,651	13%
Special English	1,003,868	1,438,643	-28%	3,669,877	4,717,580	-20%	3.66	08:21	108,608	127,545	-12%
Burmese	988,224	876,775	16%	2,089,653	1,846,960	17%	2.11	03:34	134,884	91,192	53%
Chinese	928,176	1,286,285	-25%	2,893,334	3,727,511	-20%	3.12	05:48	1,859	3,109	-38%
Russian	857,531	1,206,774	-27%	1,934,513	2,811,847	-29%	2.26	03:16	54,991	77,518	-27%
Somali	467,211	516,731	-7%	889,094	1,055,014	-13%	1.90	03:14	103,537	113,513	-6%
Amharic	359,992	421,102	-12%	624,781	749,569	-14%	1.74	02:13	123,852	138,560	-8%
Tigrigna	175,231	182,522	-1%	310,460	320,169	0%	1.77	02:34			
Spanish	173,928	174,589	3%	273,964	279,105	1%	1.58	01:17	298,608	307,650	0%
Khmer	129,163	118,854	12%	263,266	251,138	8%	2.04	03:05	20,345	19,484	8%
Urdu	126,193	134,905	-3%	327,175	341,834	-1%	2.59	04:19	33,978	29,092	21%
Hausa	105,673	104,543	4%	234,749	228,639	6%	2.22	04:29	380,985	327,411	20%
Indonesian	91,168	128,743	-27%	177,948	229,102	-20%	1.95	02:31	61,411	65,681	-3%
Portuguese	88,621	97,118	-6%	191,327	206,012	-4%	2.16	03:51	13,574	12,682	11%
Ukrainian	88,324	66,744	37%	126,141	116,424	12%	1.43	01:44	7,502	6,147	26%
Albanian	86,649	122,680	-27%	217,530	279,874	-20%	2.51	03:05	6,833	6,908	2%
Tibetan	73,758	78,360	-3%	154,953	165,923	-3%	2.10	03:47	30,154	64,477	-52%
Pashto	73,129	81,194	-7%	131,832	142,916	-5%	1.80	02:21	7,359	7,829	-3%
Dari	65,562	68,305	-1%	147,083	149,098	2%	2.24	03:08	6,422	6,031	10%
Korean	59,497	63,854	-4%	144,993	153,465	-2%	2.44	02:55	65,172	43,131	56%
Khmer - English	55,993	56,650	2%	99,197	101,226	1%	1.77	02:27			
Tibetan - English	53,077	63,433	-14%	80,459	93,636	-11%	1.52	01:35			
Lao	49,307	51,999	-2%	163,933	174,061	-3%	3.32	05:49			
Thai	44,618	25,643	80%	60,562	38,451	63%	1.36	00:52	1,867	2,333	-17%
Zimbabwe	41,196	44,149	-4%	63,997	68,422	-3%	1.55	01:37	45,108	52,968	-12%
Turkish	31,816	45,117	-27%	61,520	80,137	-21%	1.93	01:56	3,502	5,562	-35%
Central Africa	25,526	28,012	-6%	39,526	42,046	-3%	1.55	01:36			
French to Africa	24,421	29,542	-15%	45,043	52,768	-12%	1.84	02:07	4,048	4,133	1%
Serbian	24,004	44,944	-45%	51,542	80,531	-34%	2.15	02:12	1,540	2,319	-31%
Afaan Oromoo	23,568	30,086	-19%	56,757	73,498	-20%	2.41	03:25			
Azerbaijani	18,056	27,380	-32%	32,182	47,966	-31%	1.78	02:28	1,520	2,068	-24%
Kurdish	17,024	20,262	-13%	32,795	40,987	-17%	1.93	02:46	1,800	1,930	-4%
Deewa	16,196	15,552	8%	33,237	32,594	5%	2.05	03:22			
Georgian	15,920	21,704	-24%	30,968	39,904	-20%	1.95	02:06	287	374	-21%
Cantonese	14,633	19,200	-21%	34,503	41,525	-14%	2.36	03:03			
Macedonian	14,039	31,022	-53%	23,309	46,726	-48%	1.66	02:00	972	2,216	-55%
Uzbek	13,474	17,630	-21%	34,042	39,255	-10%	2.53	04:51	13,250	14,776	-7%
Bangla	12,672	14,802	-12%	21,194	23,597	-7%	1.67	01:53	2,124	2,333	-6%
Armenian	12,120	17,642	-29%	24,221	32,500	-23%	2.00	02:57	368	424	-10%
Swahili	10,938	13,403	-16%	19,282	20,835	-4%	1.76	02:22	6,967	7,403	-3%
Bosnian	7,963	12,561	-34%	19,829	22,865	-10%	2.49	16:37	303	437	-28%
Greek	7,403	11,005	-30%	13,236	20,172	-32%	1.79	01:05			
Creole	7,082	9,600	-24%	19,720	23,398	-13%	2.78	04:15			
Shona	4,861	5,409	-7%	7,634	8,721	-10%	1.57	02:05			
Ndebele	3,468	2,878	25%	5,249	4,406	23%	1.51	02:17			
Kurdi	3,221	3,860	-14%	7,212	7,855	-5%	2.23	02:47			

VOA Social Media Report May 16, 2012 – June 15, 2012				
	Youtube	Twitter	Facebook	
	Video Views	Followers	Number of times someone clicked on page content	Total Number of Fans
Afghan	101,703	1,655	182,177	78,458
Albanian	107,240	2,032	5,261	32,796
Armenian	12,874	45	23	421
Azerbaijani	14,871	1,582	8	346
Bangla	32,598	na	1,359	2,293
Bosnian	7,296	137	na	na
Burmese	445,322	849	*	*
Cantonese	*	334	*	*
Central Africa	25,696	53	88	618
Chinese	*	15,807	2,338	5,014
Creole	1,856	5,063	43	275
Deewa	7,178	587	603	3,717
English	677,569	73,958	26,099	97,746
French	34,545	642	1,815	5,521
Georgian	3,951	260	1,001	2,729
Greek	9,547	1,035	*	*
Hausa	38,362	5,130	940	34,100
Horn	90,688	463	7,459	19,150
Indonesian	*	29,840	609,227	1,020,683
Khmer	*	4,934	66,426	26,183
Korean	*	65	*	*
Kurdish	8,040	2,796	825	5,956
Lao	6,888	na	969	528
Macedonian	1,107	210	2,185	8,962
Persian	502,886	14,417	106,148	1,043,676
Portuguese	5,879	328	8,490	5,136
Russian	195,138	41,853	10,531	7,316
Serbian	63,350	350	10,913	13,145
Somali	287,189	2,022	10,913	13,145
Spanish	52,222	9,245	196	2,359
Special English	726,220	36,804	146,455	160,595
Swahili	31,216	382	312	2,898
Thai	16,673	na	13,159	2,050
Tibetan	*	1,962	6,608	8,292
Turkish	15,921	3,141	800	2,410
Ukrainian	95,559	7,086	4,526	6,924
Urdu	85,431	2,944	188	1,424
Uzbek	76,411	724	73	467
Vietnamese	778,102	1,795	31,628	16,079
Zimbabwe	4,669	492	274	1,198
Congo Story	26,745	665	*	*
* information was not available at time of reporting.				

F. PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA & EVENTS

- VOA Executive Editor Steve Redisch appeared on C-Span's *Washington Journal* on July 4 to talk about VOA and take questions from the audience. Steve's appearance was part of a week-long C-Span look at foreign news operations in the United States. Throughout the week C-Span interviewed representatives from VOA Al Jazeera English, Deutsche Welle, CCTV, and BBC America.

- Fergus Hanson, a reporter working on a video project for the Brookings Institute, interviewed Jessica Beinecke, host of the highly popular *OMG! Meiyu*.
- Zach Jones, a reporter for the *Economist* magazine, interviewed Elez Biberaj and Andre Mendes about VOA's shortwave broadcasts.

VOA STUDIO TOUR

All visitors below took the VOA Studio Tour unless otherwise noted.

- Representatives from the Karachi Chamber of Commerce in Pakistan met with VOA Urdu Service Chief Faiz Rehman and other broadcasters in the service. – May 24
- VOA Public Relations arranged a meeting with broadcasters from Deewa Radio and the Afghanistan Service for five foreign service officers who will be working in Afghanistan in the near future. – May 30
- Chinese visitors taking part in a program organized by the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations met with representatives of VOA's East Asia and Pacific Division and Chinese Branch – May 31
- Washington Center interns met with VOA broadcaster Doug Bernard Johnson. – June 4
- Students from the Global Learning Center were taken on a tour of VOA's Persian Service by Kaveh Basmenji. – June 7
- Bangla Service Chief Roquia Haider and Urdu Service Chief Faiz Rehman met with an FSI East Asia group. – June 7
- Students from West Mesa High School toured the VOA Greek Service. – June 11
- Ten officials from Pakistan met with VOA Urdu Service Chief Faiz Rehman and other VOA broadcasters. – June 13
- VOA Public Relations arranged a tour for two staffers from the White House and Office of Management and Budget who are former colleagues of Michael Messinger. – June 14
- VOA Public Relations arranged a series of tours for VOA interns. – June 18
- U.S. foreign service officers who will be posted to Haiti met with VOA Creole Service Chief Ronald Cesar and other service broadcasters. – June 19
- Michael Collins met with journalists taking part in a program sponsored by the World Learning Center. June 20
- VOA broadcaster Frances Alonzo met with participants from the National Student Leadership Council. – June 22
- VOA broadcaster Frances Alonzo met with students from the B.E.E. Academy. – June 28
- Iraqi journalists taking part in a State Department International Visitor Leadership Program met with VOA Kurdish Service Chief Fakhria Jawhary. – July 9
- Students from Higher Achievement met with VOA broadcaster David Byrd – July 6
July 9 – VOA broadcasters Doug Bernard Johnson and Pia Salmre met with students from the Close Up Foundation. – July 10
- Michael Collins met with students participants in the Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellowship Program. Students also met with representatives of VOA language services. – July 11
- A group from the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission visited VOA. – July 11

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- Burma Agrees to Air VOA Programs – June 5

- More Iranians Getting News from VOA – *June 12*
- VOA Poll Shows Somalis Want Vote on Constitution – *June 20*
- VOA Connects to Audience in Pakistan – *June 27*
- VOA's Let's Play Elections – *July 3*
- VOA TV to Iran Streaming on Livestation – *July 3*

VOA IN THE NEWS

- David Ensor of VOA lays wreaths at memorial of victims of Khmer Rouge regime; David Ensor, Director of Voice of America (VOA), on Thursday laid wreaths for the first time at a memorial ceremony celebrated for hundreds of victims...<http://www.thecambodiaherald.com/cambodia/detail/1?page=15&token=NTgyYWQ0YzNIMTIINzljOGNhYzM1ZjNmMDlkNDE0>
- UPDATE: American Journalist Peter Heinlein Released From Custody in Ethiopia; VOA Reporter Peter Heinlein Arrested in Ethiopia; Tadias Magazine; VOA's Peter Heinlein has been detained in Ethiopia while covering Muslim demonstrations following Friday prayers in Addis Ababa. (Photo: Heinlein pictured in Mogadishu, Somalia last year. By G. Joselow) A Voice of America reporter has been detained in ...<http://www.tadias.com/05/25/2012/voa-reporter-peter-heinlein-detained-in-ethiopia/>
- VOA, Burma Sign English-Language Programming Deal; NJ Tamil Radio; VOA director David Ensor has signed a deal with Burma under which Burmese state radio plans to start broadcasting short, VOA-produced English-language ...<http://www.njtamil.com/2012/06/06/voa-burma-sign-english-language-programming-deal/>

DATE: July 10, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

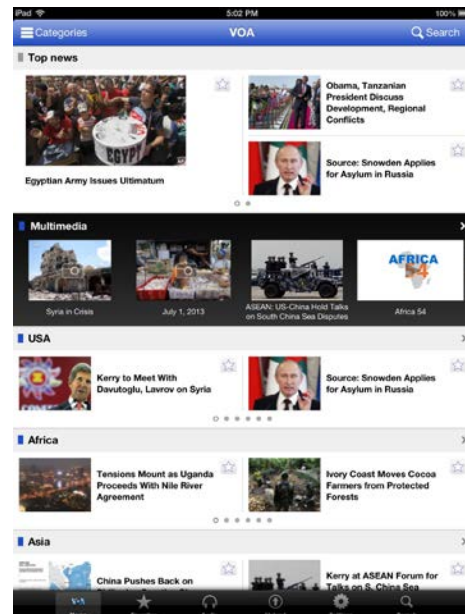
SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for June 2013

JUNE HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

Capitol Hill Innovation Showcase: On June 13, all the BBG entities (VOA, OCB, RFA, RFE/RL, and MBN) along with the Office of Digital and Design Innovation (ODDI) and the Internet Anti-Censorship Team participated in an innovation showcase for Capitol Hill lawmakers, staffers, and reporters. The Office of Communications and External Affairs worked for three months to arrange the event. IBB Director Dick Lobo gave welcoming remarks to a packed house of key stakeholders, including congressional staff working for members of our oversight committees, members of the public diplomacy community, technology experts in the public and private sectors, and media. Several publications wrote positive articles based on this event and the digital media that it showcased, including *NextGov*, *The Miami Herald*, *Radio World* and the Associated Press.

New Mobile Application: The Office of Digital and Design Innovation is happy to announce that we are launching mobile applications in over 44 languages in iOS (Apple) and 35 languages for Android. These new apps for VOA and MBN join an already released app for OCB. In August, we should release an additional nine languages for VOA on Android, as well as all of the RFA languages in a new app for their services. Working with TSI, we have also included technology that enables users to surf safely via a new “mobile Psiphon” technology.

ODDI is already working on improvements for August and a major new release with significant upgrades for the ability of users to upload user generated content (i.e. photos, video, audio) via the app. We will also undertake a major upgrade of the look and feel of the application later this year.



Anti-Jamming Efforts: New sanctions went into effect July 1 against Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), in part because of jamming of international satellite programs – including Voice of America and Radio Farda. As a result, Intelsat – one of the major satellite operators – dropped IRIB and Press TV programming. IBB kept in close touch with the U.S. Department of State, Eutelsat and other international broadcasters to monitor and report as the date approached.

At time of writing, compliance with the new sanction appears fairly widespread – provoking bitter protests from IRIB. Just prior to the recent June 14 elections in Iran, there were reports of extensive local jamming of satellite signals within Iran but no evidence of satellite uplink jamming by Iran.

Additionally, IBB worked to tackle signal interference with RFE/RL's Azerbaijani-language TV programs during much of June and early July. Coordinating with the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Embassy in Baku, RFE/RL and satellite brokers, IBB documented the interference and sent letters of concern to companies that contract for satellite time with Turksat, and the Government of Azerbaijan.

OFFICE OF THE IBB DIRECTOR

2013 RIAS Award Winners: On June 24, IBB Director Dick Lobo joined U.S. Ambassador Philip Murphy in Berlin, Germany, to participate in a RIAS commission meeting and to congratulate the 2013 RIAS Award winners. The awards recognize journalists from Germany and the United States for producing television and radio stories that explore the similarities and differences between the two countries. The top television prize examined the increasing divide between the rich and poor on Park Avenue in New York City, with outstanding camera work and insightful interviews. The winning radio piece explored how the town of Greensburg, Kansas turned to alternative energy sources after a tornado hit the city, contradicting a common German prejudice that the United States does not prioritize developing alternative energy sources.

Contractor Phone Directory: Staff in the IBB Director's Office worked with TSI on the recently launched Agency Directory on our intranet portal. For the first time ever, this application integrates full time employee information and contractor information into one view and provides a complete directory for agency staff. Since the launch, TSI has received lots of positive feedback about the new directory and some suggestions for further improvements.

Welcoming New Employees: The IBB Director and IBB Deputy Director personally welcomed nine new employees to the agency in June. As part of the employee orientation, new hires spend a few minutes with the Director, who welcomes them to the agency, discusses the importance of our mission, and thanks them for their commitment. At the end of the welcome discussion, the appropriate director – IBB, VOA, or OCB – swears in each employee.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: We have been waiting for the reorganization of the South Korean government after the election of a new President in order to assess the status of our proposed medium wave transmitter construction project with the Far East Broadcasting Corporation (FEBC). The new Ministry of Future, Creation, and Science and new personnel at the Korean Communications Commission (KCC) are now in place. Our broadcast partner in Seoul held meetings with the U.S. Embassy and the Korean administrators to determine how this project should progress. The KCC has requested that the application now be resubmitted, and then it will be turned over to the new ministry for technical review. We are in the process of modifying the technical sections of the application for submission.

Transmitting Stations:

- In support of efforts to re-use valuable surplus equipment at other locations in the BBG global network, the Kuwait Transmitting Station shipped out two ocean containers of equipment during the past months. One contained the structural steel bracing and rigging equipment necessary to support medium wave tower repairs at the BBG subsidiary station on Cyprus. The other container was full of tower hardware and miscellaneous components that were formerly in use at the closed Holtzkirchen, Germany, medium wave station. This container was outbound to Djibouti as part of the equipment being provided to Radio/Television Djibouti (RTD) in support of the pending renewal of the RTD/BBG operating agreement. The Djibouti site is under the management of the Germany Transmitting Station.
- In May, the U.S. Ambassador presented a Group Eagle Award for the 75 employees at the Philippines Transmitting Station. The award recognized their superior and innovative work in the field of information technology, cost savings, and outreach efforts while making programming accessible to millions.

Information Technology (IT):

- The current DaletPlus video system ran at 100% percent availability for the month of June.
- All BBG (headquarters), IBB, OCB, and VOA users have now been migrated to a cloud based Microsoft Exchange email system.
- The new authentication system by Entrust provides multiple methods of authentication, enhanced security, and flexible administration features, as well as remote password management. Infrastructure designed to allow for two-factor authentication on agency servers will be deployed during the July maintenance window. This will greatly increase security as any direct server access will now require both a valid Entrust token and a valid username and password.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION (ODDI)

Syria Stories Released: ODDI worked closely with MBN on the launch of a major new site telling the story of six Syrians who are either caught behind-the-lines or not able to return to Syria. The site is unlike anything currently telling the story of Syria and has had an incredible resonance with the audience online and on Facebook. One of the factors that most augments the compelling stories is the incredible art direction of the site: ODDI's Brian Williamson is the lead designer and art director on the project and details his approach in a compelling blog post and video. Blog post: <http://www.innovation-series.com/2013/06/26/illustrating-stories-from-syria/> And video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUCB15Aor0>

Hack Days! Hacking at the White House and at ODDI:

*Def: A **hackathon** (also known as a hack day, hackfest or codefest) is an event in which computer programmers and others involved in software development, including graphic designers, interface designers and project managers, collaborate intensively on software projects*

ODDI recently participated in two hackathons, the first at the White House as a part of their *We the People* hack day and the second sponsored by ODDI on a new mobile IVR (interactive voice response system).

The White House Hack Day was organized by their Office of Digital Strategy and featured approximately 25 participants to improve the *We the People* petition system. Lisa Backer, a contractor with our vendor Fig Leaf, was sponsored by ODDI to participate, and she worked on connecting *We the People* petitions to relevant *New York Times* articles for context.



The second hack day was organized by Doug Zabransky, ODDI's Director of Technology Services. Doug, along with Al Neustader and Jason McClure are leading the development of a new Interactive Voice Response, or IVR, system that will enable U.S. international media to easily and quickly deploy two-way news distribution via a simple local phone call. Doug is leading his team to improve IVR software created by Microsoft Research and move it into the cloud, allowing us to easily deploy and manage IVR solutions around the globe.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT (OSD)

Mauritania Media Cooperation: The State Department's Counterterrorism Bureau has indicated it is interested in funding more transmission in Mauritania. This potential funding will help BBG to fulfill its obligations under the newly-signed media cooperation agreement between BBG and the Mauritanian government, which allows us to build two FM transmitters in the capital, Nouakchott, in return for media training and other support.

New Agreement with Lao National Radio: OSD-Bangkok has signed an affiliation agreement with Lao National Radio (LNR) for placement of VOA Lao English teaching lessons. Laos has historically been a very difficult market for BBG broadcasters to penetrate. This is the second time that VOA English lessons have been placed with LNR. OSD and VOA hope that this placement of "soft" content will open doors to the placement of additional material in the country in the coming months and years. Lao National Television, for example, was not willing to move forward on any potential placement or cooperation until the LNR deal was signed.

VOA Extends Partnership with Ukraine's Channel Five: Olha Chornomaz, IBB contractor in Ukraine received the signed agreement for VOA broadcasting and advertising with Channel Five in Ukraine. The signed agreement will help to continue this partnership for a potential of five option years. Channel Five has gained large audiences for VOA TV products for a number of years.

Three New Affiliates in Ecuador: In spite of a much-criticized Media Law that went into effect at the end of June, two multi-city TV networks and one regional signal have asked for affiliation agreements, hoping to benefit from the VOA Washington Bureau.

Additional Funding: OSD secured outside funding for several new initiatives this month.

- VOA and USAID collaborated with Dosh-TV to launch a new monthly health show in **Bangladesh** that was praised by the U.S. Ambassador. This project is quarterbacked by OSD. The launch of the show, and the Ambassador's comments on its importance, were widely covered in local print media. USAID is now providing \$200K in additional money for the project.
- The U.S. Department of State (DOS) indicates it will provide an additional \$1 million for the **Sudan in Focus** show in 2014.
- DOS (INL) indicates it will likely provide \$700K for RFE/RL anti-narcotics programming in **Afghanistan** and the Afghanistan/Pakistan border region. State also indicates it will provide \$200K to VOA for coverage of Afghan elections in 2014.
- DOS is planning to give OSD \$200K for training in **Egypt and Ethiopia** on Nile issues.

Russia Fellowship: OSD worked with VOA to organize a fellowship for Russian journalists. Six journalists from Buryatia, a Western region near the Mongolian border, spent two weeks working at VOA as part of a unique fellowship in cooperation with the Library of Congress' Open World Leadership Center. The journalists participated in editorial meetings, observed production of live and pre-recorded programs and worked side-by-side with VOA's Russian Service broadcasters as they covered events. The Open World Leadership Center Program, which organized the June 15-28, 2013 program, supports exchanges between the United States and Central and Eastern European countries. The fellowship was designed to foster cross-cultural engagement through the sharing and reflecting of different journalistic practices.

Journalist Training: OSD is planning training in Georgia, DRC, Burundi, Indonesia, Vietnam, and for affiliates in Burma, Mauritania, Ivory Coast, Tanzania and Russia.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: A hearing was held on June 26 on relatively short notice in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which had been considering crafting legislation to restructure the BBG. HFAC leadership set hearing date with two weeks to go; committee staff relied on this office to assist with facts for background papers for committee members. With current Board members' consent, this office also provided facts and materials to two of the witnesses – former Board Chairman Jim Glassman and former Board member Jeff Hirschberg. And we drafted and sent to HFAC leadership two letters from current members of the Board – one urging that if another hearing is to take place, current Governors should be invited to testify; the other noting that BBG Board priorities, including the creation of a CEO position and changing the quorum requirement, cannot be achieved without the help of Congress.

A follow-up meeting with HFAC staffers charged with writing the BBG legislation took place at their request in the first week of July. We reported the result of this meeting to the Board, underscoring again that Governors' guidance on the conclusions of the IBIA working group – which had presented three models to the Board for input – would be essential to the process of working with HFAC staff as the legislation takes shape. HFAC Chairman Ed Royce has told his staff that he wishes to have the legislation introduced and marked up before the end of July.

In addition to arranging courtesy calls with Senate Foreign Relations Committee members for BBG Board nominee Ryan Crocker, the Congressional Coordinator remained in contact with all three nominees to the Board, along with the White House confirmations office, to track progress toward a potential business meeting the SFRC at which nominees could be considered in July. SFRC Chairman Robert Menendez requested a meeting with the three nominees, which was scheduled for July 25.

We worked with the Office of the CFO (OCFO), in tandem with OMB, to answer more than a dozen questions submitted by Senate Appropriations Committee staff regarding the FY 2014 budget submission. The Committee aims to complete work on a foreign affairs spending bill in July.

We also worked with the CFO's office and OMB on a routine reprogramming notification for RFE/RL to make adjustments due to currency fluctuations, which went to the Hill on July 8, and on another reprogramming letter regarding several agency interests, still in the clearance process.

We worked with OCB and TSI to answer a letter from Reps. Butterfield and Jones regarding funding for the Edward R. Murrow Transmitting Station in the FY 2014 budget proposal.

Media: In close consultation with the leadership of RFE/RL, BBG Public Affairs coordinated and carried out messaging on the visits to Prague and Moscow of Governor Ashe.

Outreach to *Radio World's* editor in May resulted in a request for commentary on the agency's budget, which was published under Governor Meehan's byline in June.

Leading up to the June 26 HFAC hearing on the BBG, the office pushed out a series of important releases, including announcing a record-breaking global audience estimate, the Burke Award winners and the agreement for new FM broadcasts in Mauritania; and describing new tools for reaching the audience in Cuba. In addition, we freshened web content on each broadcaster along with highlighting the agency's mission and began development of an online feature to showcase Sahel initiatives.

In addition, multiple press releases were circulated under tight deadlines this month, including on condemning the media ban in Cambodia and welcoming the partial lifting of the ban, as well as describing the special programming on the Iranian elections of BBG broadcasters despite threats to our journalists and their families.

Outreach continues to raise awareness of the changes to the Smith-Mundt Act and what this means for the availability of BBG-supported content within the United States. An item on July 1 in *Broadcasting and Cable* was an early result. Discussions have been ongoing with reporters for *The Washington Post*, *the Huffington Post*, and *The Columbia Journalism Review*. Information on the new regulations and an FAQ page have been posted on the BBG.gov website.

Notebook, which provides a first-person look at U.S. international media, featured a post on Radio Sawa's Mohamed Moawad and his coverage of [the Egyptian Revolution](#) and [the events in Libya](#); interviews with RFE/RL staff Kim Conger and Aladin Telalagic showcasing Pangea's

value and importance; an item on Franak Viačorka, the first Vaclav Havel Journalism Fellow at RFE/RL, who continues to work with RFE/RL as the Belarus Service's New Media Manager; and a piece marking the anniversary of Radio Free Europe's first broadcast to Czechoslovakia.

The agency's Open Government Report has been finalized, formatted for easier reading and navigation, and uploaded to the BBG.gov website at: <http://www.bbg.gov/open/>.

Our growth continues on social media. On Facebook, we increased our Weekly Total Reach (the number of unique people who have seen our content) by 500% to 5,468. This was due to increased content (41 posts this month) and a high interest in the following posts:

- June 28 post (with link to the press release) on Cambodia's media ban
- Photos and link to recap of BBG's June 13 innovation showcase
- Photos of singer Scotty McCreery's July 3 visit

Facebook continues to be the top social network driver to our website (354 clicks through to BBG.gov in the past month, compared to 92 on Twitter).

On Twitter, we have increased the number and frequency of posts. We now have 1971 followers.

We also continue to improve upon the monthly newsletter. The July newsletter had a click through rate of 15.1%, an improvement on the June newsletter's click through rate of 8.9%. Open rates are steady at 20%.

Internal Communication: Active and multi-prong marketing of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey continued through the survey's conclusion in mid-June and helped reach the record participation rate of 70%. This marketing effort involved BBG PA and the graphics team, which came up with eye-catching posters and in-house announcements tracking progress week by week to encourage participation. IBB, VOA and OCB top leadership devised an incentive program outside of this effort.

Anastasia Kolobrodova represented the Public Affairs office and promoted the Launchpad internal communications tool in a morning session of "Chats With Nancy," a new effort by the IBB front office to raise awareness of progress in the BBG workplace engagement initiative.

Graphics: The Graphics Department supported agency marketing, advertising and promotion with the first beta test of e-mail marketing through the Office of Strategy and Development, which informed VOA's affiliates in Africa of President Obama's trip there. The office continued production work on the OSD Marketing Program Catalog, completed billboard campaign promoting new program times for VOA's Central Africa Service, developed marketing materials for a VOA Swahili pilot program, provided graphics support and materials for marketing trips to Mauritania and Ecuador, and continued production of the VOA Calendar with VOA PR staff.

The office also provided logos and creative branding ideas for the Workplace Engagement initiative and contributed graphics and materials for the successful effort to increase participation agency-wide in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey.

Graphic support was provided for English to Africa journalist training in South Sudan and a VOA Somali Service town hall in Somalia.

The team began a leadership transition as long-time Graphics Department head Tuleda Johnson retired; Jenny Lea Ramsey, who had stepped in to fulfill many of Tuleda's duties during a period of illness and other personal leave, has been promoted to lead the office on a provisional basis.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW (OPR)

RESEARCH & PROGRAM REVIEWS

Program Review of VOANews.com English, June 3, 2013: Performance Review analysts conducted a rigorous review of the Voice of America English News web site. The team found that the site meets the highest journalistic standards of accuracy and credibility fueled by content from the English and Central News Divisions, but that the mission as understood by the web team is too broad – in essence, trying to be “all things to all people” rather than carving a specific niche, especially considering the limited resources responsible for web content. OPR recommended VOA tighten the focus of the site emphasizing original VOA stories over spot news production, and give fresh consideration to reinventing the relationship between VOA Central News and English.

OIG-GAO ACTIVITIES

OIG Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, Report Number ISP-IB-13-07: IBB/OPR received OIG's compliance follow up review and analysis of BBG's compliance response on May 7, 2013, indicating that all seven recommendations remain open. The agency is working to ensure that OIG understands the impact that the loss of a Board quorum will have on the agency's ability to provide timely agency compliance responses on a number of the OIG recommendations, some of which advocate core structural and policy reforms. The BBG response to OIG's Compliance Follow-up is due to the OIG by July 12, 2013; if final implementation of actions is still pending at that time, a formal progress report describing interim actions is required by OIG. BBG is expected to act expeditiously in resolving recommendations.

OIG Audit of the Broadcasting Board of Governors Administration and Oversight of Acquisition Functions: The agency and OPR received the official OIG notification letter about the audit on June 26, 2013; the entrance conference had been held much earlier on June 6, 2013. The OIG Audit team has conducted a number of interviews with the Office of Contracts and OCFO, and has requested many documents including an all-inclusive listing of contracts from FY 2011 and FY 2012. OPR, with assistance and oversight from the IBB Director's office, has coordinated the interviews and document collection related to this audit.

OIG Inspection of VOA's Latin America Division: Relevant staff from VOA and IBB attended the OIG Exit Conference on the VOA Latin America Inspection on June 27, 2013; a separate briefing by the OIG had been conducted earlier with the IBB Office of Contracts. The

draft report contains several recommendations for VOA and IBB (i.e., Contracts), as well as a recommendation for the BBG in coordination with VOA and OCB on implementation of specific collaborative actions outlined in the BBG strategic plan. The BBG Response is due to the OIG on July 15, 2013.

OIG Responses: OPR coordinated and submitted the responses to several ongoing OIG inspections.

- OPR submitted the BBG Response indicating no comment on the **OIG Inspection of Embassy Juba, South Sudan, Report Number ISP-I-13-29A**, which contained no recommendations for the BBG. Our response was submitted to the OIG on June 24, 2013.
- OPR worked with the IBB and RFE/RL to coordinate the BBG response to the OIG draft report on the **OIG Inspection of Embassy Minsk, Belarus**, which contained a number of factual inaccuracies. OPR submitted the BBG response to the OIG on June 26, 2013, noting many requested changes, and attaching tracked changes to the draft report.
- RFE/RL provided OPR with additional information concerning the sole open recommendation from **OIG Inspection of RFE/RL Prague, Report Number ISP-IB-12-43**, regarding RFE/RL efforts to identify a lead information systems security officer. The BBG Compliance Follow-up response was submitted to the OIG on June 28, 2013.
- TSI promptly provided additional information to address the two remaining recommendations for **OIG Inspection of the IBB Botswana Transmitting Station, Report Number ISP-IB-11-52A**, and OPR submitted the BBG Compliance Follow-up response to the OIG on June 28, 2013, a week ahead of schedule.
- OPR coordinated the BBG response to the three versions of the draft report for **OIG Draft Report of Inspection of U.S. International Broadcasting to Russia**, including comments from VOA, RFE/RL, IBB and members of the Board. OPR submitted one coordinated response to the OIG on July 10, 2013.
- OPR coordinated the BBG compliance response for **OIG Inspection of the IBB Germany Transmitting Station, Report Number ISP-IB-13-20**, and submitted the BBG Compliance Follow-up response to the OIG on July 11, 2013. TSI provided updated information on the sole open recommendation in the hopes of closing it out.

GAO Engagement on Reliability of Data for USASpending.gov – Code 311601: An official notification letter from GAO was received on June 5, 2013. OPR conferred with GAO to confirm the agency's requirement to upload information and data on BBG grantees to the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) and the USASpending.gov website. OCFO has been tasked with action to ensure agency compliance to this requirement.

GAO Engagement on Budget Justification Review of President's FY 2014 Budget Request for International Affairs (function 150) – Code 320976: An official notification letter from GAO was received on June 5, 2013. OPR continues to coordinate with the GAO on their specific concerns, and met with OCFO/Budget to encourage a timely response to the questions raised by the GAO. Though the GAO does not anticipate writing any public report on the issues raised in this engagement, we understand that GAO's inquiry is related to work it is doing in support of the Committees on Appropriations of the Congress. A BBG response is due to the GAO as soon as possible.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

2012/2013 Mentoring Graduation: On June 5, 2013, Broadcasting Board of Governors celebrated the 2012/2013 Mentoring Program Graduation after another very successful year. The ceremony celebrated the successful partnerships that resulted from the program.

LGBT Pride Month: On June 5, 2013, the Broadcasting Board of Governors and its employees celebrated Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month. This year's theme was "Helping to Build a More Inclusive Society." Welcoming remarks came from IBB Director Dick Lobo and the keynote from David Catania, DC Councilmember at-Large. The event also featured a performance from the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC.



July 11, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for July

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

Setting the Record Straight

Director David Ensor sent letters to Representatives Ed Royce and Eliot Engel to correct inaccurate statements made about VOA Persian language programming at a recent hearing by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs regarding BBG and U.S. international broadcasting. During the course of the June 26th hearing, VOA's Persian Service coverage of Iran's recent presidential elections was characterized as inadequate. In his letters, Director Ensor gave the congressmen a complete rundown of VOA Persian's election programming, explaining it was responsible, quality coverage that made a significant impact, contrary to what the committee was told. On July 9, VOA Executive Editor Steve Redisch, VOA Persian Deputy Director Setareh Derakhshesh and VOA Congressional Liaison Stephen McGinley met with Representative Ted Deutch to brief him further on VOA Persian's coverage.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

Obama in Africa

VOA's human and technological resources were on full display throughout President Obama's trip to Africa from June 27 to July 2. In addition to its live coverage of the president's town hall meeting in Johannesburg, VOA was with Mr. Obama on every other stop he made in Africa. Coverage was led by Dan Robinson, VOA's chief White House correspondent, who travelled with the President. VOA correspondents in Dakar and Dar es Salam and Johannesburg provided in-depth news and analysis for VOA Africa Division programs, using Skype to do live reports. Africa services pre-empted regular programming to stay on the story of the President's visit and give their audiences an opportunity to express their feelings about it. This trip was also a triumph for affiliate relations. VOA correspondents were available for live shots and Q&A's

with many TV and radio affiliates. A VOA marketing executive in Africa summed up the reaction in an e-mail message: “Team VOA – as they say in South Africa, you all are stars! Thank you! Thank you! We did a great service for our affiliates and audience. . . The affiliates are very, very appreciative, and so are we in the field.”

Egypt in Crisis

VOA correspondent Sharon Behn rushed to Cairo from her regular post in Islamabad to provide an on-the-ground presence for the latest political turmoil in Egypt. Behn was barely off the plane when the military forced President Morsi from power on July 3; she filed her first radio report within three hours and began digging in for what appeared likely to be a lengthy assignment. With the invaluable assistance of VOA Persian cameraman Arash Arabasadi, who arrived in Cairo shortly after Behn, she has been filing daily TV and radio packages and other elements, including several Q&As each day in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese.



Sharon Behn with Cairo protesters

Secretary of State Goes One-on-One with VOA

While Dan Robinson was traveling with the President, VOA’s State Department correspondent was accompanying Secretary of State John Kerry on his trip to the Middle East and South Asia. During a stop in India, Kerry sat down for an interview with Stearns that covered a broad range of topics, including Iran, Syria and Edward Snowden. Kerry was particularly forceful on the subject of Snowden. He said the former NSA contractor has taken an oath to uphold secrecy laws and violated that trust. Kerry said, it “may well be that lives are lost in the United States because terrorists now have knowledge of something they need to avoid that they didn’t have knowledge of before he did this.”



Secretary of State John Kerry with Scott Stearns

Former Soviet Spy Talks about American Leaker

VOA Russian's coverage of the Snowden affair – on digital platforms and via live reports to Dozhd and RBC television affiliates – included an interview with Oleg Kalugin, longtime head of KGB operations in the United States and later a critic of the KGB. At the time of the interview, Snowden was in Moscow, and Kalugin said Russian authorities would never miss a chance to speak to a person like Snowden, even if he was just a low-level government contractor.

Iran's Election

VOA Persian ran more than 15 hours of live programming on June 14 and 15 – election day and the day after in Iran. Programming included two election specials that contained reports from polling stations, interviews with U.S. lawmakers, profiles of all the leading candidates, and analysis from reporters in Washington, London, and Toronto, as well as reports from RFE/RL.

When the results were announced, Persian was live and included photos and videos contributed by viewers from all over Iran. The live election broadcasts followed weeks of coverage that started May 20 with the announcement of the final list of candidates that the Supreme Leader would permit to run. *OnTen*, Persian's satirical weekly, did a special election program that featured a message from Bono, lead singer of U2 who has become a strong human rights advocate. In a four-minute video, he talked to Iranians about protest songs and aired parts of a performance of one of U2's most famous hits, *Sunday, Bloody Sunday*. *OnTen* was recently honored with a 2013 CINE Golden Eagle Award. CINE awards are selected twice a year by juries made up of members of the U.S. film and television industry.



OnTen graphic of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, produced for the 45th episode of show

“Washington Forum” Airing in Ivory Coast

Television viewers in Ivory Coast can now watch VOA's popular French to Africa program *Washington Forum* every Sunday morning on RTI TV 1. The half-hour show, broadcast live every week from the VOA TV studios in Washington, and simulcast on radio and the Internet, provides in-depth coverage of issues in Africa, the United States and the rest of the world. Audience members can take part in the program by phone or [Facebook](#) RTI, Ivory Coast's official state broadcaster, has a network of radio and television stations around the country that reach an estimated 13 million adults.



Washington Forum journalists (from the left) Nicolas Pinault, Roger Muntu, Jacques Aristide, Robert Daguiard and Morgane Guirriec

Urdu Radio Partners with New Affiliate for Weekly Show

The Urdu Service has launched a one-hour weekly show, co-produced live with its new affiliate, Sunrise FM 97. The *Atif and Tamseel Show* airs every Friday during Pakistan prime time from 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm. The first two broadcasts focused on women's rights in Pakistan and higher education opportunities for Pakistani students studying in the U.S.



VOA and RFE/RL Cooperation and Content-Sharing

Cooperation and cross-promotion between VOA and RFE/RL's Russian Services continues forward. On July 1, Radio Liberty used VOA Russian's video report on a gay parade in New York in its evening analytical show *Facets of Time*. The package, according to acting RL Russian Service chief Irina Lagunina, "looked great, it added (a) different angle to the discussion of the new Russian law banning 'gay propaganda.'" The two services continue to exchange content widgets on their websites, with VOA showing RL's original Russia-centric production, while RL takes VOA's *US News in 60 Seconds* and other Americana features like *Made in USA* and *Hollywood Boulevard*. Content-sharing and cross-promotion between RFE/RL and VOA's Ukrainian and Balkan services also continue on a broad spectrum of subjects. The two Ukrainian services continue to re-publish up to three articles from each other's websites daily; VOA staff regularly provide radio reports to RL Ukrainian and VOA used RL's London-based reporter for a TV debrief on the release of a Freedom House report, "Nations in Transition," in the British capital. VOA Bosnian showed 10 RFE/RL video features in its daily TV program *Studio Washington*. RFE/RL's content complemented VOA Bosnian's original coverage.

Turkey Erupts

Late in May, Turks reacted with outrage to the eviction of demonstrators protesting the planned demolition of Istanbul's Gezi Park. The eviction sparked anti-government protests that continued through June. VOA Central News, Turkish and Kurdish reporters provided on-scene reports from Istanbul and other cities. In addition, the Turkish Service, on its website, and in its reports to its affiliate, TGRT, carried U.S. statements on the protests, including those from the White

House, the National Security Council, and the State Department. Through interviews with Turkish officials in Washington, the service obtained the government's response to the protests. Perhaps the best tribute to the service's coverage is that TGRT, its affiliate, used all the service's broadcasts in their entirety.

VOA Mandarin Takes China Radio International to Journalism School

Albeit unintentionally, China's state-run media recently provided a very good argument for the existence of VOA's Mandarin Service. In the end of June, commenting on the Supreme Court decision to strike down a section of the Voting Rights Act, China Radio International (CRI) reported that "A federal state [Alabama] of the United States [had cancelled] African-American suffrage" and as a result "all African-Americans of [Alabama] would no longer possess proper voting qualifications." VOA Mandarin quickly responded on its website, explaining what the Supreme Court actually ruled – the court struck down a section of the Voting Rights Act that determines which states must get federal permission before they change their voting laws – and made clear that the ruling didn't deny voting right to African-Americans in Alabama or anywhere else in the United States. CRI's report, and VOA Mandarin's response, caught the attention of Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post*, which noted that the original CRI report is no longer viewable on the CRI website, but said that before it was removed, "it was picked up by several other news agencies until the Chinese edition of Voice of America addressed the mistake."

Horn Service Cools Hot Heads with Dam Reporting

The Horn of Africa Service swung into high gear when tempers flared between Egypt and Ethiopia over Ethiopia's announcement that it was diverting the Nile River to build a huge dam. Egypt depends on the Nile for nearly all its water. Horn coverage included interviews with experts and negotiators from both countries, independent experts and representatives of the Nile Basin Initiative. Listeners thanked the service for including a wide variety of viewpoints, helping them to understand the total picture, rather than just one side. As tempers cooled, the service prepared an eight-part series that put the controversy in perspective and included a look at new water-conservation technology that could help to meet the increasing need for water as populations in the Nile riparian countries grow.

Uzbek Service Explores East Coast Cities, Meets Fans

VOA's Uzbek TV program *Exploring America (Amerika Manzaralari)* got some positive feedback from an unlikely source, outgoing Uzbek Ambassador to the U.S. Ilhom Nematov. During his farewell ceremony at the Uzbek Embassy on June 13, Nematov praised VOA's coverage of Uzbek immigrant families living in the United States. "I have really enjoyed the recent programs from Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York." Nematov added that the episodes helped him better understand the lives of Uzbek immigrants in US cities. *Exploring America* is aimed at Uzbekistan and Uzbek-speaking people in the rest of Central Asia as well as Afghanistan. Host Navbahor Imamova and her crew discovered during their recent shoots in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York City that many Uzbek immigrants watch via the Internet. One of her most memorable moments on the road came in Brooklyn's Brighton Beach, a haven for Central Asian communities, at a concert featuring Uzbek pop star Yulduz Usmanova. The crowd of 1,500 mostly Uzbeks immediately recognized Imamova and the VOA cameras there covering the event. One by one, a seemingly endless flow of people stopped to thank Imamova

and her Uzbek colleagues for their work. “It’s easy to wonder if all our hard work is really making an impact, especially given how hard it can be to penetrate Uzbekistan,” Imamova says. “But moments like those inspire us and really prove to us that what we do matters to many people out there.”



Navbahor Imamova in Philadelphia

VOA Scores Exclusive Interviews at Aspen Ideas Festival

Three VOA Divisions – Eurasia, East Asia, and South Asia – teamed up the end of June to bring the Aspen Ideas festival, its aims and inspirations, to audiences the world over. VOA landed interviews with former U.S. diplomat Nicholas Burns, Aspen President and CEO and former BBG Director Walter Isaacson and major innovators in areas such as social media, renewable energy and personal genomics, including Reddit.com co-founder Alexis Ohanian, Council of Foreign Relations Fellow Michael Levi and the Mount Sinai School of Medicine’s Dr. Joseph Dudley, among others. Burns, currently a professor at Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, answered specific questions about U.S.-Russia relations, Ukraine and human rights, and the recent Kosovo-Serbia agreement. Isaacson talked about the future of the festival and the optimism it generates, while Director Ensor took part in a panel on “The 21st Century Diplomatic Toolbox: Soft Power, Economic Statecraft and Technology” with former secretary of state Madeleine Albright and former assistant secretary of defense Joseph Nye. Eurasia’s reporters filed a comprehensive TV package on the festival for the Division, which was also versioned and issued house-wide by Central News.

Other Notable Interviews

- In an interview with VOA’s Albanian Service ahead of Albania’s recent elections, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe Philip Reeker appealed to all parties to accept the results. The interview was picked up by all the major newspapers and media portals in Albania, and was also aired on the evening newscast of major TV stations in the country.
- Gary Sick, a Middle East analyst who served on the U.S. National Security Council under Presidents Ford, Carter, and Reagan, spoke with VOA Russian about Iran’s recent elections: “I am impressed that every time during the Iranian presidential elections, for the whole history of the Islamic Republic, the voters look at the sample of the candidates they are being offered, and pick the one who has the least connection with the regime. And they do it with enthusiasm.”
- *Border Crossings* host Larry London featured conversations with, and live performances by, American Idol winners Candice Glover and Scotty McCreery. Both artists were in town to perform at the Capitol 4th on the Mall. *Border Crossings* is carried on VOA’s satellite channels to Asia and Africa.
- VOA Serbian interviewed World Bank Chief Economist for South Eastern Europe, Zeljko Bogetic. Mr. Bogetic said that the six countries in southeast Europe are coming out of a

double-dip recession and are expected to grow by 1.7 percent collectively, but he said the projected growth rates are not strong enough to reduce unemployment.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

New Hausa Mobile Feature Spotlights Unrest in Northern Nigeria

Nigerians are increasingly turning to VOA's new mobile platform for breaking news about three troubled northern states where a state of emergency has been imposed in an effort to clamp down on the militant group Boko Haram. The new section on the Hausa-language mobile platform, called *The Troubles in Northern Nigeria*, includes reports from citizen journalists and local reporters in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, which have been under a state of emergency since May 14. The platform also invites mobile users to submit questions they would like to see discussed at upcoming VOA roundtable events in Nigeria. VOA Hausa also plans to launch 'virtual' town hall events, where citizens can join the conversation in real-time, directly from their mobile phones.

Immigration: The New Face of America

The English Web desk collaborated with several teams across VOA to create a special page on VOA's television series, *Immigration: The New Face of America* on VOANews.com. In addition to the special report, the page also offers a wealth of information on U.S. immigration policy through charts, photo galleries and an interactive quiz. The page will live on a space for a continuing conversation about immigration with readers, experts and VOA journalists. In the two weeks the page has been up, it's been viewed over 8,000 times.

Talk2US: Afghanistan

On June 28, VOA Learning English and the VOA's Afghanistan Service launched a joint Skype call-in show for Afghans to practice their English. *Talk2US: Afghanistan* is aired on the Afghan and Learning English websites, as well as on Learning English's YouTube channel. It is the first regularly scheduled regional edition of Learning English's *Talk2US* program and will serve as a model for other Learning English-language service collaboration. *Talk2US: Afghanistan* follows the TV Ashna broadcast and is cross-promoted on the air and Facebook.

Urdu Launches Facebook Chat, Learning English Segment

The Urdu Service web team has launched a weekly live Facebook chat between Urdu reporters in Washington and Karachi and Pakistani youth on a wide range of topics. The service has also debuted *English in a Minute*, a video series that teaches viewers how easy it is to learn English. In addition, the largest Urdu daily, *Jang*, published four Urdu Service web articles with attribution to the Urdu Service. The *Daily Express*, one of Pakistan's most widely circulated newspapers, also published an Urdu Service web report with attribution.



E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

INSIDEVOA.COM

- *Steve Ember Named Finalist in NYF International Radio Awards* – July 1
- *VOA Condemns Cambodian Ban on Foreign Broadcasters* – June 28
- *VOA's "Washington Forum" Airing on RTI in Ivory Coast* – June 27
- *John Kerry Tells VOA: Snowden Betrayed Country* – June 24
- *Voice of America Hosting Global Immigration Debate* – June 24
- *Tony Award Winner Alfie Boe Visits Border Crossings* – June 17
- *Uzbek Service Explores East Coast Cities, Meets Fans* – June 16
- *"On Ten" Exclusive: Bono Offers Message of Solidarity to People of Iran* – June 14
- *Bill Workerger Receives Dateline Award* – June 14
- *VOA Jazz Show Builds on Musical Legacy* – June 13
- *VOA Reporters Rake in AP Awards* – June 13
- *New Hausa Mobile Feature Shedding Light on Unrest* – June 12
- *'My Story' Radio Show Delivers Dose of Optimism* – June 12
- *'Call Me Maybe' Star Carly Rae Jepsen Talks to Larry London* – June 12
- *VOA Covers Iran Election with TV Special* – June 6

VOA STUDIO TOUR

- Employees from U.S. Customs and Border Protection took VOA tour. – July 2
- Tour for former chief of Central Africa Service and friend. – July 1
- Tour for VOA interns. – June 26
- University of Maryland students met with representative of Persian Service. – June 21
- South Carolina social studies teachers met with representative from VOA newsroom. – June 20

DATE: July 11, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: Interim Management Team

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for June 2014

Global Strategy:

- On June 1, Sonja Gloeckle assumed the position of IBB Director of Research, a new office being established that integrates the digital metrics team, formerly of ODDI, with the research staff. On July 1, IBB Research launched “Research Insights into Strategic Goals and Targets,” a series of briefings to familiarize language services with the media use and content interests of target audiences they set in the recent Strategy Review.

Global Operations:

- On June 12, the agency published the final Request for Proposals for firms to provide staffing and management services for VOA’s contractors. The solicitation period closes on July 14.
- As part of the implementation of the FY 2014 Operating Plan, TSI enacted radio transmission reductions effective June 30 that will ultimately save the agency about \$1.6 million annually.
- Unrest in Iraq has forced the discontinuance of transmissions from BBG FM and TV sites in Mosul and Tikrit. Our contractor is searching for safer sites to relocate equipment in order to resume broadcasts in these cities.
- The new BBG FM transmitter in Nouakchott, Mauritania, was inaugurated on June 25. On June 24, a new program stream was launched at the BBG FM in Juba, South Sudan, and an operating agreement for an FM station in Dakar, Senegal, was signed. The BBG FM in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, is back on the air as of June 16 after installation of a new antenna tower and system.
- The U.S. embassy sent a Diplomatic Note to the Kuwait Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially confirming renewal of the BBG Kuwait Transmitting Station’s twenty-year operating agreement for the period October 17, 2013, through October 16, 2033.
- BBG arranged the transmission of two half-hour special programs as part of the International Radio for Disaster Relief (IRDR) trial in Jakarta, Indonesia, hosted by the Asia-Pacific Broadcast Union (ABU) on June 4-5.
- Cybersecurity Incident: U.S.-CERT (United States Emergency Computer Readiness Team) reported that it had observed suspicious communication between an agency workstation and an Internet site potentially associated with a foreign actor. The information security team, using its monitoring and analysis tools, confirmed the communication and is conducting forensic analysis to determine if any malware or harmful software was downloaded to this computer. We also continue to monitor the workstation for suspicious communication or behavior.
- The IBB Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) team trained OCB staff on the use of the reporting and statistics platform for the satellite terminals that OCB has distributed to users in Cuba so that OCB staff can directly monitor usage of these devices.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim CEO & Director, André Mendes
DATE: July 24, 2015
SUBJECT: IBB Monthly Report for June 2015

Five-Tier Performance Management System

The Office of Human Resources (OHR) introduced the 5-Tier Performance Management System that will be automated in November of this calendar year. Briefing sessions have been held for employees to be educated about the new system.

Performance Awards Program

The Office of Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) and OHR initiated the FY 2015 Performance Awards Program in the amount of \$1M.

New Learning Management System

The Office of Workforce Support and Development finalized the purchase of a new Learning Management System.

FY 2017 Budget Preparation

OCFO coordinated the process to formulate the FY 2017 budget submission for Board consideration in August.

Technology Services and Innovation (TSI)

TSI continues the work to upgrade the Agency to the Einstein 3 Internet Monitoring System deployed by the National Security Agency. Currently, the BBG is one of the few agencies running the Einstein 2 System.

Migrating VOA EAP Division to New Contractor Module

VOA has completed the migration of its East Asia and Pacific (EAP) Division to the new contractor module. Approximately 40% of the contractors have been migrated. The implementation is ahead of schedule but will face some challenges advancing in FY 2016 if there is a prolonged Continuing Resolution period.



July 17, 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: Kelu Chao, VOA Acting Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for July

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- BBG Governor Matthew Armstrong met with Burmese President Thein Sein in Naypyidaw June 24 to discuss VOA and public diplomacy. President Sein told Governor Armstrong that he has been a VOA listener since he was a student and thanked him for BBG efforts to train Burmese journalists. They discussed the role of the media in Myanmar's transition, and Governor Armstrong thanked the President for allowing VOA to establish one of the first foreign news bureaus. U.S. Ambassador Derek Mitchell, Burmese Foreign Minister Wunna Maung Lwin, and VOA EAP Director Bill Baum joined those talks. Baum and Armstrong also visited the country's second-largest station, Myawaddy TV, where Director Major Thuta said the military-run station welcomes more VOA news and learning English programs.
- VOA Kirundi reporter Diane Nininahazwe survived a grenade attack on her home in Bujumbura after reporting on a series of unexplained nighttime abductions north of the capital. Nininahazwe fled to Rwanda as did VOA Kirundi reporter Desire Hatungimana who received a series of death threats following a pro-government website naming him among a group of journalists allegedly organizing protests against President Pierre Nkurunziza running for a third term. "The authorities must ensure the safety of journalists especially during the current political turmoil in Burundi," says Committee to Protect Journalists Africa Coordinator Sue Valentine. "The state must investigate all threats against the press and bring the perpetrators to justice."
- VOA Mandarin service saw a serious backlash against its contributors and guests. Well-known Beijing human rights lawyer Wang Yu disappeared two days after she participated in VOA Mandarin's *Issues & Opinions* show to discuss rule of law. The authorities later revealed that she was detained as part of a wider round up of human rights lawyers suspected of being part of a "criminal gang." Lawyer Zhou Shifeng appeared on VOA's *Weishi* to talk about Wang Yu's disappearance. The next day he was detained as well. Attorney Zhang Lei participated in a Q&A on *Weishi* about the round up, and he too was summoned to the local police station for a "talk." Attorney

Chen Jiangang was scheduled to appear on *Weishi* July 13, but when the producer called him for the show, he said he was in a police station being questioned.

- The BBG Office of Strategy and Development in collaboration with VOA's Africa Division conducted an eight-day workshop on entrepreneurial journalism in partnership with Bayero University in Kano, Nigeria. The workshop focused on multimedia storytelling, video, social media, and digital publishing. Using 10 iPhones and two Mac computers, the participants learned how to record, edit, and share audio and video on multimedia platforms. They were also exposed to core business development concepts, financing, sales and marketing strategies. Six of the participants developed a business model for a media communications and advertising company and raised more than \$5,000 to launch Waves Advertising Limited.
- VOA English announced the names of 10 English students from Central and East European countries who will come to Washington in September for a two-week VOA fellowship. The announcement by live video conference was made during the graduation ceremony for "English for Journalists," a ten-week course developed by the U.S. State Department and VOA English. Journalists and journalism students in Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine enhanced their journalism and English language skills through this innovative course that blends internet learning and classroom teaching with online discussions with VOA journalists. The top students from each country that participated in the pilot course will come to VOA in the fall.
- VOA's English Division launched new business segments for its *Africa 54* and *International Edition* programs and its affiliate *Channels TV* in Nigeria. Anchored by former CBS News and Bloomberg Correspondent Alexis Christoforou, these fast-paced radio and TV reports examine the day's leading economic stories, with a focus on African business news. According to the head of *Channels TV*'s business team, "We appreciate the report you sent to us and would like this relationship to continue."
- In collaboration with the Newseum, VOA hosted a forum June 18 to examine the role of cameras in the relationship between police and citizens. "In the Public Eye, Police, Cameras & Constitution" included active and former law enforcement officers, academics and free speech advocates. The [Washington Examiner](#) referenced the event in an article discussing police use of body cameras. Chicago's PBS television station, WYCC, streamed the event live on its website.

DATE: May 30, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for April and May, 2012

APRIL AND MAY HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

Pitch Fest: The BBG Pitch Fest (www.bit.ly/bbgpitchfest) closed with a total of 83 entries from both employees and contractors representing all entities. Outreach and publication efforts from the Office of Communications and External Affairs contributed to a significant increase in entries. At the time of this Board report, judges are due to sit down to review the internal pitches and come up with 15 “semi-finalists”, which will be then provided to entity heads for their review and potential development of pilots. Because of government rules, prizes for the entrants and semi-finalists are limited, though Director Lobo has asked us to think creatively about how we can recognize the amazing work of all who have entered.

Language Service Review: Language Service Review, the annual process by which BBG attempts to determine deletions and additions of language services, took place from May 3-16. Each broadcaster submitted documents outlining their strategies and plans for every language service in the coming years, and broadcast management and relevant IBB staff met to discuss service performance and any possible enhancements to add to the FY 2014 budget.

Buyout Opportunity: On March 21, 2012, the agency announced an opportunity for employees to apply for a Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment, or Buyout by April 27. The end date was later extended to May 4. Under this program, employees who resign or retire by June 30, 2012, may receive up to \$25,000.00 as a separation incentive. In response to this opportunity, the agency received 41 applications, six of which subsequently were withdrawn. The agency is processing 35 applications from all areas of the agency, including 24 from the Voice of America, three from the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, and eight from IBB. Buyouts are a vital tool in assisting the agency in reducing the impact of a potential Reduction in Force in conjunction with implementation of the FY 2013 budget.

OFFICE OF THE IBB DIRECTOR

Federal Employee Viewpoints Survey: We just concluded the administration of the annual OPM Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. The final estimated participation rate for all of BBG (federal entities) was 48%, down from 67% last year. Full results are not expected until late fall, e.g. October. The final participation rate will likely be slightly higher once partial responses and bouncebacks are removed.

Contracting: After several months of information gathering, via surveys, brownbags, and numerous meetings, the Contractor Working Group is finalizing an action plan to address the most pressing contractor concerns. The group is coordinated by the IBB Director's Office and comprised of representatives from the Office of the CFO, Office of Contracts, VOA Director's Office, and Office of the General Counsel. Once finalized, the various offices will begin reporting monthly on their progress.

Morale: In concert with the VOA Director's office, the IBB Director is developing an action plan to address employee morale issues consistently identified in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. This action plan incorporates recommendations and feedback from representatives of all three unions and the Workplace Morale group, a collaborative group of union and management officials. The IBB and VOA Directors, as well as their staffs, met recently with the Workplace Morale Group and discussed the issues contributing to low morale at BBG and the group's recommendations for making improvements.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

Jamming of BBG Satellite Transmissions to Iran: VOA PNN returned to the Eutelsat Hot Bird (HB) on February 29, 2012, in a third party provider's system. BBC Persian returned to the HB on or about February 27. Both remain clear of uplink jamming since their return. VOA PNN was returned to the BBG/IBB Eutelsat HB transmission system on May 15. The third party leased Eutelsat HB transmission will be discontinued on May 31.

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: A system design report for the project has been completed. TSI engineer Gerhard Straub traveled to Seoul with Gary Thatcher in April to continue negotiations for this sensitive project. Negotiations continue and additional options are being investigated in an attempt to speed up the implementation of this project. TSI is keeping both VOA and RFA apprised.

New Satellite Picture with Audio Services for Radio Farda: TSI is working to establish new Radio Farda Picture with Audio satellite service contracts for the following satellites: Turksat 3A, Eutelsat 7A (formerly Eutelsat W3A), Arabsat, and Telstar 12.

RFA Video Service to Burma: TSI has established an RFA video capability on the Asiasat-3 satellite. RFA has also established a temporary satellite delivery capability on Apstar-2R until the permanent video link between RFA headquarters and the Cohen Building can be established for the Asiasat-3 service. During the interim period, video files are being transported to the Cohen Building via File Transfer Protocol (FTP). The long term effort involves the establishment of a 24/7 MPLS connection from RFA into the cloud allowing an effective and economical connection to Cohen and future gateways through the MPLS network.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

- The new BBG FM station in **Tripoli, Libya** became operational on April 16, 2012, on 106.6 MHz.
- The BBG FM station in **Ghazni, Afghanistan**, began test broadcasts on May 9, 2012 and continues with regular broadcasts.

IBB Transmitting Stations: A ceremony to rededicate the IBB shortwave station in Greenville, North Carolina, in honor of Edward R. Murrow, famed journalist and former USIA Director, was held on May 2, 2012. The Master of Ceremonies was TSI Director André Mendes, and guest speakers included U.S. Congressman Walter B. Jones, BBG Governor Victor Ashe, IBB Director Richard Lobo, and Casey Murrow, son of Edward R. Murrow. Perfect weather and good upfront planning by IBB and station staff made the two-hour event highly successful.

Pangaea Content Management System: Pangaea is BBG's enterprise website content management system (CMS). It is being hosted in a facility operated by RFE/RL in Prague. Representatives from RFE/RL have been onsite at the BBG to conduct training and assist in the migrations. As of May 16, the following sites have been migrated to the Pangaea CMS: OCB, MBN, VOA-Spanish, VOA-Indonesia, VOA-Creole, VOA-Inside VOA, VOA-English, VOA-Learning English, VOA-Russian and VOA-PNN.

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities

- An IAC task order for web proxy and client-based proxy services was awarded to Ultrareach for \$1,974,000. The new contract began on April 23, 2012.
- The IAC Team held working meetings to finalize requirements for the development of a bundle of mobile apps to be developed on the Android and iOS platforms.
- The IAC Team received a demo of and access to a web monitoring tool that provides real-time results of URL blockage in countries that filter the Internet.
- The IAC and Freedom to Connect (F2C) teams met in late May for their second knowledge sharing discussion. The teams are growing synergy and collaboration around their collective anti-censorship programs.
- Initial results of the BBG mobile information security study are expected to be reported by Freedom House. Bi-weekly conference calls with the researchers are ongoing. The IAC Team plans to share the study's findings with mobile app developers and other stakeholders in the information security arena.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION

Online Video/Audio Platform: ODDI, in close cooperation with all of the entities and TSI put out a Request for Proposals for a single, consolidated online video/audio platform (OVAP) for the distribution of U.S. international media's rich media content to our websites, mobile devices, as well as out onto YouTube, iTunes, Facebook, and beyond. The ability to leverage all of our usage under one consolidated platform enables us to not only leverage best-in-class platforms, but at a price point that is estimated to save the BBG approximately \$1.7 million over the next five years.

"Olympic" Sprints: ODDI is exploring innovative tools and services to help with news gathering and publishing, particularly during the upcoming Olympics.

- *Simple Video Annotation* – currently video is "locked" inside the media players used to watch or listen to video. However, the new technology standard of HTML5 affords users a more complex, intuitive interaction with web video. Using HTML5 we are experimenting with ways for a reporter to easily "annotate" a video. For example, when a video about Pakistan is played on our website, a corresponding map from Google Earth could automatically

display next to the video. Or, when a video with an interview about the employment rate is played, the website automatically brings up a corresponding chart. This tool will allow reporters to make web-based video more powerful and informative.

- **Mobile, Location-Aware Content** – utilizing the Olympics as an editorial framework, we are developing an Android app that will enable visitors to experience US international media coverage specific to their physical location. As an example, if a VOA audience member with the app is in front of the Olympic Velodrome, our stories – text, video, audio – about the U.S. bicycle team content would appear on the mobile device and accessible at that location.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Research: OSD has launched work on 15 research surveys with Gallup, including recent ones for Indonesia and Egypt. More than 20 additional research projects are currently in the contracting pipeline. Data is back from Iran and the Tibetan travelers study; results from both surveys look positive and will be released in a few weeks.

USAID Partnership and Affiliates in Bangladesh: OSD's Brian Armstead spent April 20-May 9 in Dhaka negotiating an Inter-Agency Agreement with USAID for \$430,000 for 18 months. The money will fund training on health, along with a Dhaka Reporting Center. While Brian was in Bangladesh, VOA affiliates Desh TV and Radio Today, working with the VOA Bangla Service, USAID, the U.S. embassy, and OSD coordinated coverage of a USAID conference and brought information about maternal health issues to a wide audience in Bangladesh. Brian provided a training workshop for journalists on what to report from the conference.



US Ambassador to Bangladesh, Dan Mozena, being interviewed by VOA Bangla affiliates Desh TV (left) and Radio Today (right), at the USAID conference on maternal health in Dhaka in early May.

English-Language Programming for Pakistan: OSD is following up on an inquiry from PTV, the government-controlled television network. The station has inquired about working with VOA on co-producing a discussion program on its new English-language channel. The proposed program could run two days each week. The station is also working on similar arrangements with Al Jazeera and NDTV of India.

South Sudan Affiliations: VOA's "South Sudan in Focus" program will air on ARUA ONE FM, a station that broadcasts into South Sudan, DRC and Uganda from the Northwestern border

town of Arua in Uganda. The station estimates its audience at 1.5 million across the three countries.

New Funding for Special Projects: Acting on a proposal from OSD, the State Department has committed in principle \$300,000 for BBG to cover water issues and conduct town halls and training on water. State has also committed in principle \$100,000 for BBG to conduct trainings for journalists on Avian Influenza in Asia. OSD is also working with Exxon, J&J, Merck, PHRMA, USAID's Global Health Initiative and the State Department in an effort to find funding for the Africa Health Network.

Training of Journalists: OSD's Gustavo Win is in Tanzania for a journalists' training and town hall on health in conjunction with DW and RFI May 17-18. Joan Mower and Inna Dubinsky, also of OSD, conducted a journalists' training in Moscow April 10-13 on immigration issues. Several VOA colleagues participated in the sessions in Moscow.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: Former BBG Governor Wimbush met in mid-April with Rep. Dana Rohrabacher after he requested the Agency take action to ensure the security integrity of the VOA workforce and to monitor broadcasts for any messaging that might run counter to U.S. interests. Governor Wimbush acknowledged the Congressman's concerns and pointed to ways in which the agency is addressing these issues, which struck a positive note. The meeting also provided occasion to discuss the Board's long-term goals for agency reform, starting with grantee consolidation, which Rep. Rohrabacher strongly supported. Turning to broadcasting to China, Governor Wimbush invited Terry Balazs to give TSI's demonstration of interference with short-wave and local radio stations' signals, contrasted with the crisp audio signal of satellite TV. The Congressman was clearly impressed with this demo and asked a senior staff member to follow up.

Congressional Affairs and the General Counsel's Office teamed up to intensify their work with the office of Rep. Mac Thornberry on his provision to ease the legal restrictions on domestic dissemination of materials produced with public diplomacy funding – collectively, commonly known as Smith-Mundt. This project had been in the works, and coordinated with the State Department, for nearly two years. The pace picked up in April as Mr. Thornberry began finalizing the bill. It was attached to legislation that passed the House in May.

Media: Positive coverage of the BBG and the work of its journalists during April included an hour-long *Federal News Radio* program on the agency featuring Bruce Sherman on strategy and Jeff Trimble on upcoming reforms, a feature in *Radio World* about RFA's innovative approach to video production using a multi-disciplined staff, and a *New York Times* story about Afghan women who risk death to write poetry; they were inspired by a program on Radio Azadi.

Board and staff members, together with David Ensor and Carlos Garcia-Perez, spent a very productive hour with the editorial board of the *Miami Herald* and a top editor for *El Nuevo Herald*. These seasoned journalists, who were evidently savvy about OCB's work and where it fits into U.S. relations with Cuba, asked knowledgeable questions about plans for the Martí's future and seemed impressed with the agency's overall plans for reform. The meeting was capped with their standing offer for the BBG to submit an op-ed on these topics at any time.

BBG Public Affairs (PA) staff worked with technical experts in other offices of the agency to develop a prototype for mobile delivery of our materials, from web pages to streaming video. PA staff also stepped up social media outreach, enlivening the agency Twitter feed and creating additional links between the Strategy blog and other platforms.

With respect to internal communications, a PA staffer was assigned full-time to keeping Tune-In, the in-house blog, fresh and up to date. Reaction to the new, improved Tune-In has been good.

Other Outreach: This office once again produced the agency's annual report, which tells compelling stories of individual journalists and their dedicated work in the field, along with providing basic information on VOA, OCB and the grantees and top-line audience research results. As in past years, this effort was spearheaded by Tish King of BBG Public Affairs, supported with verve by the graphics department – in particular, Jennifer Lea Ramsey. Copies of the report were hand-delivered to the Speaker of the House, the Vice President as the leader of the Senate, the congressional committees that oversee U.S. international media and stakeholders in academia, media and NGOs. Governors each received copies for distribution as they saw fit; we facilitated the delivery of 30 copies on Governor Ashe's behalf. A link to the on-line version of the report was also provided to public diplomacy bloggers and key staffers on Capitol Hill.

We conceived, planned and held an April 10 event in the Cohen Building welcoming the new Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Tara Sonenshine. This was her first public gathering since being sworn in four days before, and she conducted her first media interview, an on-camera sit-down with VOA that was shared among all entities. More than 60 guests from Capitol Hill, the White House, academia and the public diplomacy community attended a late-morning reception; this was followed by a private tour conducted by VOA Director Ensor, and then a lunch with IBB/BBG staff, Mr. Ensor and Governor Ashe.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Horn of Africa Review, March 15, 2012: The latest results of a national survey of Ethiopia, conducted in late 2011, show that VOA is the leading western international broadcaster in Ethiopia with a last-week reach of 12.2 percent across all platforms and broadcast languages. VOA is a key source of information, surpassed only by the state broadcasters for mentions as a top news source—a notable achievement in Ethiopia's tightly controlled media environment. Three quarters of regular listeners tune in through shortwave, while satellite audio has a niche audience. Performance Review recommendations focus on greater streamlining and collaborative production across the three languages within the service, and a continued focus by the service on balance in news reporting, given the Ethiopian government's attention and accusations.

Uzbek Review, March 29, 2012: Research planning is currently underway with Gallup; access to Gallup World Poll results is also expected. The chief challenge for the VOA Uzbek Service remains delivery of content into the target region – Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan. Adding Uzbek content to Afghan and Kyrgyz radio and television streams and affiliates is being assessed by VOA and OSD/OMPP as placement in Uzbekistan is impossible. The service continues to focus on social media and web delivery of content and more interactive features to enhance audience engagement.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Special Emphasis Programs

- On April 26, 2012, the agency celebrated “Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day” which has been celebrated as a national program for over twenty years. The theme for this year’s celebration was “Build Opportunity: 20 Years of Education, Empowerment and Experience.”
- On May 10, 2012, the Agency celebrated its 11th Diversity Day event in the Cohen Auditorium. This event included welcoming remarks from IBB Director Lobo followed by the presentation of numerous musical selections (cultural dances, solos, drums, etc.) by agency employees or their relatives. In addition, the exhibits from the divisions, affinity groups and other interested guest filled the halls with much festivity. The food tasting continues to be the event that brings many employees out to interact with other employees they are not able to see daily.

OFFICE OF POLICY

Interview: On May 10, Office of Policy recorded an address by Samantha Power, Senior Director of Multilateral Affairs on the staff of the National Security Council on the subject of International Disability Rights. Material will be used for a VOA editorial and a *Policy Brief*.



May 29, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for June

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

VOA Reporter Detained, then Released in Addis Ababa

Voice of America correspondent Peter Heinlein and his translator, Simeginah Yekoye, were released by Ethiopian police May 27 after being arrested one day earlier while covering a Muslim demonstration at a mosque in Addis Ababa. State Department and embassy officials and the Committee to Protect Journalists were instrumental in helping secure information and his eventual release. VOA issued statements calling for his release and urging Ethiopian authorities to allow journalists to work without fear of interference. Heinlein says he was held in the Maekelawi prison, where he was questioned about "illegal reporting."

VOA Director Travels to Burma, Cambodia and Thailand

VOA Director David Ensor travels to Cambodia, Thailand and Burma from May 29 to June 8. His first stop is Phnom Penh, where he and Khmer Service Chief Chris Decherd will visit VOA's office and meet with stringers and U.S. and Cambodian officials. Ensor has a brief stopover in Thailand where he'll meet with personnel in VOA's Bangkok bureau. From there, he travels to Burma with Burmese Service Chief Lwin Than and OMPP's Doug Boynton. He plans to sign an agreement with Burmese officials that will place VOA programs on a nationwide radio network (Myanmar Radio-Television). If the agreement is signed as presented, MRTV's radio network will carry a four-minute VOA feature report three times a week.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

Friend of VOA Mandarin Makes Headlines around the World

Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng is in the United States now, but he had quite a time getting here, and VOA Mandarin followed every step of his journey, with live and recorded interviews, tweets and analysis. Soon after Chen's escape from house arrest, a time when almost no other news organization was getting to him at all, Mandarin reporter Yibing Feng was in near-daily contact with the dissident and issuing regular updates. Chen spoke by telephone with staffer Xin Chen during Mandarin's live TV broadcast on May 11 and expressed his gratitude to the service for its reporting on his case. Chen told VOA that he is and has been a dedicated VOA listener and that VOA has been an important source of news and information for him. Central News Beijing correspondent Stephanie Ho worked in close cooperation with the China Branch, while VOA's State Department and White House reporters followed the story's Washington angles. All the exclusive material was translated and distributed throughout VOA by Central News, which made it available to the other BBG networks.

For Central News, Syria Is Central

In Syria, what started as anti-government demonstrations is now a rebellion that threatens to spread into neighboring Lebanon. Though the Damascus government has largely kept Western reporters out of the country, VOA's Cairo bureau chief, Elizabeth Arrott, managed to get into Syria in early May to produce a series of radio, TV and Internet reports under very difficult conditions. Stringer Henry Ridgwell also produced several TV reports from the Syria/Turkish border, and UN correspondent, Margaret Besheer, handled the story from there. Jerusalem bureau chief Scott Bobb packed his bags for Lebanon duty when pro and anti-Syrian factions in Lebanon began clashing in Tripoli and Beirut. Throughout, the Central News web team produced a steady flow of maps, factboxes, charts and graphs to help explain the violence for web and mobile audiences.

Burmese First with News of VP's Resignation

On 5 May, VOA Burmese broke the news of the resignation of Myanmar's vice president, Tin Aung Myint Oo, and his submission of a resignation letter citing poor health. Reuters and other news outlets in the region quoted VOA on the story. Though the Burmese government did not officially comment on the resignation for several days, a cabinet meeting photo posted on a Burmese government website showed a vacant seat where the vice president usually sits. Tin Aung Myint Oo was regarded as a hardliner who was resistant to the political reforms initiated by President Thein Sein.

VOA Interviews President of "World's Most Censored Country"

In an exclusive interview with VOA, Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki denied his country stifles free speech, just days after the Committee to Protect Journalists called Eritrea the world's most censored country. President Isaias told VOA's English to Africa reporter Peter Clotey that the government is not interested in keeping people from expressing views, but he will do what is necessary to "protect national security" against "external aggression." President Isaias told VOA he is more interested in building up his country than embracing "so-called" tenets of democracy.

Coups in Mali and Guinea-Bissau

The English to Africa radio team had its hands full dealing with political turmoil in West Africa. First there was the March 21 coup in Mali, which was soon followed by a coup in neighboring Guinea-Bissau. In addition to reporting on the political and humanitarian crises the coups set in motion, English to Africa secured interviews with top officials in the region, including former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanj, about the damage the coups did to prospects for economic growth in West Africa.

Sudan versus South Sudan

In April, Sudan and South Sudan moved to the brink of war after South Sudan took over the oil town of Heglig that is claimed by both countries. The takeover led to the heaviest armed conflict between the two sides since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005. VOA's South Sudan in Focus program covered the story using freelancer Bonifacio Taban, who reported from Bentiu, the capital of Unity State in South Sudan, and Alsanosi Ahmed, who filed from Khartoum. Fighting between Khartoum and Juba, South Sudan's capital, continued into May and SSIF continued to report on the skirmishes as well the international pressure at the UN and elsewhere to end the fighting and bring the two sides to the negotiating table.

Kurdish News on Direct to Home Satellite

Since April 23, Kurdish-speaking regions of Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Iran have been able to watch VOA's Kurdish language radio broadcasts via direct-to-home satellite. Broadcast from Studio 2, which is outfitted with cameras and a portable switcher, the radio-on-TV program airs daily at 5:00 PM Iraq time, simulcast on radio and Hotbird, one of the most popular satellites in the region. VOA's Kurdish Service is the only international broadcaster that speaks to the Kurds of Iraq in their main dialects, Sorani and Kurmanji. The service, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in April, also attracts a significant audience in Syria, Turkey and Iran, all of which have sizable Kurdish minorities.

New VOA Persian Show

VOA Persian introduced a new show in May called *OnTen*. *OnTen*, which means Antenna in English, provides an off-beat look at the Iranian political scene. The show is a half-hour mix of parody, satire, comedy and news that gives viewers a tongue-in-cheek look at Iranian government policies and the people behind them. *OnTen* co-host Saman Arbabi, who played a key role in the creation of *Parazit*, says the new program is unlike other Persian Service programs. "People always used to make fun of Cold War era documentaries from the 1950s," Arbabi says, "so one of the fun ideas we had was to use that format for a weekly segment that profiles people who play a powerful behind-the-scenes role in Iran." These are serious people and serious topics, Arbabi says, but there is no reason we can't examine them in a humorous way. In addition to a weekly news roundup with commentary, Arbabi says the show will have a video blog and a rapid-fire debate format that will include guests from opposite ends of the political spectrum.

Hausa Show Focuses on Boko Haram Territory

A new Hausa Service radio program hit the airwaves in Nigeria May 5. *Tattauna* (Dialogue) is a half-hour Saturday evening program, featuring late-breaking news from reporters around the region, roundtable discussions of issues behind the headlines and commentaries from civic,

religious, and community leaders. *Tattauna* is also streamed on the VOA Hausa website and is available on mobile devices in Nigeria. Much of the programming focuses on northern Nigeria, where the Islamist militant group Boko Haram has been carrying out attacks. Hausa Service Chief Leo Keyen says the new radio program provides a place for “serious dialogue that is essential to solve problems and build democratic institutions.”

VOA Program Focuses on Somali Constitution

VOA began a weekly radio call-in show to Somalia April 15 that focuses on the draft constitution that will chart Somalia’s future. *Constitution Square* airs Sunday evenings in Somalia, featuring constitutional experts, Somali political and civic leaders. The program helps Somalis explore fundamental constitutional issues such as human rights, the federal structure of the country, the role of Sharia, and Somali citizenship. It also delivers the results of nationwide telephone polls conducted by VOA. In cooperation with Google, the poll asks Somalis around the country and in refugee camps about such issues as Sharia, presidential power, human rights and the role of women. The vote on the new constitution will take place at the end of May.

New Deewa Program Targets Pakistani Women

VOA Deewa Radio launched a daily half-hour women’s program. *Bibi Shereena* (Sweet Woman) encourages women to offer their opinions and discuss the daily challenges they face. Deewa has also introduced weekly features about children, health, agriculture, education, politics and the economy.

VOA Provides US Election Coverage to Desh TV in Bangladesh

VOA is now supplying Desh TV with weekly video updates highlighting the latest developments from the U.S. presidential election. The fast-paced feature, *VOA 60*, wraps up the week’s campaign news. *VOA 60* airs each Friday on Desh TV’s prime-time news program, which is carried on satellite throughout the region and elsewhere.

Indonesian Service Prepares New TV Insert for Affiliate

VOA Indonesian is providing a new feature for one of its affiliates, ANTV, one of the top five national stations in Indonesia. The feature explores the diverse Muslim communities that gather for Friday prayers at mosques in the Washington area and other parts of the United States. It will be shown every Friday on ANTV’s popular early-morning Islamic program, *Wisata Hati* (Excursion of the Heart).

New Affiliate for VOA Thai

The Thai Service has a new radio affiliate in Bangkok, FM101, and has begun providing the station with a weekly interactive on U.S. politics and current affairs. The interactive is included as part of the program *101 Degrees*, a news talk show hosted by well-known Thai TV and radio personality Varin Sajdev.

Albania’s President Grants Exclusive to VOA Albanian

In a wide-ranging interview with VOA’s Albania’s Service, Albania’s outgoing president, Bamir Topi, discussed his five-year term and the serious challenges facing the tiny Balkan country. President Topi expressed the hope that the ruling Democratic Party and opposition parties will agree on a consensus candidate to succeed him. President Topi, who has had a troubled

relationship with Prime Minister Sali Berisha, said a president selected against the wishes of the opposition is likely to further fuel political tensions. The interview was rebroadcast by leading TV stations in Albania and reprinted by the major dailies.

Eurasia Division Director Honored by Albanian Government

In May, Albania's President Bamir Topi awarded his country's "Medal of Gratitude" to Elez Biberaj, director of VOA's Eurasia Division and former head of the VOA's Albanian Service. Dr. Biberaj was recognized for his contribution to the democratization of Albania and the strengthening of U.S.-Albania relations. In accepting the award, Dr. Biberaj described it as a "tribute to the Albanian Service" and VOA as a whole.

Praise for VOA Korean at House Hearing

In April, at a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ) commended VOA's Korean Service by quoting from a letter the service recently received. Smith told the hearing: "One doctor who did humanitarian work in North Korea wrote to VOA Korean Service that 'according to my friend who is still based in Pyongyang, you are not only the Voice of America but also the voice of the victims of the North Korean dictatorship.'"

VOA Persian Special on MEK

In early May, VOA Persian's Investigative and Special Reports unit released a multi-part series on the Iranian opposition group Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK). The group, also known as the People's Mujahedin of Iran, is seeking, through both the U.S. Appeals Court as well as the court of public opinion to be removed from the State Department's Foreign Terrorist Organization list. To produce the series, investigative team members Jeffrey Young and Catherine Schell conducted extensive interviews and many hours of research. Among those interviewed was State Department Iran Desk chief Henry Wooster, attorney (and MEK counsel) Allan Gerson, Georgetown University scholar Paul Pillar, and John Limbert, former hostage at the U.S. embassy in Tehran. During his interview, Limbert recalled that the MEK, at the time of the hostage crisis, was calling for the Americans to be tried and executed.

Another Honor for *Parazit*

More proof that VOA Persian's *Parazit* is popular not just with Iranians. In April, the program was awarded a bronze medal at the New York Festival's Best Television and Films award show in the comedy/satire category.

Greek Service Goes Where Other Greek Media Don't Tread

The Greek Service produced an original report on a rarely touched subject in Greece: police violence against journalists. The report was simulcast by VOA Greek affiliates Radio SKAI of Athens and Radio City International of Thessaloniki, and was a big hit on the service's website, where it stayed number one for almost two days. Yet, despite the strong interest in the story, none of the media in Greece, not one of the service's affiliates, published it on their websites. The story was not even carried by any of the print and electronic media whose reporters were attacked by the police.

Ukrainian Religious Delegation Visits Washington

VOA Ukrainian covered the Washington visit of a delegation from Ukraine that included Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and Jewish leaders. The trip was initiated by Rabbi Yaakov Bleich of Kyiv and focused on honoring the late Ukrainian Catholic Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, who saved hundreds of Jews in western Ukraine during the Holocaust. Patriarch Filaret of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church said that the delegation wanted to demonstrate that people of different religions and confessions in Ukraine can live in peace and understanding.

Notable Interviews

- VOA Korean interviewed Michael Hayden, former CIA Director, about nuclear weapons and other security threats posed by the North in the region.
- VOA Burmese interviewed Koko Hlaing, chief political adviser to the president of Myanmar. Hlaing talked about Myanmar's commitment to reforms and also said that the government was surprised by the overwhelming victory of Aung San Suu Kyi's NLD party in the April by-elections.
- VOA Tibetan had an exclusive TV interview with movie star Richard Gere in Bedford, NY. Gere spoke to VOA about his involvement with the Tibetan struggle, his friendship and support of the Dalai Lama, his career in Hollywood, and his practice of Buddhism.
- Haiti's new ambassador to the United States, Paul Altidor, spoke to the Creole Service about the reconstruction process in his country and U.S. support for the process. He also mentioned that President Obama might visit the country.
- The Russian Service interviewed Senator John McCain after his return from a meeting of the OSCE parliamentary assembly. Senator McCain, a harsh critic of Vladimir Putin, said the future of Russia's democracy depends on the establishment of the rule of law, respect for human rights, and an open political process.
- English to Africa's Vincent Makori spoke with Jehan Mechak Deng, acting charge d'affaires of South Sudan's Washington embassy, about the border stand-off between Sudan and South Sudan; Makori also interviewed Pagan Amum, secretary general of South Sudan's ruling party, who defended his government's invasion of the disputed town of Heglig.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

VOA Launches English Learning for Vietnamese

Vietnamese speakers who want to learn American English have a new place to go. Early in May, VOA launched goenglish.me, which is loaded with tools that make learning English fun, easy and, perhaps best of all, free. [Goenglish.me](http://goenglish.me) is aimed at Vietnamese speakers who have some knowledge of English, but are interested in learning how it is spoken in everyday American life. It also includes forums, blogs and group pages to allow users to dig deeper into the language through conversation. Within a week after the Vietnamese Service launched the site -- <http://vietnamese.goenglish.me/> -- it had received 62,078 page views.

News4VN -- News for Vietnam

In April, VOA Vietnamese launched News4VN, a social network aggregator website similar to Digg and Reddit that focuses on highlighting stories of interest to Vietnamese. The site allows users to submit links to stories of interest and vote on them. The project is a team effort between the English and Vietnamese Services. (<http://www.news4vn.com/>)

VOANews.com

VOANews.com has launched its newest blog, *State of Affairs*. In it, State Department correspondent Scott Stearns goes beyond the daily reporting to give the inside story on U.S. diplomacy. Topics so far include: Washington's evolving relationship with Burma and disputes over the South China Sea.

<http://blogs.voanews.com/state-department-news/>

New Format for Middle East Voices

The Middle East Voices website has upgraded to a more user-friendly format that is specifically designed for optimal display on smartphones and tablets such as ipad. The website featured interviews with the two main candidates in the Egyptian presidential election (Abdel Moneim Abolfotoh and former foreign minister Amr Moussa), who discussed U.S.-Egyptian relations and other foreign policy issues.

VOANews.com Web and Mobile Traffic

April 2012

Language Service	Visits			Page views			Quality Metrics (April 2012)		Mobile Visits		
	April 2012	March 2012	Change	April 2012	March 2012	Change	Pages per Visit	Avg. Time Spent (min)	April 2012	March 2012	Change
All VOA	14,693,988	15,473,519	-2%	34,501,697	36,486,982	-2%	2.35	03:40	2,563,684	2,893,906	-8%
English	3,740,444	3,331,747	16%	6,282,882	5,918,306	10%	1.78	01:56	1,160,119	1,412,291	-15%
Persian	1,998,060	2,399,173	-14%	4,239,033	5,143,111	-15%	2.12	03:46	52,406	60,219	-10%
Special English	1,664,303	1,860,465	-8%	4,646,905	5,222,688	-8%	2.79	04:34	126,227	125,597	4%
Vietnamese	1,568,858	1,615,008	0%	5,048,516	5,066,601	3%	3.22	05:13	137,611	130,955	9%
Chinese	1,349,066	1,263,781	10%	3,986,127	3,383,282	22%	2.95	05:20	3,258	2,344	44%
Russian	1,109,605	1,663,617	-31%	2,408,975	3,858,855	-35%	2.17	03:11	55,982	80,963	-29%
Burmese	906,695	759,255	23%	2,018,010	1,658,983	26%	2.23	03:51	81,988	60,303	40%
Somali	506,790	524,948	0%	1,107,904	1,075,211	6%	2.19	03:56	111,600	98,153	17%
Amharic	384,687	409,383	-3%	688,519	747,581	-5%	1.79	02:19	111,021	109,107	5%
Tigrigna	206,312	213,610	0%	382,184	389,949	1%	1.85	02:37			
Albanian	127,042	134,772	-3%	286,400	307,127	-4%	2.25	02:40	6,406	6,566	1%
Urdu	115,441	122,797	-3%	316,784	328,500	0%	2.74	05:20	27,796	40,283	-29%
Spanish *	110,887	244,354	-53%	192,438	369,014	-46%	1.74	02:12	93,342	240,818	-60%
Tibetan - English	100,454	103,900	0%	138,441	157,792	-9%	1.38	01:11			
Khmer	98,468	94,778	7%	211,604	195,424	12%	2.15	03:28	15,201	14,021	12%
Hausa	92,849	102,172	-6%	204,627	227,267	-7%	2.20	04:37	282,145	278,185	5%
Portuguese	90,856	78,971	19%	206,921	176,170	21%	2.28	04:23	10,370	8,616	24%
Ukrainian	89,760	91,881	1%	134,525	143,871	-3%	1.50	01:30	6,664	4,572	51%
Indonesian *	85,604	138,226	-36%	168,594	262,532	-34%	1.97	03:00	36,858	53,349	-29%
Pashto	85,585	91,220	-3%	152,058	163,660	-4%	1.78	02:39	8,310	9,902	-13%
Tibetan	79,710	87,998	-6%	175,044	198,256	-9%	2.20	03:58	70,645	22,234	228%
Dari	68,816	64,725	10%	153,287	142,040	12%	2.23	03:15	7,397	7,307	5%
Korean	67,505	69,632	0%	162,714	172,300	-2%	2.41	03:16	27,907	29,947	-4%
Zimbabwe - English	54,932	41,884	36%	84,025	66,391	31%	1.53	01:35	85,741	58,234	52%
Turkish	53,006	65,512	-16%	91,341	115,733	-18%	1.72	01:42	3,776	4,262	-8%

Khmer - English	51,914	45,530	18%	89,820	81,199	14%	1.73	02:16			
Lao	46,621	47,505	1%	159,132	161,424	2%	3.41	06:23			
Serbian	41,171	46,254	-8%	73,077	89,019	-15%	1.77	01:51	1,696	1,737	1%
Macedonian	34,257	28,391	25%	47,787	41,792	18%	1.39	01:28	2,327	1,379	74%
Central Africa	32,970	29,511	15%	46,080	43,483	10%	1.40	01:34			
French to Africa	27,929	29,133	-1%	49,880	54,077	-5%	1.79	02:23	4,354	4,325	4%
Afaan Oromoo	26,905	27,526	1%	68,016	67,849	4%	2.53	03:46			
Azerbaijani	23,954	27,152	-9%	40,320	49,245	-15%	1.68	02:26	1,510	1,944	-20%
Thai	22,247	29,676	-23%	32,788	43,635	-22%	1.47	02:06	1,966	2,022	0%
Kurdish	22,210	20,008	15%	43,515	38,088	18%	1.96	03:05	2,029	1,398	50%
Uzbek	22,203	24,465	-6%	44,785	50,030	-7%	2.02	04:29	15,295	15,649	1%
Cantonese	18,664	18,156	6%	40,369	34,564	21%	2.16	02:40			
Swahili	17,243	13,324	34%	24,722	20,606	24%	1.43	02:24	8,349	4,012	115%
Bangla	16,738	18,013	-4%	25,295	26,983	-3%	1.51	02:07	2,436	2,455	3%
Georgian	16,251	15,785	6%	29,422	29,558	3%	1.81	02:23	304	221	42%
Armenian	15,764	15,423	6%	29,417	31,059	-2%	1.87	02:15	428	442	0%
Deewa	14,234	15,663	-6%	30,470	34,431	-9%	2.14	03:35			
Bosnian	11,705	12,572	-4%	19,169	21,474	-8%	1.63	01:51	469	342	41%
Creole *	9,225	18,467	-48%	23,722	30,249	-19%	2.57	07:59			
Greek	8,906	9,762	-6%	14,763	16,764	-9%	1.66	01:05			
Kurdi	5,867	4,974	22%	12,078	10,116	24%	2.06	02:55			
Shona	4,686	4,519	7%	8,440	8,151	7%	1.80	02:39			
Ndebele	3,041	2,352	34%	4,768	3,661	35%	1.57	01:46			

*These sites moved to Pangea in April 12 and have new domains (URLs) – some loss of traffic is expected immediately following these changes.

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA & EVENTS

- Responding to May 2 inquiries from AP and E-News Africa in South Africa about Boko Haram's threats against VOA's Hausa Service, VOA Public Relations told these news organizations that VOA supports the safety of our journalists but made no more additional comment about the Hausa Service or its staff.
- VOA Chinese Branch Director Sasha Gong appeared on PBS NewsHour on April 30 to talk about the escape of Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng and human rights in China. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/world/jan-june12/china2_04-30.html
- VOA Public Relations provided support along with other Agency offices for the celebration of the Swahili Service's 50th Anniversary on May 11, 2012.
- On May 7, VOA Director David Ensor participated in a panel discussion at the Newseum on how digital culture is changing journalism and free expression. Other panel participants included Lee C. Bollinger, President of Columbia University; Chrystia Freeland, Global Editor-at-Large for Thomson Reuters Digital; and Rebecca MacKinnon, Senior Fellow at the New America Foundation. Robert Siegel of NPR moderated the event. The panel discussion was carried live by C-SPAN.
- On May 15, VOA Director David Ensor addressed attendees at the CNA National Security Seminar about communicating with difficult to reach audiences.

INSIDEVOA SITE

- On April 19, VOA Public Relations made the transition from the old Clickability to the new Content Management System—Pangea.

VOA STUDIO TOUR

All visitors below took the VOA Studio Tour unless otherwise noted.

- Indonesian students met with Indonesian Service Chief Norman Goodman, Helmi Johannes, and other staff from the service. -- April 9
- Our office provided support to the Ukrainian Service for the visit of a delegation of Ukrainian journalists on a study tour to the United States. While at VOA, they sat in on a panel discussion with VOA'S National Correspondent Jim Malone, Senior Executive Producer Steve Springer, and Ryan Davis, Director of Social Innovation at Blue State Digital. -- April 10
- Participants from the National Defense University came to VOA for a panel discussion. Panelists were Jeff Trimble, Deputy Director, IBB; John Lennon, Associate Director Strategy and Planning, VOA; and Samir Nader, State Department Correspondent, Radio Sawa, MBN. – April 10
- Students from the Global Learning Center studying Korean visited the Korean Service and met Hyun Suk Kim. – April 11
- Bahamas High School students came to VOA during their trip to Washington to take the VOA Studio Tour. – April 11
- VOA White House correspondent Kent Klein talked about VOA's mission with students from Ohio University. – April 13
- Fairfax Academy students met with Korean Service broadcaster Hyun Suk Kim. – April 17
- Broadcaster Behruz Nikzat took students from the Global Learning Center on a tour of the Persian Service. -- April 19
- Students taking part in an AYUSA International Exchange Program met with VOA journalist Jessica Stahl. -- April 20
- Students from the Global Learning Center met with Pashto broadcaster Nawid Orokzay. – April 23
- VOA Public Affairs offered tours to staff and families during Bring Your Sons and Daughters to Work Day. – April 26
- VOA Khmer Service broadcaster Reasey Poch met with students who are taking part in a State Department Exchange program. – May 1
- Jessica Stahl talked to Miami University students about her "Student Union" blog, social media, and the VOA website. – May 2
- Students from Mount Saint Mary's University met with VOA Executive Editor Steve Redisch and Director of the Media and Social Innovation Center Rob Bole. – May 2
- Participants from India on a State Department International Visitors Leadership Program met with host of *OMG! Meiyu* Jessica Beinecke. – May 3
- Chinese journalists taking part in a State Department International Visitors Leadership Program on Electronic Media met with Chinese Branch Chief Sasha Gong, Ji Feng, and George Deng. – May 9
- David Byrd, VOA reporter for the Middle East web desk, met with students from Miami University. – May 15
- Ukrainian Service Chief Adrian Karmazyn and other service staff met with visitors from Ukraine. – May 16

- Chinese graduate students from Georgetown University met with Information Technology Specialist Peter Vaselopoulos and Chinese Branch Chief of External Relations and Internet Ji Feng. – May 16
- Washington Center interns from Mexico met with Latin American Division Managing Editor Clara Dominguez. – May 16
- Telecommunication manager Gy Williams met with students from the Sullivan Middle School. – May 18
- Newsroom Editor Michael Collins met with students from the GW Community School in Fairfax, Virginia. – May 18
- Chinese Branch Chief Sasha Gong and Chief of External Relations and Internet Ji Feng met with students from Hong Kong. – May 21
- VOA broadcaster Doug Bernard Johnson met with students from the Closeup Foundation. – May 22
- A delegation of African officials from Francophone Africa met with Beth Mendelson, Timothee Donangmaye, and other staff in VOA's French to Africa Service. – May 22

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- VOA Program Focuses on Somali Constitution – April 12
- Parazit: VOA Satire for Iran Gets TV Award – April 19
- VOA Kurdish Goes on Direct to Home Satellite – April 23
- New VOA Hausa Show Focuses on Northern Nigeria – May 4
- VOA Launches English Learning for Vietnamese – May 8
- New VOA Show Lampoons Iranian Politics – May 10

F. PERSONNEL

New English Division Director

Sheila Gandji has been named director of VOA's English Division. A VOA veteran, she most recently headed the Russian project creating a groundbreaking social media television program, Podelis. She has also served as division director for West and South Asia and, more recently, for the Persian Service, where she ramped up TV in Persian, Urdu and Afghan languages. Earlier in her career she had division level responsibilities in the European and Latin America Division and worked on the creation of Radio Sawa.

New Head of Music for English

John Stevenson has moved from heading the Worldwide English Division, which he did for 24 years, to heading the English Division's music operations. During his years as director, English blazed many new trails in television and new media. He oversaw the development of new television initiatives and the creation of the largest website at VOA, VOANews.com. He brings years of expertise to his new position. He recently retired after 30 years as director of an extremely successful church choir.

DATE: June 12, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for May 2013

MAY HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

U.S. International Media's First Interactive Book: Office of Digital and Design Innovation (ODDI) partnered with RFA to publish the first interactive ebook for U.S. international media (USIM). The book is a retrospective of Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 and features exclusive, original photos, video and interviews (see images below).

A July 2012 press release for the Beijing International Book Fair (BIBF) asserts that China is the second-largest publishing market in the world, and their digital publishing market (ebooks + digital content) was ¥138 billion. While the ebook market is tightly controlled by the state through the General Administration of Printing and Publication (GAPP), these numbers indicate a strong demand for ebooks for the growing tablet and eReader markets in China.

The RFA book is being published via the RFA website and independent ePublishing sites by June 20.



Combatting Satellite Jamming: IBB is engaging with several international and governmental organizations to formally combat satellite jamming. IBB is represented at a meeting with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) on interference with satellite transmissions, a UN Disarmament Research Institute briefing about how jamming is at odds with the UN's efforts to promote only peaceful uses of outer space, meetings at the U.S. Department of State to coordinate BBG's position with the relevant offices there, and regular teleconferences with the DG5 group to ensure a synchronized approach by international broadcasters and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

OFFICE OF THE IBB DIRECTOR

Workplace Engagement: Implementation of the agency's action plan to improve Workplace Engagement ramped up in May and into June. Focus groups were held throughout the agency to get employee feedback on performance management, the process for reviewing all position descriptions in the federal entity, and cross-training and employee development. The team focused on reducing bureaucracy created an email address for staff to suggest areas where we can "cut the red tape," which has already generated about 50 suggestions. In addition, the health and wellness team hosted several activities to continue promoting the use of the fitness center and other opportunities for health and wellness.

Federal Employee Survey: The OPM Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey ends on June 14. Through close coordination with VOA and OCB, we have already exceeded our response rate from last year. Current response rates show the total agency participation rate at 66%. IBB has a participation rate of 73.3%; VOA (67.3% participation) and OCB (57.7% participation) have already achieved the highest participation rates ever for their organizations. A contractor survey is currently in development; we hope to administer it in the fall.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

Jamming of Other BBG Satellite Transmissions: The Alhurra TV feed on Nilesat 201 experienced destructive interference on May 26 for a total of 44 minutes and on May 30 for a total of 3 minutes.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

- The last (currently funded) new BBG FM facility in **Afghanistan at Nuristan** came on air June 1. A total of 15 BBG FM facilities are currently on the air in Afghanistan.
- The aging BBG FM transmitter in **Arta, Djibouti**, was replaced and put on air on May 13. Another old BBG FM transmitter in **Djibouti City** is also being replaced.
- TSI Engineer Daniel Maxwell will travel to **Bamako, Mali**, in late June to help with the installation of a new FM transmitter at the BBG facility there. During this trip to Africa, Daniel will also visit **Accra, Ghana**, to explore FM reception concerns and **Freetown, Sierra Leone**, to survey a possible relocation site for one of our FM host partners.

IBB Information Technology (IT):

- The transition to the use of Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) for global networking continues. We successfully tested failover procedures for the two new 200Mbps MPLS circuits in the Washington, DC, headquarters. Circuits to RFE-Prague, RFA, MBN, and VOA New York News Bureau have been deployed and are in use. Circuits to Lampertheim and Tinang have been deployed. Transition to the circuit to Tinang is complete while the circuit in Lampertheim is still in design and testing mode.
- The IT Directorate continues to develop a continuous device monitoring program. All devices connected to the agency's infrastructure are periodically scanned to identify system and application vulnerabilities. Patching priorities are determined based on a scoring system that takes into account risk to the system and availability of an active exploit. We continue to

fine-tune the multi-divisional communication, testing, and application of patches to agency systems to minimize disruption to the agency broadcasting mission.

- The IT Directorate is also exploring improving its cybersecurity defenses by participating in the Department of Homeland Security's *Early Adopters* program to implement, at DHS's expense, additional cybersecurity vulnerability assessment tools and reporting capabilities.
- The IT Directorate is also installing, testing, and configuring tools to perform forensic identification, analysis, and remediation of security threats to agency systems.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT (OSD)

News Republic Signs Agreement Placing USIM Newsfeeds on HTC Phones: App company "News Republic" signed a deal with BBG for USIM content on 15 localized platforms. Languages include English, Spanish, Turkish, Arabic and Russian. The app is on the homescreen of all new HTC phones, with access to USIM content "baked in" every new HTC phone that ships.

Research Progress: The suspension of our prime research contractor, Gallup, has been lifted. As this occurred, BBG's Office of the General Counsel advised that we were obligated to continue with Gallup per the International Audience Research Program contract. OSD is currently proceeding to field the previously agreed-upon surveys within the reduced sequestration budget. There is keen interest from DG5 partners to purchase some of the data. Due to the delay related to the Gallup suspension, surveys in Muslim countries will be delayed until after Ramadan. We expect data from those by November 30.

Deal in Nouakchott, Mauritania: OSD's Bruce Sherman and Joyce Ngoh signed a media cooperation agreement with the government of Mauritania for two FM frequencies (one for Radio Sawa now and another for future use). The agreement calls for the frequencies, Radio Sawa programming, training for Mauritanian journalists, and technical assistance for their broadcast infrastructure. The transmitter will be inexpensive as we are adding equipment to existing Mauritanian state radio and TV facilities. With a population of one million people, most of whom are under 25, Nouakchott could offer 200,000-300,000 in new audiences. TSI's Ken Claerbout and GC's Dan Dzara were instrumental in securing this deal.

New VOA Affiliations and Funding in Africa:

- VOA French to Africa is working with Radiodiffusion Television Ivoirienne (RTI), the government radio and TV broadcaster, on short, customized reports for RTI's radio network. RTI TV will broadcast VOA's "Washington Forum" weekly. The RTI network covers about 80 percent of the country, with relay stations located throughout the country. In addition, the PAO in Cote d'Ivoire has indicated that the embassy will provide \$200K for health reporting and training in that country.
- A contract has been signed with dynamic independent community station Radio Mutaani which covers Goma, in the conflict-ridden eastern portion of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**. In addition, OSD has signed an agreement with the State Department for \$424K to continue the popular VOA French to Africa DRC health show for two more years.

- A contract has been signed with Western **Kenya's** TV Lake Victoria, which covers the riparian region surrounding Lake Victoria. TVLK will carry Straight Talk Africa, Africa 54, On Assignment and other acquired programs.
- The Johannesburg Regional Marketing Office has established partnership agreements in **Zambia** with the national public broadcaster ZNBC Radio and TV, a dynamic private station Q FM, and the office is also discussing VOA content expansions with longtime partner Muvi TV, Zambia's first and only private TV network.

Influenza Workshops in South Asia: OSD organized training for journalists in Bangladesh and Afghanistan on Influenza. The training aimed to give participants a better understanding of avian and pandemic influenza, and other diseases; to assist them in providing accurate, responsible, and supportive coverage of disease outbreaks and/or disasters, and to help them develop and/or improve journalism skills for health and disaster preparedness coverage. The training in Bangladesh was funded by a grant from USAID and attended by the Deputy Chief of Mission, Jon Danilowicz. In Afghanistan, the training was supported by VOA, RFE/RL and OES/State.

New VOA Affiliates in Asia: OSD-Bangkok signed several valuable affiliates for VOA.

- Cambodian News Channel (CNC), a national all-news television station in **Cambodia**, will air VOA Khmer's magazine show, "Sapada," two times per week.
- Beijing-based iYuba agreed to include VOA Mandarin English teaching materials in book and DVD-insert publications in **China**.
- CPP Radio Network in **Indonesia** renewed their agreement to air VOA Indonesian programming on the network's 44 FM stations across the country.

Talks Begin to Place RFE/RL Russian on RTVi: OSD-Prague orchestrated calls between management and editorial staff of RTVi, a worldwide, Russian-language satellite network, to investigate the possibility of placing the "Caucasus Crossroads" program and "People Have Rights." RTVi is awaiting a formal written proposal from the RFE/RL editorial staff.

Russia Training: OSD has finalized a proposal for Russian citizen journalism training program in partnership with the NGO Resource Center in Tbilisi, Georgia. The project, CJ/Sochi Watch, is to be funded by NED and held in in September 2013.

TV Azteca to air Foro Interamericano, Amid Praise for VOA: During a visit to TV Azteca headquarters in Mexico City, News Producer Enrique Valdés firmed up an earlier discussion about including the one-hour Foro Interamericano in the lineup of one of their premier national channels, a 24/7 over-the-air signal that gets prominent cable placement elsewhere in Latin America. Present at the meeting were International News Director Amada Castanón, Director of Information César Peón, and David Moyer, Assistant Information Officer at the U.S. Embassy.

Ecuador Training: OSD is preparing for a June journalism training in Guayaquil, Ecuador, with the support of the U.S. Embassy.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Congress: This office coordinated and conducted follow-up to a meeting on agency Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) efforts between Governors Meehan and Ashe, Rep. Frank Wolf, and senior staff for Senator Roy Blunt. The meeting was prompted by a letter from Senator Blunt and Mr. Wolf indicating their dismay at the proportion of agency funds spent on IAC activities; both Governors agreed that this is a high-priority program that deserves more funding, and they discussed options for increasing the budget allocation in Fiscal Year 2015 while Congress considers the Administration's FY 2014 budget request.

The Congressional Coordinator accompanied OCB Director Garcia-Perez on visits with Senate staff to discuss current operations.

All parts of the Office of Communications and External Affairs – congressional, public affairs, and graphics – have worked for the past three months with the broadcast entities, TSI and ODDI to arrange an innovation showcase on Capitol Hill that takes place on June 13. The intended audience of key stakeholders will include congressional staff working for members of our oversight committees, members of the public diplomacy community, technology experts in the public and private sectors, and media. It will feature tools and technologies developed by all BBG broadcasters. The Congressional Coordinator, with experience in holding events on the Hill, has played a pivotal role in ensuring that this one is smooth and well organized. A full read-out will be provided afterward to the Board.

Agency congressional liaison staff took an active role in planning meetings with State Department and USAID contacts for the May 13-14 Global Diaspora Forum, which involved five events with participation by the BBG and its all broadcasters. Details below.

The office coordinated BBG submission of agency reports to Congress, including the 2012 Annual Report, the Office of Inspector General's Semi-Annual Report to Congress (SARC), the FY 2013 program plan and a summary of the agency's sequestration plan, along with answers to follow-up questions from Hill staff.

Working with all three nominees to the Board, the Congressional Coordinator laid the groundwork for internal briefings and courtesy calls with key senators and Senate staff, and conducted follow-up to them. Jeff Shell was in DC for these meetings May 6-8, Matt Armstrong May 6-8 and June 3-5, and Amb. Ryan Crocker June 11-12. During this period, the Congressional Coordinator also completed and submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee the nomination paperwork for Armstrong and Crocker and worked out travel orders and logistics for the latter's visit to Washington.

Media: This office coordinated and carried out messaging on the visit to Moscow of Governors McCue and Meehan, in close consultation with the leadership of RFE/RL.

Outreach to *Radio World's* editor resulted in a request for commentary on the agency's budget, which was submitted in late May for publication in print in June.

We responded to queries from *Government Executive* on buyouts, *Popular Communications* on broadcast technology, and from *The Chicago Sun-Times*, *Radio World*, Townhall.com and Scripps News Service on vacancies on the Board.

The BBG's 2012 Annual Report, coordinated by BBG Public Affairs in cooperation with all offices across the agency, was delivered from the GPO on May 17. Electronic and hard copies have been distributed widely to Congress, key contacts in academia, think tanks and the media.

On social media, BBG's Facebook page saw 31 more likes with an average daily reach of 49,500, and BBG's Twitter feed now has 1898 followers. On Twitter, we have engaged several high profile and influential stakeholders, including U.S. Embassy in Cambodia, CIMA and Freedom House.

BBG Public Affairs marked World Press Freedom Day with an online video and virtual reading of names on Twitter to remember our slain journalists. Those tweets continue to be "favorited" weeks later.

We have also optimized our YouTube presence, enhancing the BBG's branding according to YouTube's new responsive design, which makes our channel more attractive on a variety of devices and screen sizes. We have also organized our existing videos into playlists and made the general feel of the channel more user-friendly and easy to navigate.

With the help of ODDI, we have updated the Wordpress software for the BBG.gov website. With this comes increased utility in search engine optimization, and we have begun implementing these functions.

Other Outreach: In addition to providing photography support throughout the above-mentioned Global Diaspora Forum, BBG PA participated in the conference's open session, "Building Partnerships with the U.S. Government" and hosted a panel discussion titled "Connecting People Worldwide, Online and On Air." During the open session. Staff and representatives from the entities interacted with conference participants and answered questions about current programs and initiatives. The panel discussion, hosted by Lynne Weil, focused on how working journalists cover events on a variety of media platforms using innovative programming. Panelists included Jessica Beinecke, host of OMG! Meiyu; Kyaw Kyaw Aung, Senior Editor of Radio Free Asia's Burmese Service; and Bashar Jarrar, Senior Producer of Alhurra Television. A variety of leaders from diaspora communities and media from across the United States attended the event and developed contacts with agency staff and representatives of the broadcasters.

Lynne Weil met for an extensive discussion with Katherine Brown, who was selected as executive director for the newly-reauthorized U.S. Advisory Commission for Public Diplomacy. Katherine has not yet started in this position. The Commission's mandate includes oversight of U.S. international media.

Internal Communication: This office produced the Board's May 15 Town Hall meeting on the FY13 budget submission, including preparing talking points, creating the budget presentation,

ensuring smooth A/V coordination, and assembling a video summary that was narrated by IBB Director Lobo and made available to all agency staff.

Following its late April debut, *Launchpad*, an internal platform to exchange ideas, has triggered 46 ideas, 123 comments, and 913 votes. Two of the ideas have been marked as completed, and four ideas are in progress. The online venue opens conversation to everyone who is interested. *Launchpad* is a venue for interactive discussion and a community of ideas where all are welcome to share thoughts and best practices.

We sponsored a Fitness Flash Mob on May 8 that generated enthusiasm as well as a short video PSA on the BBG's Health and Wellness program.

At the agency's networking event on May 9, we provided a battery of information and increased participation in the BBG Health and Wellness program. Through our efforts at this event, more than 40 people signed waivers to participate in the fitness center. We promoted Bike to Work day along with sharing information on free classes in the city for Yoga Week. The new run/walk club, which began on May 2, has over 50 members and is planning to field teams in races in September and November. On May 29, we issued the first Health and Wellness Newsletter to bundle information on classes, healthy nutrition tips and upcoming events.

Marketing of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey is underway with creative use of graphics, emails, posters and fliers as well as other avenues for increasing participation.

Graphics: The Graphics Department completed a number of agency priority projects in May and early June: Publication of the annual report, table-top displays for the Global Diaspora Forum at USAID/the State Department and the agency's innovation showcase on Capitol Hill; posters for an agency-wide brown bag lunch on internet censorship, a booth for VOA Learning English for a trade show, a press kit for a major VOA documentary on Tibet, the Africa Health Network branding guide, and promotional material for the agency's LGBT Pride Month event.

The team is working with the VOA marketing office on an email campaign to inform affiliates of upcoming coverage of President Obama's trip to Africa, and to promote the products that VOA is creating around the trip. They will be using their new Customer Relationship Management tool for the first time, so this is a test run. The office is coordinating with VOA Creative Services to maintain consistent branding.

Design and production work continued on the Language Service Review book and the Office of Strategy and Development catalog.

The Graphics Department, working with VOA Public Relations, has prepared selected photos and a proposed theme for the 2014 VOA Calendar, an important promotional item overseas as well as among key constituents in the United States. VOA leadership will review the theme and proposed photos before production begins.

Work was coming to completion on the VOA Logo Usage Guide, a long-range-project to ensure uniform application of this branded graphic across language services and on all manner of broadcast and print materials.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW (OPR)

RESEARCH & PROGRAM REVIEWS

Micro Poll on VOA Bambara for Mali: In close coordination with the VOA Africa Division, IBB Research designed a micro poll about the new Bambara program for Mali. The study, which involves four waves of 25 respondents each, seeks to provide initial feedback on Mali Kura with minimal turnaround time. In the first three weeks of fieldwork so far, IBB Research was able to release results within days. Respondents – all regular Mali Kura listeners – express great pride and joy in being able to listen to relevant and credible news in their own language. Some lament that the program is not yet well known among Maliens and that it deserves a wider audience; they recommend increased awareness campaigns.

Qualitative VOA Mandarin Research: Program testing showed focus group participants overall liked the various Mandarin program formats. While responses to the episodes varied, participants mainly were looking for balanced reporting.

Satellite Distribution Research for China: Discussions with two satellite TV companies (KH Technology Group and CSTV) generated ideas for additional placement of VOA Mandarin television content, including on CSTV's satellite TV bouquet inside China, and pre-installing parameters of VOA *Wei Shi* channels in satellite set-top-boxes distributed inside China.

Khmer Review – April 25, 2013: A Gallup national survey conducted in Cambodia in November 2012 found a weekly all-media Khmer-language audience of about 12%, one of the largest for any VOA language service. Most of the VOA audience is via FM affiliates, though VOA TV attracts 2% of the adult population now on a weekly basis. The overall BBG weekly audience in Cambodia on any media is nearly one-quarter (24%) of the adult population.

Urdu Review – May 9, 2013: New survey data from Pakistan confirmed the overwhelming importance of television in reaching audiences in that country. Daily TV use continues to grow and is more than eight times higher than daily radio consumption (59% vs. 7%). However, both the TV and radio audiences for VOA have increased since the 2011 survey, with the total VOA audience now reaching 6.6% (vs. 4.2% previously.). VOA's strategy of multiple placements on important local stations appears to be paying off. Closer analysis of the VOA audience revealed that the radio audience – while less than half the size of the TV audience – was more dedicated and much more likely than the TV audience to express trust in VOA's news, suggesting that these listeners may have a value that belies their small number. While the TV audience has risen, VOA remains at a disadvantage in not having access to the best airtimes, locally. Digital media are finally starting to take off in Pakistan, at least among younger urban populations, with past week Internet use doubling from 4 to 8%.

Management Efficiency Reviews of OCFO and Dalet: The Office of Performance Review concluded final interviews for its management efficiency review of the Office of the CFO/Budget, which will be presented later in June. Also scheduled for June presentation to VOA and IBB technical management is the Dalet Plus review, completed earlier in the year.

OIG-GAO ACTIVITIES

GAO Engagement to Evaluate the President's FY 2014 Budget Request for International

Affairs: Engagement notification letter received on May 22, 2013, requests an entrance conference in early June 2013. However, it appears that this engagement will be satisfied through a short series of questions and answers submitted to the BBG in writing. GAO does not anticipate writing any public report on the issues raised in this engagement. GAO will also be looking at the FY 2014 budget requests of the U.S. Department of State and USAID in this engagement.

GAO Engagement on Reliability of Data for USASpending.gov: This GAO Engagement is being conducted in response to a request made by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs and the Taskforce on Government Performance, Senate Committee on the Budget. The GAO will examine: 1) the extent to which federal agencies are reporting required award data; and 2) the extent to which inconsistencies exist between the data on USASpending.gov and records at federal agencies. This is a multi-agency review. The entrance conference is expected to be held sometime in June, 2013.

GAO, "Broadcasting Board of Governors, Additional Steps Needed to Address Overlap in International Broadcasting":

OPR continues to assist OSD in the development of an "overlap" matrix designed to close out GAO's recommendations stemming from its recent report on overlapping services. GAO recommended that the agency develop a method to allow for the systematic consideration of cost and impact of internal overlap among language services, and among the activities of other international broadcasters. The matrix design has been accomplished, and variables (including service costs, personnel, research, overseas presence (bureaus/stringers) and cooperation between services in the same languages targeting the same countries) are being collected as part of the LSR process. OPR will coordinate with GAO to try to gain GAO's agreement that the agency has complied with the recommendations.

OIG Inspection of the VOA Latin America Division: Interviews are still being conducted by the OIG inspection team.

OIG Review of Broadcasting Board of Governors' Operations in Baghdad, Iraq:

OIG's Final Report on its limited inspection of BBG Operations in Iraq was received by OPR and issued on May 22, 2013. No BBG Response is necessary as the report does not contain any recommendations. The OIG found no serious management issues at the RFE/RL news bureau (RFI) or the MBN operations in Baghdad. The OIG notes, however, that employees at both offices were troubled by uncertainty over budgets, salaries and a possible merger of operations.

OIG Review of Broadcasting Board of Governors' Operations in Kyiv, Ukraine: OPR coordinated BBG's response to OIG's first draft report dated May 16, 2013; BBG comments were submitted to OIG on *May 30, 2013*.

OIG Inspection of Embassy Juba, South Sudan: The BBG section of OIG's Final Report, Inspection of Embassy Juba, was received by OPR on *May 30, 2013*.

OIG Inspection of the IBB Philippines Transmitting Station: OPR received notification on *May 31, 2013* that OIG has completed a final review and closed both remaining recommendations, closing the entire report.

OIG Semi Annual Report to the Congress (October 1, 2012 – March 31, 2013): During this reporting period, OIG issued four audit reports pertaining to BBG operations: an audit report on BBG's Information Security Program, a report and management letter on BBG's 2012 and 2011 financial statements, and a report on FY 2012 compliance with improper payments requirements. OIG also conducted three inspections and one compliance followup review of BBG operations overseas, as well as an inspection of the BBG Board itself. OIG determined that the BBG entities inspected were generally well run with no major management or security problems despite operating in sometimes challenging environments. The OIG Semi Annual Report was received and delivered by the BBG to the Hill on *June 3, 2013*.

OIG Audit of BBG's Acquisition Functions (part of OIG's FY 2013 Audit Performance Plan): OPR was informed of this upcoming audit by the OIG on May 24, 2013. Proposed audit objective is to determine whether the BBG is in compliance with Federal regulations for conducting selected acquisition functions in support of the BBG mission. The entrance conference for this audit occurred on June 6, 2013, at which OIG asked specific questions regarding the organization, administration and oversight of the BBG acquisition functions. OIG will provide a general timeline for the audit, and an overview of the audit process when the final audit plan is approved later in June.

OIG Inspection of RFE/RL Prague: OIG completed another review of the RFE/RL Prague inspection based on the compliance response received from the BBG on May 13, 2013. In this latest compliance follow-up analysis issued May 31, 2013, OIG closed one recommendation but requests additional information on the remaining one, that regarding RFE/RL efforts to identify a lead information systems security officer. BBG's Compliance Response is due to OIG by *June 30, 2013*.

OIG Inspection of International Broadcasting Bureau Botswana Transmitting Station: OIG Compliance Followup letter was received by OPR on May 13, 2013, indicating that an additional four recommendations were closed; two recommendations remain open pending additional information from the BBG. OPR is coordinating the BBG response with relevant individuals in IBB/TSI to close out these remaining actions by the OIG due date of *July 8, 2013*.

OIG Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors: IBB/OPR received OIG's compliance followup review and analysis of BBG's compliance response on May 7, 2013, indicating that all seven recommendations remain open. The agency is working to ensure that

OIG understands the impact that the loss of a Board quorum will have on the agency's ability to provide timely agency compliance responses on a number of the OIG recommendations, some of which advocate core structural and policy reforms. The BBG response to OIG's Compliance Followup is due to the OIG by *July 12, 2013*; if final implementation of actions is still pending at that time, a formal progress report describing interim actions is required by OIG. BBG is expected to act expeditiously in resolving recommendations.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES (OHR)

Buyouts: On May 20, 2013, the agency announced an opportunity for employees to apply for a Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment, or Buyout. Under this program, employees who resign or retire by June 30, 2013, may receive up to \$25,000.00 as a separation incentive. The agency has received 30 buyout applications from employees. Buyouts are a vital tool in assisting the agency in reducing the impact of a potential Reduction in Force in conjunction the FY 2014 budget and allows the agency to replace incumbents with outdated skills with individuals having the skills needed in today's workplace.

In-House Training: In order to provide essential skills training despite a budgetary shortfall, the OHR Training Division has begun an In-House Training Initiative that utilizes the skills and knowledges of agency employees to provide valuable learning opportunities to their peers. Currently, 15 in-house training programs have been scheduled.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Diversity Day Program: On May 14, 2012, agency employees celebrated our Annual Diversity Day activities. This year's theme was "Diversity Embraces Change: Communication, Collaboration & Engagement." The activities for the day included cultural presentations, fitness presentations, and music and entertainment from agency staff and the house band, and a program featuring remarks from IBB Director Lobo and a keynote address from Howie Schaffer, founder and chief learning officer at Cook Ross.

OFFICE OF POLICY

Commemoration of Vietnam Human Rights at the U.S. Capitol: The Policy Office Director, Charles Goolsby, represented the IBB Policy Office's role in promoting human rights at the 19th Commemoration of Vietnam Human Rights Day, held on May 9, on Capitol Hill. The Director was among speakers, including members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives; U.S. State Department Deputy Assistant Secretary Dan Baer, and representatives of human rights organizations.



June 13, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director
SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for June

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

Deewa Stringer Warned

Adnan Khan Bitani, a Deewa stringer in Pakistan, has received threatening text messages from a man who identifies himself as Ihsan Ullah Ihsan, the name of the spokesman for the Taliban in Pakistan. Khan's beat is North/South Waziristan, considered the most dangerous place for journalists in Pakistan, and he regularly provides, in addition to his other reports, balanced coverage of attacks that take place in the region. Bitani received two messages on June 11. The first said: "I know you are Adnan Bitani. I am Ihsan Ullah Ihsan" and went on to suggest the two would soon meet. In the second, the sender warned Bitani that, in a few days, he would "learn what I will do with you."

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

VOA Unveils Documentary on Tibetan Self-Immolation

Disturbing images of Tibetans setting themselves on fire, interviews with protesters, and background on Tibet's rich culture are woven together in *Fire in the Land of Snow: Self-Immolations in Tibet*, a compelling new VOA documentary that examines the deadly wave of political self-immolations that have taken place in Tibet since 2009. Following a special press screening of the documentary in the VOA Briefing Room, Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ) said the film "is a really important contribution, and hopefully it will spur the world to act on behalf of Tibet and the Dalai Lama." Speaking to reporters, he said the



East Asia and Pacific Division Director, William Baum, VOA Director David Ensor, and Rep Chris Smith (R-NJ)

documentary “brings further understanding to what Chinese repression is all about.” Many of the videos used in the documentary were made by citizen journalists who risk imprisonment or worse to record the protests and what is happening in their homeland. *Fire in the Land of Snow* also features interviews with leading scholars and experts on Tibet, including the Dalai Lama, Steven Marshall, from the U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China, and Robert Barnett, Director of Modern Tibetan Studies at Columbia University. VOA is now broadcasting the film around the world in Tibetan, Mandarin and English on direct-to-home satellite, affiliate stations, and VOA websites. It is also available on social media platforms, including YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and as a podcast in the iTunes store. News about the documentary was widely picked up by media, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *China Digital Times* and *Christian Science Monitor*.

Iran’s Election

Ahead of the June 14 elections in Iran, a VOA Persian web page dedicated exclusively to the election provided Iranian audiences with news about the campaign and daily one-minute video wrap-ups that included interviews for the web. The audience participation program *Straight Talk* featured a Skype interview with former Iranian President Abol Hassan Bani Sadr, who took audience questions – some directly from Iran. Late-breaking developments were reported through live Twitter feeds and Facebook, while the Persian website consolidated and curated information from Iranian media in Tehran and the provinces. A special file-sharing dropbox was set up in “U-send-it” for Iranians to share video, photos and voice messages with any Persian Service program. The dropbox offered a direct line of communication between viewers in Iran and the special programming. In addition, Central News teamed up with PNN to produce a series of stories related to the elections. On Friday, June 14, election day, PNN broadcast a live television special that included interviews with members of the U.S. Congress, comments from voters, and segments from polling stations in Dubai, London, Paris, New York and Los Angeles. Throughout the day Friday and into Saturday evening, every VOA Persian news program started with two minutes of breaking news about the election. The day after the vote, PNN broadcast two four-hour specials, one early Saturday morning, as the results were being announced, and the other on Saturday evening, when a clearer picture had emerged of the results and what they would mean for Iran and its people.

VOA Exclusive on Boston Bombing Suspect Draws Wide Attention

Following the Boston bombings in April, VOA Russian Service reporter Fatima Tlisova landed an exclusive interview with a former Chechen rebel fighter living in the United States who knew one of the bombers. The VOA story was widely quoted by major U.S media, including *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, CNN and ABC News. Musa Khadjimuradov told Tlisov that he met several times with bombing suspect Tamerlan Tsarnaev prior to the attack that killed three people. Khadjimuradov also said the FBI had searched his home in New Hampshire and questioned him about Tsarnaev’s use of a shooting range in New Hampshire and his purchase of large quantities of fireworks last February at a store in New Hampshire.

First Things First for Burma’s Leader

Toward the end of May, Thein Sein became the first Burmese leader to visit Washington in 47 years. And what did he do on the first day of his visit? He came to VOA, and, in front of a studio audience that included representatives of U.S.-based Burmese groups, answered questions

posed to him by the chief of VOA's Burmese Service and members of the audience. The question-and-answer session lasted nearly an hour, and much of it was devoted to the human rights situation in Burma. The Burmese leader acknowledged some "heavy-handed" actions by police in their efforts to control political dissent in the country, and said both protesters and police must understand their responsibilities as democracy takes hold. On the second day of his visit, President Thein Sein met with President Obama.



Burmese President Thein Sein at VOA

Somalia's President Addresses VOA Town Hall

Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud headlined a town hall meeting in London, sponsored by VOA's Somali Service. About 80 young Somali exiles attended the early May event, moderated by Somali Service staffer Harun Maruf. The exiles asked blunt questions and President Mohamud answered just as bluntly. Asked about the number of young Somalis being recruited as suicide bombers, he said young people are still joining the al-Shabab militant group because of the "weakness" of Somali leaders. "The fact that al-Shabab convinces a young man to die and take his life," he said, "and we on the other hand were not able to convince them to live and get a decent life, is a weakness on our part as politicians, religious leaders, elders and women's groups." The president said his government has plans to rehabilitate young people who defect from al-Shabab and has already processed more than 1,800 who have left the group. President Mohamud was in London at the time for a conference on rebuilding Somalia. The town hall meeting was broadcast in its entirety on the Somali Service's youth show, *Your Call*, and excerpts have been airing on the service's website.



Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud

Deewa's Blanket Coverage of Pakistan Election

VOA Deewa extended its normal broadcasts by six hours on May 10 and 11 to cover Pakistan's general elections for the central parliament and four provincial assemblies. The service made good use of the extra time by focusing in depth on the threat of attacks on political leaders, the participation of youth and women, and the impact of the Taliban. Deewa also provided U.S. perspective on the elections through interviews with experts on Pakistan, including Lisa Curtis of the Heritage Foundation, Marvin Weinbaum of the Middle East Institute, and Dr. Gareth Price of the London-based Chatham House. A special "Deewa Election Blog" was created on the service website to examine interesting aspects of the elections. The extra effort did not go unnoticed. In one of the messages of praise to the service, Ms. Shad Begum, a 2012 recipient of the International Women of Courage Award, said, "It was due to VOA Deewa that Pashtun women in the far-flung areas came out to vote. We are thankful to Deewa Radio for mobilizing the otherwise ignored communities ..."

Cambodian Activist Mam Sonando Tells VOA He Won't Give in to Pressure

Cambodian activist and independent radio station owner Mam Sonando, who was recently released from jail, told VOA that his station, Beehive Radio, will continue to air stories on

sensitive subjects, despite pressure from authorities. Mam Sonando, who was on his first U.S. visit since being released from prison in March, vowed that he would make sure that people are able to have access to news on Beehive Radio, a radio station he owns and one of the few remaining independent broadcasters in Cambodia that airs programming from VOA, Radio Free Asia, Radio France International, and others. The station often reports on government corruption and other sensitive issues. During his visit to VOA, the Cambodian activist met with Director David Ensor and took questions from the Cambodian audience by phone and through Facebook during his interview on the Khmer Service's *Hello VOA* program.



David Ensor and Mam Sonando

Mandarin Report Gets behind Beijing's Firewall

Within hours of getting posted on QQ Weibo, one of China's most popular Twitter-like services, a VOA Mandarin report on the dangerously polluted underground aquifers in Northern China was viewed tens of thousands of times and reposted by thousands of viewers. The report by Fred Wang, VOA Mandarin's Beijing correspondent, included an interview with Chinese geologist Fan Xiao, who estimated that more than 20,000 factories in the country are discharging unprocessed waste water into waste wells, pits and ditches, and even underground storage sites. As a result, according to the geologist, there has been a spike in heavy metal and other toxicants in the country's already depleted underground water supply. The report, which has full VOA branding, has been viewed by more than 1.3 million people. It is the latest example of VOA Mandarin's success in circumventing Beijing's firewall and getting widespread attention on Chinese social media.

VOA and RFE/RL Cooperation and Content-Sharing

Cooperation and cross-promotion between VOA and RFE/RL's Russian Services is moving forward. As of May 29, VOA Russian's widget featuring *US News in 60 Seconds* was placed on the two top-level sections on RFE/RL's Russian website, and VOA Russian's widget will feature other U.S.-centric video products such as *Made in USA* or *Hollywood Boulevard*. RL/Pangea programmers are working on their end to place the VOA Russian widget along all articles targeted to their U.S. content zone. At the same time, VOA Russian placed RFE/RL's widget along VOA's Russia-related articles and on VOA's Russia section. The two Russian Service chiefs, Irina Van Dusen and Irina Lagunina, put in place the exchange arrangement in which VOA will feature RL's Russia-focused content while RL will take VOA's U.S.-focused features. Content-sharing and cross-promotion between RFE/RL and VOA's Ukrainian and Balkan services also continues on a broad spectrum of subjects. In May, some 60 RFE/RL materials were republished by VOA Ukrainian, and some 40 VOA Ukrainian materials were republished by RFE/RL. In addition to the regular exchange of web stories, VOA Ukrainian intensified its cooperation with RFE/RL in May, with reporters from VOA and RFE/RL's Ukrainian services beginning regular reporting to each other's programming. VOA's Ukrainian Service has become the source of U.S. stories for RFE/RL radio and web programming, and VOA Ukrainian's TV show, *Chas Time*, began featuring RFE/RL's correspondents in London and Brussels to report on

major news events. VOA Bosnian used two television stories by RFE/RL in this period, and RFE/RL carried VOA Bosnian's daily 60-second video web segment.

With New Show, Central Africa Service Now Reaches Its Audience Night and Day

The Central Africa Service launched a new early evening live news program on June 3. The half-hour show is heard weeknights from 7:30-8 PM local time in Africa's Great Lakes region. With the addition of the new show, the service is now able to reach its listeners in the morning and evening. The service's longtime sunrise show airs from 5:30-6 AM. In addition, the service airs several half-hour feature programs, including its popular panel discussion and call-in programs. Listeners can hear these shows from 1:30-2 PM, Monday through Sunday, on VOA's 104.3 24/7 FM frequency in Kigali, Rwanda.

VOA Spanish Expands Reach

Continuing its highly successful efforts to expand its affiliate base in Latin America, the Spanish Service has started a live, daily interactive segment with the leading TV network in Peru, Andina Television. The 5-minute prime time segment deals with the top U.S. news stories of the day. The Spanish Service has also added more live reporting on U.S. developments for some of its affiliates in Mexico, Ecuador and Uruguay.

Deewa Reporter Added to Memorial

In a ceremony in mid-May at the Newseum, the name of VOA reporter Mukarram Khan Aatif, killed last year by the Taliban, was added to the Newseum's memorial for slain journalists. Aatif, a reporter for Deewa Radio, was praying at a mosque near his home in the Pakistani town of Shabqadar when a gunman entered the mosque and fatally shot him. His beat was one of the most dangerous in the world, Taliban territory in the tribal areas of northwestern Pakistan, and the Taliban had repeatedly warned him to stop reporting. The names of 81 other journalists, all of whom were killed last year, were also added to the memorial in the May ceremony. The Journalists Memorial was unveiled in 2008, and it now bears the names of 2,244 reporters, photographers, broadcasters and news executives.

Vote of Confidence for French to Africa Super-Stringer

F2A was delighted -- but not surprised -- to learn that its outstanding super-stringer in Bamako, Kassim Traore, recently won a strong vote of confidence from his peers in Mali. The National Union of Journalists of Mali gave him first prize as the journalist who most faithfully upholds the ethics, standards, and impartiality of the profession in reporting the news. Traore's coverage of his country during its trying times is heard on several VOA programs, including *The World Today*, *Sahel Plus* (F2A's daily magazine focusing on the crisis in the Sahel region), and *Mali Kura* (the service's special daily news and information program presented in the Bambara language).

Prominent Economist Flees Russia, Grants VOA Exclusive Interview

Russian economist Sergei Guriyev, who fled Russia under pressure from government investigators, granted an exclusive interview to VOA Russian. A liberal-minded economist and professor at the New Economic School in Moscow, Guriyev resigned on April 30, and fled to France. His ideas had helped guide economic policy during the presidency of Dmitry Medvedev. After Vladimir Putin returned to the post, Guriyev became one of the most prominent people to

vocally support opposition causes. Since then, Russian prosecutors had questioned him repeatedly on a 2011 report he helped write that criticized the prosecution of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, a Putin rival and oil tycoon. The interview was widely republished in the target area and by RFE/RL.

Burmese Chief Part of USIP Mission

VOA Burmese Service Chief Than Lwin Htun joined United States Institutes of Peace as an adviser during its trip to Burma to assess the role of media in conflict resolution. For two weeks, he gave the USIP mission his expertise on the Burmese media, the conflicts between the country's different ethnic nationalities, and the tensions between Muslims and Buddhists.

VOA Reporters Win AP Awards

Up-close footage of NATO Summit protests that turned violent, a documentary on the severe droughts in the Midwest, and a feature story about the Haitian amputee soccer team were winning entries for VOA at the Chesapeake AP Broadcasting Association's annual awards ceremony. The feature story, by correspondent Carolyn Presutti and photographer Michael Burke, about the Haitian Tarantulas, a soccer team whose members all lost limbs in the 2010 earthquake, brought home the top prize for the Sports Features award. VOA Midwest Correspondent Kane Farabaugh received the Outstanding Video Journalist/One-Man Band award for his footage on the clashes in Chicago during the 2012 NATO Summit. Farabaugh and Michael Burke were also part of the team honored for the VOA documentary, *A Dry Season*, which followed the impact of the historic drought that withered crops across the nation's midsection last year. The documentary wove together reports from Farabaugh and Steve Baragona, VOA's Food, Agriculture and Nutrition Correspondent, and examined how farming will adapt to a warming planet. Executive Producer Amy Katz and Videographer Adam Greenbaum were also part of the award-winning production.

How Do You Say That?

Mastering hard-to-say names from around the world is now easier and faster than ever with VOA's newly updated online pronunciation guide, *VOA Pro•nounce* provides access to nearly 7,000 hard-to-say newsmaker names and locations, and it puts them on mobile devices, tablets or desktops. VOA's original online Pronunciation Guide was the first of its kind on the Internet when it was released in 2000. The site has been featured in the *Washington Post*, mentioned in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, and used on the quiz show *Jeopardy*. "The primary aim of the upgrade," says Steve Fuchs of the BBG's Office of Digital Design and Innovation, "is to make the guide more user-friendly and universal, with a responsive design that is accessible on the mobile devices that are in use today."

VOA Turkish Plays Big Role in Coverage of Prime Minister's DC Visit

The prime minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, was in Washington in mid-May and VOA's Turkish Service had him covered, much to the satisfaction of the service's affiliates in Turkey. In addition to daily live news broadcasts on the service's major Turkish affiliate, *TGRT News Network*, VOA Turkish reporters provided live reports to five other major television news organizations in Turkey, including coverage of the prime minister's news conference with President Obama and major policy speeches by the prime minister to Washington audiences and journalists. Even though these Turkish TV outlets had their own journalists covering the visit,

they turned to VOA's Turkish Service to provide Washington expertise and context.

Crackdown on Bloggers and Activists in Vietnam

VOA's Vietnamese Service provided in-depth coverage of attacks by security forces in Hanoi and two other large cities in Vietnam on human rights activists. The attacks came after the activists tried to hold what they called "human rights picnics." Service coverage included interviews with activists, police, and representatives from international human rights groups, as well as legal scholars in the United States.

State Department Religious Freedom Report Points to Neo-Nazi Party in Greece

VOA's Greek Service was the first media outlet in Greece to report on the State Department's International Religious Freedom Report for 2012, which was released in May and was especially critical of Greece's openly anti-Semitic and racist Golden Dawn party. The party is now in parliament and, the report states, is "linked to violent attacks against individuals perceived to be immigrants." VOA Greek's radio/web piece on the report was republished by various major media outlets and blogs in Greece.

Human Rights in Ukraine

On May 8, the U.S. Helsinki Commission held a hearing to examine the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's role in strengthening human rights and the challenges it faces. Among the issues discussed were crackdowns on civil society in Ukraine, which currently chairs the OSCE, including non-investigated cases of journalists and opposition leaders, such as that of imprisoned former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. In an exclusive interview with VOA Ukrainian after the hearing, U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin noted the shortcomings of Ukraine's democracy and stressed that political prosecutions will remain an issue of concern in U.S.-Ukraine relations. VOA Ukrainian also interviewed Ukrainian Foreign Minister Leonid Kozhara following his meeting with Secretary of State John Kerry. Kozhara dismissed U.S. concerns regarding selective prosecutions, saying that while he acknowledges the Tymoshenko case is a problem in bilateral relations, a single criminal case should not be an obstacle to closer ties with the U.S. or to Ukraine's bid for closer relations with the European Union.



U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin

Previewing Albania's June Elections

Albania holds national elections June 23, and, in addition to deciding the country's leaders, the elections could also have a lot to say about Albania's chances of getting into the European Union. For the past three years, Albania has failed to get candidate status from the European Union, and since the multiparty system was established in Albania in the early 1990s, elections have never been considered fully free and fair. In an interview with the Albanian Service (May 20), Bob Hand, adviser to the Congressional Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, warned that if the national elections "do not get a good grade" – do not meet international standards – there will be grave consequences for the country's prospects for EU

integration. The interview – in its entirety or parts of it – was rebroadcast by all national TV stations in the target area and printed by most of the daily newspapers.

VOA Bangla Has Special Guest

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dipu Moni was in Washington in May for talks with Secretary of State John Kerry – and with VOA’s Bangla Service. The foreign minister spoke to VOA Bangla after her talks with Secretary Kerry and described her visit as “very fruitful.” She also gave a detailed account of the government’s action with regard to the Rana Plaza building collapse in Dhaka.

Swahili Town Hall in Arusha

The Swahili service held a successful town hall meeting in the northern town of Arusha, Tanzania, May 21. The topic was “Health and Economic Opportunities for the Youth,” and the focus was on helping young people make good decisions in balancing their health needs as they seek economic opportunities. Swahili Service staffer Mary Mgawe moderated the town hall which was attended by an estimated 150 people drawn from university students from around Arusha, civil society organizations that work with young people, and young businessmen and women who work in and around Arusha. The town hall meeting was well covered by the Tanzania media, including television coverage by Channel TEN of Dar es Salaam.



Urdu Service Photo Contest Gets a Thumbs Up

As part of its coverage of the recent elections in Pakistan, the Urdu Service held a “Proud to be a Pakistani Voter” photo contest. Visitors to the Urdu website were invited to submit their personal photographs of people going to the polls, and three winners received digital cameras. The service created a special web graphic and posted all of the submissions, some of which are featured here...



Other Notable Interviews

- In an interview with VOA’s Creole Service, Haitian President Michel Martelly talked about environmental issues in Haiti and his new reforestation project.

- On VOA's *Foro Interamericano* TV program, Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere, Roberta Jacobson, discussed the recent meeting of the Organization of American States in Guatemala and efforts to combat drug trafficking.
- In an exclusive interview with VOA Burmese in Yangon, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who was visiting Burma as President of National Democratic Institute, told VOA that she believed Burma is on a right path and its reform process would not be reversed.
- VOA Russian spoke with Freedom House director David Kramer to get an inside look into the group's *Freedom of the Press 2013* report, which states that "the percentage of the world's population living in societies with a fully free press has fallen to its lowest level in over a decade." Russia was ranked as number 176 of 197 countries and named an "authoritarian regime," as were China and Iran.
- Kramer also spoke with VOA's Azerbaijani Service. In a TV interview with the service, the Freedom House president criticized the latest crackdown in Azerbaijan on political activists and warned that the crackdown could affect U.S.-Azerbaijan relations.
- In an exclusive interview with VOA, Bosnian Defense Minister Zekerijah Osmic talked about his visit to the Pentagon, where he was received by U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel. The two defense ministers discussed their mutual priorities of NATO reforms, including ammunition disposal and logistics reform, and Hagel reiterated the United States' commitment to Bosnia's progress toward NATO and EU integration.
- VOA Serbian conducted a TV interview with renowned Afghan-American author Khaled Hosseini, whose third book, *And the Mountains Echoed*, has just been published. The interview was done on behalf and at the request of the Service's affiliate, TV Montenegro (public service TV station in Montenegro). VOA Serbian used excerpts from the interview in its TV shows (aired May 23 and 25).

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Hausa Service Breaks Record

Thanks at least in part to major crises in the Hausa Service's target area, the service broke a monthly record in May with over a million visits to its mobile and websites. The crises included the imposition of a state of emergency in three Nigerian states, the killing of nearly 100 policemen by an emerging cult in Nassarawa, and the first suicide attacks in the Niger Republic. A new section on the Hausa-language mobile platform, called *The Troubles in Northern Nigeria*, includes reports from citizen journalists and local reporters in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, all of which have been under a state of emergency since May 14. In addition to stringer reports, the platform regularly features photos of the unrest taken by citizens, as well as audio vox pop reports from people with first-hand accounts of the constant threat of violence from Boko Haram and other militant organizations. The platform also invites mobile users to submit questions they'd like to see discussed at upcoming VOA roundtable events in Nigeria.

Urdu's Facebook Numbers Soar

The Urdu Service Facebook page achieved a major milestone in May: the number of fans of the page topped 300,000. Another 44,000 people posted that they were talking about the page

online. The service's just-concluded Facebook promotional campaign has yielded over a 100 million impressions.

Ashna TV Now Carrying VOA60

In collaboration with VOA's Media Lab team, Ashna TV has started producing Dari and Pashto versions of *VOA60 World*, a daily program provided by the Media Lab. The videos are posted on Ashna TV's newly revamped YouTube channel. The service is also working with the Media Lab team to produce a custom-made Afghan VOA60 for use on weekend editions of Ashna TV as well as YouTube. The service's revamp of its YouTube channel includes new playlists and other features.

ZimMinute, ZimPlus

As part of its efforts to streamline its mobile audio products, the Zimbabwe Service has begun producing *ZimMinute*, a quick look at top headlines. *ZimMinute* goes out as a short (60 to 90 seconds) podcast, and as text via SMS and WhatsApp, every morning. This is followed up in the afternoon by *ZimPlus*, a 4- to 5-minute podcast with headlines and the complete lead story of the day.

Arab Idol

VOA's Kurdish Service websites garnered thousands of hits following a radio interview with *Arab Idol* finalist Parwas Hussein. Ms. Hussein, a Kurd from Iraq's semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan, was the first contestant to perform in the Kurdish language on *Arab Idol*, a popular program broadcast by the Middle East Broadcasting Center. She told the Kurdish Service that, for her, "it is not important to win the Arab Idol competition, the most important thing is introducing the Kurdish Songs to the Arab audiences and viewers." The VOA story was picked up by several Kurdish news organizations, including Nalia media whose website received nearly 25,000 hits in five days, and the Kurdish website Xendan whose article received more than 11,000 hits.

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Press Releases

- *VOA Jazz Show Builds on Musical Legacy – June 13*
- *Fire in the Land of Snow: Self-Immolations in Tibet – June 6*
- *Cambodian Activist Tells VOA He Won't Give in to Pressure – May 28*
- *Burma President Questioned on Rights Issues at VOA Town Hall – May 20*
- *VOA Exclusive: Boston Bombing Suspect Met Former Chechen Rebel – May 16*
- *VOA Pronunciation Guide Gets Innovative Makeover – May 14*
- *Newseum Memorial Honors VOA Reporter Killed in Pakistan – May 13*
- *Somali President Appears at VOA Event – May 9*

Highlights

- *In-House Design Duo Spruces Up Studio 47 – May 21*

PR Supported Events

- Rollout event for Tibetan Service Documentary, June 6
- Town Hall with Burmese President – May 20
- Newseum Memorial to VOA reporter Mukarram Khan Aatif – May 13
- David Ensor took part in Global Diaspora Forum. – May 13

VOA Studio Tour

- International Visitors Leadership Program participants from Serbia meet Serbian Service staff – June 11
- Journalists from Bangladesh meet Bangla Service – June 5
- IVLP Multi-Regional participants meet with VOA language service staff -- June 5
- National Committee on U.S.-China Relations brings students to VOA – May 30
- Iscar Blanco talks to Pepperdine University students – May 29
- FSI students and instructors meet VOA language services – May 23
- ICFJ Journalism Fellows meet Urdu Service – May 23
- German journalists meet Eurasia Division staff – May 22
- Mr. Yusuf Iqbal of the Free Rohingya Campaign received tour and met with Burmese Service – May 21
- Committee of U.S.-China Relations brings group to VOA Mandarin Service – May 16
- Pakistani administrators visit VOA Urdu Service – May 15
- University of Hong Kong students meet Mandarin staff – May 15
- IVLP Participants meet with Creole Service – May 9

DATE: June 10, 2014
MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim Management Team
SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for May 2014

Global Strategy:

- The Board will soon receive 16 regional strategies completed in the Office of Strategy and Development's annual Strategy Review process. In the coming weeks, we will begin implementing the strategies and discussing priorities and trade-offs for the FY 2016 budget process.
- The Digital Analytics rollout for all agency entities is complete. Key audience metrics are now available for all USIM web and mobile sites. The Mobile News Applications will include new analytics tracking when updates are issued later this summer.

Global Operations:

- On May 28, the agency issued a draft Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new contracting structure that would acquire all broadcast support services through one/a few external firm(s), rather than on an individual basis. The procurement team held a successful pre-solicitation conference attended by representatives from approximately 15 firms, who received clarifications on the solicitation. The agency expects to publish a finalized RFP in the coming days.
- Destructive interference interrupted MBN Alhurra TV transmissions on the ARABSAT satellite for over an hour on May 26. The operator of the satellite geo-located the source of the interference within the country of Ethiopia. VOA Persian News TV transmissions through EUTELSAT 25B were also interrupted on June 1-2. These disruptions also affected other broadcasters, and BBG transmissions were probably not the intended primary targets.
- Inauguration of the new BBG FM transmitter in Nouakchott, Mauritania, is scheduled for June 25.
- Agency data traffic between the BBG transmitting station in Kuwait and Washington has been shifted from a satellite link to a secure Internet connection resulting in significantly improved performance and decreased satellite channel costs.
- A lightning strike near the BBG Sri Lanka Transmitting Station completely destroyed the station's telephone system. Interim Internet connectivity has restored some service while a new telephone system is being shipped and installed.
- The first phase of the office space reconstruction project on the fourth floor of the Cohen Building in Washington should be completed in July, and up to 85 employees are scheduled to move into the renovated open space by the end of that month.
- A total of 17 VOA language services are now transitioned to the upgraded Dalet Radio Production.
- The Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) team continued work with contractor Oliver and Coady to develop Ukrainian and Russian language versions of a mobile application to allow social news reading and curated user-generated content. The free app is now available on the Google play store and is also available in Chinese and Tibetan.
- Mr. Frank Filipkowski will be joining the agency on July 14th in the position of Budget Director, Office of Chief Financial Officer. Mr. Filipkowski comes from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.
- The agency received a project plan and timeline from OPM Human Resources Solutions Division for the engagement to assist in managing human capital challenges anticipated in Fiscal Year 2015 budget. Internal meetings are being scheduled to receive comments and discuss any issues with timing, union notifications, and etc.
- The agency received a total of 24 applications for the Buyout. Under this program, employees who resign or retire by June 30, 2014, may receive up to \$25,000.00 as a separation incentive.

Global Communications:

- The 2014 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) ends June 13, 2014. The agency wide response rate is currently 59.6%. If the agency achieves 70% participation in this year's survey, all federal employees will receive two (2) hours of paid administrative leave.



June 10, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for June

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- On June 1, three days ahead of the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown, Chinese immigration officials summoned VOA Mandarin correspondent Fred Wang to their offices. The officials warned Wang and VOA Beijing Bureau Chief Bill Ide, who accompanied Wang to the hearing, that no interviews or filming could be conducted in public venues without permission from authorities and that no citizens of the PRC could be interviewed in VOA's Beijing offices. Undeterred by what both reporters saw as an obvious attempt to intimidate them, each gathered information as they normally do and filed pieces on the anniversary. *Government Executive* magazine filed a story June 5 citing VOA coverage of the anniversary.
- VOA Burmese Correspondent Khin Soe Win has taken up her post as VOA's first-ever bureau chief in Rangoon. Khin Soe Win, an 11-year veteran at VOA, arrived in Myanmar on May 24, and immediately started filing reports on constitutional reform and reactions to the Thai coup. She was one of the first foreign journalists interviewing senior Burmese officials in Rangoon after the country opened up in 2010.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors
FROM: Interim CEO & Director, André Mendes
DATE: June 22, 2015
SUBJECT: IBB Monthly Report for May 2015

Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey closed on June 12. Preliminary results indicate BBG's response rate to be around 72%. Between August 2015 and December 2015, OPM will provide BBG with final response rates and employee satisfaction scores. We expect the final results to be a few percentage points higher than our current tabulation. As compared with this time in 2014, BBG's response rates were 65.9% and the final OPM number came in at 68.7%. The BBG's participation rates are 9% above last year and a remarkable 61% higher than the Federal Government at large.

Technology Services and Innovation (TSI)

- BBG has provided ongoing updates with employees regarding the June 4th Office of Personnel Management (OPM) cyber intrusion to include messages from the Interim CEO and Director, the Chief Information Officer, and OPM. We will continue to monitor and follow up with stakeholders as necessary.
- TSI continues to work with the embassy in Amman to direct officials of **Jordan** Radio and TV to fulfill their contractual obligations to us to restore BBG's leased FM sites at **Amman** and **Ajloun** to full operating power.
- TSI added additional shortwave transmissions of VOA Kinyarwanda/Kirundi in response to the turmoil in Burundi. TSI also extended the VOA shortwave Amharic, Afan Oromo, and Tigrigna transmissions to cover the Ethiopian general elections.
- U.S. Ambassador Cynthia Akuetteh (U.S. Embassy Gabon) visited the Sao Tome Transmitting Station in early April. She was favorably impressed by the station's operation and friendly team who worked several days to prepare the building and grounds for her first visit to Sao Tome. André Mendes also visited Sao Tome in early May to meet with station staff and to visit local officials and institutions.
 - In April, Sao Tome station staff members promptly responded to an urgent distress call to help a stranded fisherman caught in turbulent waters well offshore. They launched the Station's Zodiac boat in heavy seas and brought the stranded fisherman and his dugout to shore. This type of community service is priceless and reflects well on the entire staff and operation of the station in Sao Tome.
- The agency received no notifications from the United States Computer Emergency Response Team (US-CERT) in the past month of any suspicious activity being directed toward or emanating from the agency's computing infrastructure.

Office of Digital & Design Innovation (ODDI)

- **VOA ‘Audio Streamer’ Application Submitted to the iOS and Android App Stores on June 17**

The free, official VOA Mobile Streamer application serves broadcast audio news in more than 30 different languages to your Android devices, iPhone, iPod Touch, and iPad. The VOA Mobile Streamer allows users to:

- Listen to **hundreds of radio news programs on-demand** in more than 30 different languages
- Hear **live radio broadcasts streaming** in dozens of languages
- **Save download time and data costs** with the Low-Bandwidth Mode in the settings
- **Share your favorite audio** by e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, Google+ and other social media services

- **What is the Unique Value of the Mobile Streamer for VOA & Its Audiences?**

- It allows VOA to better serve and **connect with audiences in low-bandwidth countries using click-to-call cellular/voice** minutes to get our audio content, instead of having to stream it over costly data connections.
- It offers a new way to experience VOA audio content through a unique and refreshing design offering a non-traditional news app experience, especially **for younger audiences that might be turned off by the more traditional news approach.**
- It **offers a passive, hands-free way to consume VOA’s content** while commuting to work or doing other tasks.
- It helps **showcase the depth and breadth of all the thousands of hours of VOA audio programs** we produce each week.
- It allows us to leverage **AudioNow’s international IVR infrastructure.**



June 18, 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: Kelu Chao, VOA Acting Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for May

KEY ISSUES / CHALLENGES

- VOA Burundi stringer Desire Hatungimana has fled to Rwanda following weeks of threats and intimidation from security and government officials. A pro-government blog identified Hatungimana as one of the reporters it says was inciting protests against the decision by President Pierre Nkurunziza to seek another term. The deputy spokesperson of the security ministry and police said that the media were to blame for the remaining pockets of protests. "It is a movement of some journalists - especially those sent by the international media - who... organize groups of people in remote areas, away from police, and ask them to sing, to exhibit placards," the spokesperson said.
- On May 17, VOA English launched its new *International Edition*. VOA's flagship English news radio program is much more conversational and features expert interviews and debriefers with VOA reporters around the world. The new format also allows hosts to provide instant analysis on breaking stories such as the FIFA scandal, the prisoner escape from New York's Clinton Correctional Facility, and Washington's decision to send more troops to Iraq.
- The English Division's partnership with Nigeria's leading television news station, Channels TV, continues to pay dividends in promoting the VOA brand across Africa's most populous nation. Last month, VOA provided the local affiliate live reports on the African Union summit, the terror attacks in Pakistan, and human-trafficking in Malaysia. English also enhanced VOA's exposure by adding weekly business reports from New York that are carried on Channels' most watched program, *The News at Ten*.
- VOA English is still jammed by China. In fact, any VOA English that can be received in China, even if it is officially meant for a region other than Asia, like VOA English to Africa, is jammed. This so-called "hash" jamming is used by the Chinese against VOA/English and other international broadcasters such as the BBC. It started back in mid-December, 2012. Initially was targeting Radio Australia, as well as VOA/Chinese/Cantonese/Tibetan/Uzbek. VOA/English frequencies 17895/15580/13590 kHz are constantly jammed, as well as 4930 kHz and sometimes 6080 kHz.
- TSI has identified a Chinese report that a Medium Wave transmitter site located near Yanbian close to the North Korean border is specifically broadcasting to jam VOA and FEBC signals on 1188 kHz and 1566 kHz with a TSD-25 transmitter. [The article](#) was published on China's electronic magazine website or "Technology Wind."

DATE: March 8, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: IBB – Richard M. Lobo, Director

SUBJECT: IBB Summary Report for February, 2012

FEBUARY HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ISSUES

Multilateral Effort to Combat Satellite Jamming: BBG, working with other international broadcasters, spearheaded efforts to revise telecommunications regulations in order to combat satellite uplink jamming. Gary Thatcher, of the Office of Strategy and Development, was part of the U.S. delegation to the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) in Geneva. The conference has the ability to rewrite the international treaty that governs radio, television, satellite and mobile phone frequencies worldwide. BBG, working with the BBC, Audiovisuel Extérieur de la France and other members of the DG5 group, pressed delegates to act against satellite jamming, which originates from Iran and Syria, and has interrupted the programs of PNN, Alhurra and Radio Farda. The WRC reinforced prohibitions against deliberate interference, broadcasting with excessive power and without proper identification, and called upon members of the International Telecommunication Union to take action to end the practice. BBG worked closely with the Department of State and the regulatory authorities of France, the UK and Germany during the conference.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

Satellite Picture with Audio Services: BBG currently provides three picture with audio satellite services for audiences in Africa and Asia. One service for VOA in Africa is on Arabsat, and services for VOA and RFA in Asia are on Telstar 18. This economical service provides a stereo audio channel with accompanying still pictures, texts, and graphics for viewing on a television set. TSI has set up a series of demonstrations beginning on February to show how different data rates affect the picture quality and the overall cost of the service in an effort to find even more economical options to expand these services.

New BBG FM Transmitters in Libya: For the planned BBG FM station in **Tripoli, Libya**, TSI delivered all needed equipment to Tunis for shipment on to Tripoli. Because the land border crossing entrances to Libya have been closed, the contractor decided to transport the equipment by boat to Benghazi and then truck it to Tripoli. The boat shipment has been greatly delayed.

New Medium Wave Radio Transmitter in South Korea: TSI engineers Gerhard Straub and Ken Claerbout traveled to South Korea in mid-February to coordinate with the Far East Broadcasting Corporation (FEBC) on implementation of the medium wave project. Details regarding the license application and facility modifications were discussed. BBG agreed to supply data for the license application and assist with contracting tasks. Potential issues with

Korean Communications Commission (KCC) were discussed. Immediate goal is the filing of the license application.

Maintaining and Improving OCB Transmissions to Cuba: TSI is continuing technical investigation of various possibilities to increase or enhance radio coverage into Cuba. We have also initiated technical discussions with the Federal Communications Commission regarding possible station authorizations. We have received some FM monitoring data and are following up for further verification. We are also investigating various medium wave possibilities in the region. We also initiated frequency license renewals for the OCB Marathon, Florida, medium wave transmitting site and its associated UHF radio network.

FM and TV Transmission Projects:

- TSI continues to work on the installation of seven additional BBG FM facilities in **Afghanistan**. Installations have been delayed another 3-4 weeks by bad weather. According to the current schedule, the installation at **Lashkar Gah in Helmand Province**, should be on-air in March, and the installation in **Ghazni** should be on-air in April. Bad weather, shipping delays, and security issues have delayed these and subsequent planned installations.
- BBG engineer Ken Claerbout traveled to **Juba, South Sudan**, from January 27 – February 2 to explore alternatives for establishing a BBG FM station there. Three options have been identified, but the cost quoted by an embassy engineer to erect a surplus tower appears excessive. We are investigating other tower installation options.

IBB Transmitting Stations:

- The new U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait, Mathew H. Tueller, visited the Kuwait station in late January. He was given a complete orientation tour and spoke to the local staff. Matt Tueller is no stranger to Kuwait. He was an officer at the old U.S. Embassy during the first Gulf war and DCM at the new Embassy in 2005.

IBB Information Technology (IT):

- Post-deployment clean-up continues after the very successful December cutover to Office 365 email and calendaring cloud-based service for BBG and IBB users in Washington. Phase 2 planning is now underway for migration of SharePoint to the cloud, general rollout of Lync conferencing service, and upgrades to news bureaus and transmitting stations. On February 15, Microsoft shot a video interview with Andre Mendes, in which he described the business and technical benefits to the agency derived from moving to the cloud. Microsoft will use it to illustrate a success story.
- IT Division representatives traveled to Prague to perform a site survey and start dialog about cross facility utilization for Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery, as well as sharing IT services.
- Representatives from RFE/RL will be onsite at BBG through March 31, 2012, to train and implement the migration of the new Pangaea content management system that will be hosted in a facility operated by RFE/RL in Prague.

Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) Activities:

- James Marshall, developer of a critical piece of circumvention software (cgi proxy) gave a presentation to VOA and RFA regarding the expected future state of state control over information flows.
- BBG made a presentation at an AID sponsored security conference that brought together major funding recipients from BBG, State, and AID.
- Akamai was invited to present their technical proposal for a URL obfuscation system with applicability for mobile phone applications in highly filtered environments.

OFFICE OF DIGITAL & DESIGN INNOVATION

USIB iTunes Store: The Voice of America has been quite successful in distributing its audio content via podcasts in the iTunes international store. VOA content regularly hits in the “top 5” in the international category and is often featured by the iTunes staff. This fact is partially attributable to the quality of the content, but also to one person, Addie Nascimento, on the ODDI staff. Addie helped create the VOA iTunes podcast store and maintains a regular and interactive relationship with iTunes staff. We asked Addie to repeat her success by developing a strategy to work with all of the entities to either bring their content onto iTunes or upgrade their presence. After developing a strategy and presentation, she got buy-in from all of the entities to sign onto a single iTunes agreement that enables ODDI to build out a single “backend” for all of USIB on iTunes, while allowing each entity to retain their brand and control of putting content into the store. Over the next few weeks, we will be launching a number of new stores with RFA, RFE/RL and OCB. MBN is soon to follow.

Quick Hits: A number of quick updates and innovation projects in development:

- **Audio/Video Platform:** ODDI is leading an effort to replace our current audio and video platform, for which the current contract ends in April. We have begun a twin process of developing forward-looking technical requirements, as well as a USIB-wide coordination process with the goal of building a single audio/video platform that is tightly integrated with the Pangea content management system.
- **Social Media Newsroom:** We have contracted with Kate Gardiner, formerly head of social media at PBS NewsHour and the Senior Social Media Consultant for Al Jazeera English, to work with the VOA Russian and MBN Al-Yaum program on integrating social media workflow and products into their work. Kate was an instrumental consultant on launching Al Jazeera’s The Stream program, and will be key in helping to grow our own television programming with social media.
- **Avanza Cuba:** Some members of the ODDI staff travelled to Miami to work closely with the OCB staff on the Avanza Cuba program. Our role is to help them build and then execute on a social media strategy that engages prospective audience members to help shape the upcoming programs and then participate during the broadcast.
- **Intel Content Bundling:** ODDI, under the direction of Raina Kumra, completed an experiment to identify VOA health content for “bundling” onto Intel devices being distributed to Africa. We will be completing a post-mortem on the project to determine what

we need to do to expand the opportunities of bundling content for mobile and computer devices.

OFFICE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Placement Opportunities in Burma: Doug Boynton and VOA Burmese Service Chief, Than Lwin Htun explored opportunities to place BBG multi-media content with Myanmar Radio-TV and with at least one private radio broadcaster, Padamyar FM, which operates stations in a number of cities nationwide. The Burmese (Myanmar Radio and TV) expressed interest in English learning programs as well as training (e.g., for use of video editing equipment). BBG has worked closely with State to manage the project in compliance with U.S. sanctions law. BBG will continue current programs for Burma from outside the country. Internal distribution is in addition to, not instead of, the targeted news and information the agency has been doing for years. We are currently discussing the logistics and timing of a follow-on trip that could include signing a deal.



Boynton, Lwin and Adrienne Nutzman, the PAO from Rangoon, with officials of MRTV and the Ministry of Information.

Somalia: The Ministry of Information in the Somaliland Region has encouraged VOA to install additional FM transmissions in cities around the region. In addition, an Africom official has informed OSD that his organization is committed to funding a proposal for \$100,000 to produce programming aimed at countering violent extremism.

Cuba Giveaways: Working with the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, OSD is seeking partners who will donate items as contest giveaways in Cuba: cell phones, tablets, soccer sport equipment, etc. to be given to listener's families responding to TV/radio/internet contests. This is an effort to expand a program that has already been very successful in improving OCB's engagement with its audience on the island.

Bangladesh Placement:

Marketing Officer Neal Lavon traveled to Bangladesh to meet with current and potential VOA television and radio affiliates. Several new television affiliates plan to carry VOA segments, particularly coverage of the U.S. Presidential election. OSD has also submitted a proposal to USAID to fund health programming for Bangladesh.



Development Activities

- **China Health Programming:** At the request of the State Department, OSD is developing a proposal for funding on covering non-communicable diseases.
- **Africa Health Programming:** OSD is reaching out to foundations, including Gates, and corporations to gauge interest in helping to fund the new VOA Africa Health Network.
- **Mozambique Opportunities:** Development Officer Joan Mower traveled to Mozambique and secured placement for television products on two new affiliates. OSD is also seeking USAID funding for expanded VOA programming on health and education.
- **Citizen Journalism in Belarus:** OSD is working to launch a Citizen Journalism project in Belarus with VOA and RFE/RL.
- **Russia:** OSD is organizing a journalism training session in Moscow in early April. In addition, the Oak Foundation has pledged to give VOA funds to produce a program on the history of dissidents.

Research

- **DG5 Researchers and Strategists Meeting:** Researchers and Strategists met over 2 days at Radio Netherlands in Hilversum, Feb. 9&10. The group made progress on the final details of the shared research program with Gallup, under which the other DG5 broadcasters will pay BBG to license our research data.
- **Upcoming Research:** Research projects coming soon include national surveys of Burma, Rwanda, Nigeria, Tanzania, Russia, Iran, Iraq, Haiti, and possibly, for the first time, Cuba. Qualitative work will be conducted in Nigeria and among Cubans in Miami. Gallup will also be reviewing BBG's current performance reporting to ensure compliance with federal performance standards and to better capture the impact of our broadcast programs.

- **Gallup Contract Roll-Out:** OSD is working with BBG Public Affairs to plan an event at Gallup's DC headquarters to announce the new research contract and draw attention to BBG's research program. The event is tentatively planned for the week of March 12th, but the exact date has not been finalized.

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Ashna Review: This year's research in Afghanistan confirmed that international broadcasters continue to play a critical role in that country, providing comprehensive and objective news in a manner not matched by domestic media. VOA's weekly audience has reached 60 percent – an increase of 10 percentage points since the last survey in 2009. Both the radio and television components of VOA's broadcasts have gained significant audience in that period. VOA's audience is highly dedicated, as well. Nearly half tune in every day, and the majority consider themselves "appointment listeners". Moreover, nearly 20% of VOA's listeners consider the station to be their single most important source of information. VOA's television products give it a strong advantage in urban Afghanistan, where TV has increasingly come to be the dominant medium. In the country's top five cities, VOA's television broadcasts alone reach more than 60% weekly, and VOA's "all-platform" reach of 72% make it the leading international broadcaster by far. Performance Review recommendations address enhancing delivery, presentation and technical quality of content/programs in addition to development of an effective branding and marketing campaign for Afghanistan.

Radio Marti (OCB) Review: The first national phone survey on Cubans' "yesterday" media habits (December 2011) showed most report only one radio listening session a day (30% reported two), users almost always listen at home, and that—while listening peaks in the morning (0700-1200), radio use is above 10% most all day (0600-2000). A quarter of these adults in wired phone households had a mobile phone, over half of mobile users have made or received calls from abroad, and over half have received and SMS from abroad. Radio Martí's informational programs are accurate, timely, unique in their Cuba coverage, and largely objective, according to nine panelists in a December 2011 monitoring panel, although concerns about diversity of views and single-source reports were raised by one expert panelist and a minority of seven recent immigrants who were listeners in Cuba. Panelists found Radio Martí's presentation to be professional and polished and liked the mix of news and lighter information offered by the four programs they evaluated. As demonstrated in the research, Performance Review analysts found significant improvement in content and program quality and recommendations focused on expansion of distribution efforts for Cuba and strengthening of online presence.

Ukrainian Review: Voice of America has the highest level awareness of any international newscaster among adults in Ukraine (surveyed November 2011), with 72% recalling the station spontaneously or after prompting, and the weekly reach of its television programs increased significantly over 2011 to 16.8% of adults. Regular audience has increased for each of its three TV products (*Window on America*, *Chas-Time* and special reports for major networks), as well as for viewing measured by only the channel name. About nine in ten weekly viewers find VOA programs offer interesting news/information and two-thirds or more agree they offer news they do not see elsewhere. Almost three-fourths of weekly viewers say that watching VOA-TV

programs has increased their understanding of current events, and almost four in five say they find VOA news trustworthy. Performance Review found Ukrainian content to be of exceptional quality and recommends that VOA and OSD work together to better promote and distribute the television and online content for VOA in Ukraine.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

FY 2013 Budget Meetings: In conjunction with VOA, the Office of Human Resources met on February 13 and 14 with 15 language services potentially affected by the FY 2013 budget. OHR also is planning a series of informational meetings with language services and employee groups to explain Reduction in Force (RIF) procedures and policies and will develop an Intranet page that includes links to federal RIF regulations and Frequently Asked Questions, among other information. Employees have been advised that they may ask at any time to meet privately with a member of the OHR staff to discuss their potential standing if a RIF were implemented.

Performance Appraisal Handbook: The Office of Human Resources has developed a comprehensive Performance Appraisal Handbook to assist managers in communicating individual and organizational goals to employees that support the overall strategic mission and Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) goals of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. The Handbook also informs managers and supervisors on how to monitor and evaluate employee performance and use performance as a basis for appropriate personnel actions, including rewarding noteworthy performance and taking action to improve less than successful performance.

OFFICE OF POLICY

Interviews with Assistant Secretary of State Brownfield and Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator Crowley: On February 22, Office of Policy editorial writer and producer Joan DeLuca interviewed Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs William Brownfield concerning the Merida Initiative and related programs. On February 9, Ms. DeLuca interviewed Christopher Crowley, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for USAID's Middle East Bureau on Iraq's civil society program. Both interviews provided original audio and video actualities for radio and web editorials, as well as *Policy Brief* and *Punto de Vista* TV editorials.



March 1, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Broadcasting Board of Governors

FROM: David Ensor, VOA Director

SUBJECT: VOA's Monthly Report for March

A. FIREWALL

There are no firewall issues to report this month.

B. CHALLENGES/ISSUES

Administration's FY 2013 Budget Request

On February 13 and 14, after the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2013 was sent to Congress, David Ensor, his senior management team and HR Director Donna Grace met with all VOA elements that are to be reduced or eliminated as part of the proposal.

VOA Burmese Chief Participates in Rangoon Media Workshop

At the invitation of the Burmese government, VOA Burmese Service Chief Than Lwin Htun delivered a presentation the end of January at a media workshop organized by the government-sponsored Myanmar Writers and Journalist Association in Rangoon. Than's speech, on "Media Development in Burma and the Role of Media in Current National Peace-Building Efforts," was well-received by the audience. Excerpts of the speech appeared in several local news outlets. During his time in Burma, Than and OMPP Director Doug Boynton met with various information ministry officials and private FM station operators to discuss future cooperation and placement of VOA programs. As a result of these meetings, VOA Burmese is now producing a series of VOA branded "English in a Minute" video lessons for Burmese media, and the service will also send copies of their "English American Idioms" radio program to Burma for rebroadcasting.

C. PROGRAMMING/NEW INITIATIVES

Secretary Clinton Gives Albanian Service an Exclusive

An aide to the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton contacted the Albanian Service February 24, saying the Secretary might be available for an interview in response to the landmark agreement that had just been reached between Serbia and Kosovo. The service immediately expressed its interest

and a short while later received a call from Tunisia, where the Secretary was holding meetings. Mrs. Clinton gave a six-minute interview in which she praised the agreement as a significant step forward for both countries. The interview focused exclusively on the Serbia-Kosovo agreement. The Secretary did not entertain questions on other subjects. VOA's Albanian Service has a total weekly reach of 57 percent in Kosovo and 48 percent in Albania. In addition to being broadcast by the Albanian Service, the interview was rebroadcast by leading media outlets in Kosovo and Albania.

Burning of the Quran Sets off Firestorm

The protests that erupted after the burning of the Qurans by NATO forces in Afghanistan have been major news for all VOA services, but for the VOA services that broadcast to the region they continue to be the subject of intense and virtually nonstop coverage. Afghan Service programming includes constantly updated news reports from its Kabul stringer, video feeds of the protests, and reaction from Afghan President Karzai and other officials in the Afghan government. The service also reported on the apologies over the burnings by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and President Obama. In addition to full coverage of the protests, Deewa Radio has conducted talk shows and broadcast a feature in which scholars discussed the proper way to handle old or defaced copies of the Quran. The Afghan Service Facebook page has been overwhelmed with comments about the protests. Many of them are critical of the U.S. and Afghan governments. There are also comments blaming religious fanatics for creating a chaotic situation.

VOA Launches *On Assignment*

VOA is producing a new 30-minute weekly TV magazine show, *On Assignment*, giving VOA's audience a behind-the-scenes look at the VOA correspondents and producers who report the news. In the first *On Assignment*, reporter Sharon Behn and videographer Ilyas Khan took viewers to Baghdad and told how they reported on the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. Another *On Assignment* features Khin Soe Win, the first VOA reporter to return to her native Burma since 1995, and Carolyn Presutti, who describes her recent trip to Haiti to cover the progress the country is making in its recovery from the earthquake that struck two years ago. The new English language show is broadcast by satellite from Washington and hosted by Imran Siddiqui and Alex Villarreal. The program has already been picked up by Cores Networks in Bulgaria, which covers several TV markets in that country.

Urdu Adds Three New Programs

The Urdu Service launched a new TV segment called *Café DC*, focusing on how members of Congress and the Administration balance their professional and personal lives. The first guests were Rep. Chris Van Hollen, ranking Member of the House Budget Committee and Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, ranking member of the House Intelligence Committee. VOA Urdu also launched two new weekly radio programs: *Awaz-e-Dost* (Voice of a Friend), which features stories from listeners, and *Har Dam Rawan Hai Zindagi* (Community Building), which covers prominent Pakistani-Americans and their efforts to improve PAK – U.S. relations.

VOA Expands Reach to Somali Diaspora

Canada's large Somali diaspora community can now listen to the latest VOA Somali broadcasts on their phones. The new "call-to-listen" service is part of a growing partnership between VOA and

AudioNow, a mobile distribution provider. The service is available in Canada on any phone, 24 hours a day, by simply dialing the number posted on the VOA [website](#). Africa Division Director Gwen Dillard says a similar service VOA introduced in Great Britain last year has been extremely successful. “The Somali diaspora community is an important audience for us,” Dillard said. The Somali Service is also wildly successful inside Somalia. The service recently celebrated its fifth anniversary, and Director David Ensor, in offering his congratulations, noted that it has become one of the country’s most respected news sources. “A recent survey,” he added, “shows that 73 percent of people in the regions that were polled, listen each week to the news and information the service offers, a sign of the trust that the Somali audience has placed in us.” Last year, VOA and *AudioNow* also inaugurated new “call-to-listen” services in Guinea and Liberia. *AudioNow*’s proprietary, patent-pending technology allows any fixed or mobile phone to access live audio programming across all mobile platforms.

PNN Has a Big Night at the Oscars

This year’s Oscar for best foreign language film was awarded to Iranian director Asghar Farhadi for the film *A Separation*. Iranians learned about the award immediately, thanks to PNN’s *Late Edition*, which extended its airtime to cover the awards live. The night after the Oscar ceremony, PNN correspondent Behnood Mokri was given access to the Oscar press room and was the only Iranian reporter to directly ask a question of Farhadi. PNN also had an original report on Farhadi and the difficulties and challenges he faced as a movie director in Iran.

VOA Delivers for Whitney Houston’s Many Fans in Indonesia

In response to high demand from its TV and radio affiliates, VOA Indonesian provided extensive coverage of Whitney Houston’s death and the days of grieving that followed it. Indonesian Service reports appeared on seven of the 11 national TV stations and numerous regional TV stations, as well as radio affiliates across Indonesia. The service sent two reporters to Newark for the singer’s funeral, and they provided live reports direct to TV and radio stations in Indonesia as well as content for recorded packages that were distributed via satellite and VOA Direct.

40th Anniversary of Nixon’s Visit to China

VOA Mandarin dug into its archives and made available selections from interviews conducted with people from China and the U.S. who were involved in President Nixon’s 1972 visit to China and the subsequent establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Among those interviewed were: Zhang Hanzhi (Mao Zedong’s private English teacher) and Winston Lord, a diplomat who was a key figure in establishing relations between the countries. These reports, which feature several interesting anecdotes about Nixon’s visit and the negotiations on the Shanghai Communique, have been used on radio, TV, and on the Internet.

VOA Korean Breaks News of U.S. Liaison Dispatched to North Korea

On February 16, Korean Service reporter Sungwon Baik broke the news that the U.S. plans to dispatch a liaison officer to Pyongyang, North Korea to monitor efforts to recover the remains of U.S. servicemen killed during the Korean War. The liaison officer will be stationed in Pyongyang during the recovery effort, which is expected to begin in April and last for six months. The move comes as the United States is reviving efforts to resume the long-stalled multilateral talks over

North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Baik's report was widely picked up by major South Korean media organizations.

Zimbabwe Series on Communicable Diseases

The Zimbabwe Service aired a five-part series about the recent typhoid outbreaks in the country, particularly those in Harare townships. The issue of communicable diseases strikes a nerve in Zimbabwe, where memories remain strong of the nationwide cholera epidemic of 2008-2009 that killed more than 4,200. Zimbabweans this time around expressed anger that the central and local governments had accomplished so little in the way of purifying water supplies in the past three years. The Harare City Council initially blamed the outbreaks on street vendors, but eventually acknowledged a more likely cause: the city's water supply. VOA Studio 7 is now preparing another five-part series looking in detail at the government's failure to provide safe water.

An Exclusive for VOA Turkish

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu visited the United States in February for talks with Secretary of State Clinton and other top officials in the Obama Administration about Syria and Iran. Before his meeting with the U.S. officials, Davutoglu gave an exclusive interview to the Turkish Service. Davutoglu told the service that Turkey is urging the Assad regime to stop killing its own people and that Turkey is preparing for a possible influx of Syrian refugees.

EU's Greece Bailout

VOA's Greek Service was the first Greek-language broadcaster to air a comprehensive report on the details of the agreement reached by Eurozone finance ministers to approve a new \$171 billion bailout for Greece. The director of VOA affiliate Radio City International called Greek Service Chief George Bistis and thanked him for enabling his station to become "the first in Thessaloniki to air crucial details of the deal." Thessaloniki is the second largest media market in Greece.

VOA Lao Turns 50

VOA's Lao Service celebrated its 50th anniversary on February 22. David Ensor, Dick Lobo and past and current colleagues and friends joined the service to celebrate the occasion. On March 1, Governor Victor Ashe, accompanied by Ensor and Rebecca McMenamin, dropped by the service to thank its members for their dedicated service to their audiences and to present them with a BBG commemorative plaque.



On hand for the Feb. 22 party was Thavanh Svengsouk, the first chief of the service.
To his right is Dara Baccam, the current service chief.

Notable Interviews

- “Africa is not the last frontier but the final frontier for development,” said Don Ayamamoto, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, in an interview with VOA Portuguese to Africa Service. “If we look at the next ten years,” Mr. Ayamamoto said, Africa is probably going to be one of the biggest opportunities for U.S. trade and investment.
- Senator Robert Menendez, D-NJ, spoke to VOA Spanish about the threats of Iranian intervention in the hemisphere. The interview took place after a Senate hearing on Iran’s activities in Latin America.
- English to Africa – E2A – spoke with Margo Drakos, founder of a mobile phone app called AppBridge, about the possibilities of using that feature to help educate the poor.
- VOA Tibetan interviewed Lobsang Sangay, prime minister of India-based exile Central Tibetan Administration, on the administrative challenges he has faced in his first six months in office.
- VOA Korean interviewed Chang Ung, the North Korean member of the International Olympic Committee and a head of the International Taekwondo Federations. Mr. Ung said North Korea’s preparations for the Olympics in London are going well despite the sudden death of the country’s leader Kim Jong Il.
- The Georgian Service interviewed George Bokeria, Georgia’s National Security Adviser. Bokeria criticized the statements made by Russian leaders regarding the close ties between Washington and Tbilisi, but added the Georgian people and their government have nothing against the citizens of Russia.
- Film director Phillip Ruch spoke with the Bosnian Service about his documentary, *Sky over Srebrenica*, which accuses the United Nations of not doing enough to prevent the Srebrenica massacre.
- PNN interviewed Nazanin Afshin Jam, an Iranian-Canadian model, singer and human rights activist who recently married Canada’s Minister of National Defense, Peter MacKay. Nazanin spoke about her marriage to MacKay and how she intends to stay involved in the campaign to highlight Iran’s human rights violations.

D. INTERNET AND NEW MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

Russia’s Presidential Elections

The big story for VOA Russian in February was the campaign for president. So far the service has gotten exclusive interviews with two of the presidential contenders: independent candidate Mikhail Prokhorov and the chairman of the opposition Fair Russia Party, Sergei Mironov. The service is also actively engaged in online social networking, providing regular updates on Facebook, *Vkontakte*, and Twitter. *Golos Ameriki*’s following on Twitter increased to 31,542 in February, compared to 28,656 in January. The service has also incorporated the new crowd-sourcing tool, *Storify*, into its daily work flow, which allows it to immediately cover stories trending in social-media.

Kudos to VOA Russian from the Guardian

Luke Harding, an award-winning foreign correspondent for the *Guardian*, testified before the U.S. Helsinki Commission on the media situation in Russia. VOA Russian Service's report of his testimony was picked up by two major Russian Internet news portals, *NewsRu* and *Gazeta.ru*, and generated significant traffic in *Runet*. Harding praised the VOA report on his Twitter account. According to Miriam Elder, the *Guardian*'s Moscow bureau chief, the VOA report was among the most popular articles on *Gazeta.Ru*.

America Votes 2012

Russia isn't the only country holding a presidential election this year. The English Division's coverage of the U.S. election includes daily reports, a blog from the trail filed by political reporter Jim Malone, and video explainers of how the campaign process works. It also includes a VOA exclusive: a fully searchable database of everything said by the candidates over the last few years, as well as the full context for the quote. How many times did Mitt Romney mention Iran? When did President Obama talk about Russia and what did he say? There's also a crowdsourcing tool that allows readers to submit transcripts that an editor can vet. For more:

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/special-reports/politics/USA-Votes-2012-137026558.html>

Hausa Launches New Sports Blog 'Tamaula'

"Tamaula" is Hausa slang for soccer and that's the name of a new Hausa Service blog for its audience in soccer-mad West Africa. The blog is the social media centerpiece of the soccer sections on mobile and web that the service launched late last year. The new blog provides original programming that is supported by soccer scores, standings, photo galleries and news feed from Yahoo Sports UK and Ireland, ClubCall.com and SkySports.



New Facebook Page for Swahili Health Show

The Swahili Service has begun a Facebook page for *Je Nifanyeje*, the service's new health show aimed at young women in Tanzania. Launched in January, *Je Nifanyeje* includes a round table segment giving women an opportunity to talk about health issues.

Over 700,000 Facebook Fans for VOA Indonesian

The Indonesian Service passed 600,000 Facebook fans for its main Facebook page in February. It has another 100,000+ fans for its Dunia Kita Program Facebook Page. According to Facebook Analytics, VOA Indonesian's weekly reach is over four million people.

VOA Khmer Web TV

Though not even a month old, VOA Khmer WebTV on YouTube has more than 10,000 views and 41 subscribers. The four-days-per-week program includes Cambodia stories/segments, in addition to top international stories, a U.S. Business segment, a U.S. news package, and a VOA60-Khmer report.

VOANews.com Web and Mobile Traffic

February 1-28, 2012

Language Service	Visits			Pages Viewed			Quality Metrics (February 2012)		Mobile Visits		
	February 2012	January 2012	Change	February 2012	January 2012	Change	Pages per Visit	Avg. Time Spent (min)	February 2012	January 2012	Change
All VOA	13,840,779	14,534,761	5%	32,739,206	34,546,774	5%	2.37	3:44	2,442,354	2,881,997	-6%
English*	3,095,470	3,530,886	-3%	5,512,214	5,996,693	2%	1.78	2:13	1,144,056	1,458,244	-13%
Persian	2,359,473	2,653,249	-2%	5,127,536	6,217,749	-9%	2.17	3:53	62,892	68,912	1%
Special English	1,716,528	1,543,196	23%	4,768,213	4,286,511	23%	2.78	4:35	118,721	96,192	37%
Vietnamese	1,443,486	1,404,979	14%	4,684,181	4,678,724	11%	3.25	5:06	107,014	78,589	51%
Russian	1,355,310	1,547,425	-3%	3,237,839	3,746,040	-4%	2.39	3:54	71,592	53,733	48%
Chinese	910,645	513,646	96%	2,438,211	1,477,560	83%	2.68	4:41	1,314	560	160%
Burmese	681,441	791,745	-5%	1,494,448	1,868,594	-11%	2.19	3:40	48,629	48,346	11%
Somali	448,754	487,574	2%	917,183	1,003,600	1%	2.04	3:54	84,199	86,390	8%
Amharic	319,460	363,180	-3%	554,554	663,419	-7%	1.74	2:17	68,603	66,858	14%
Spanish	253,784	265,071	6%	385,499	422,021	1%	1.52	1:13	218,625	233,820	4%
Tigrigna	149,881	175,137	-5%	265,013	343,844	-15%	1.77	2:42			
Albanian	140,964	139,132	12%	316,424	335,123	5%	2.24	2:56	6,699	5,456	36%
Indonesian	134,774	160,855	-7%	256,106	305,336	-7%	1.90	2:33	49,375	45,145	21%
Urdu	114,232	136,832	-8%	306,064	372,797	-9%	2.68	5:05	39,007	44,233	-2%
Hausa	100,491	135,118	-18%	220,274	319,121	-24%	2.19	5:18	284,117	442,536	-29%
Tibetan-English	92,090	63,970	59%	131,018	107,269	35%	1.42	1:18			
Khmer	91,212	109,540	-8%	194,758	229,912	-6%	2.14	3:24	12,047	12,270	9%
Turkish	89,786	70,785	40%	140,253	125,160	24%	1.56	1:19	6,561	3,865	88%
Ukrainian	86,698	105,249	-9%	143,595	167,988	-5%	1.66	1:47	4,108	3,659	24%
Pashto	79,590	85,102	4%	149,852	163,344	2%	1.88	2:52	8,177	7,814	16%
Tibetan	68,272	68,660	10%	142,758	153,533	3%	2.09	3:28	4,387	4,795	1%
Korean	62,911	65,795	6%	158,171	164,799	6%	2.51	3:24	18,881	37,468	-44%
Dari	62,610	67,952	2%	148,398	164,602	0%	2.37	3:18	6,753	5,517	36%
Portuguese	62,535	69,397	0%	141,420	160,905	-3%	2.26	4:04	5,492	5,357	14%
Serbian	55,026	50,755	20%	100,837	106,304	5%	1.83	2:01	1,849	1,596	28%
Lao	47,831	44,776	18%	154,661	152,643	12%	3.23	5:55			
Zimbabwe-English	46,173	49,044	4%	73,219	76,626	6%	1.59	1:49	46,502	46,269	11%
Khmer-English	42,276	47,975	-2%	75,255	85,398	-2%	1.78	2:10			
Thai	32,117	30,039	18%	45,218	45,889	9%	1.41	1:34	2,057	1,276	78%
French to Africa	31,814	37,939	-7%	59,130	76,347	-14%	1.86	2:22	4,213	5,982	-22%
Central Africa	27,641	35,999	-15%	41,204	58,874	-23%	1.49	1:47			
Uzbek	21,605	22,618	6%	44,058	49,545	-2%	2.04	3:50	13,251	12,388	18%
Afaan Oromoo	21,279	27,768	-15%	49,471	66,929	-18%	2.32	3:20			
Macedonian	20,977	23,263	0%	33,650	38,728	-4%	1.60	1:42	914	674	50%
Azerbaijani	20,765	31,247	-26%	36,539	53,834	-25%	1.76	2:40	1,225	1,277	6%
Kurdish	18,975	25,347	-17%	35,786	50,968	-22%	1.89	2:40	837	1,222	-24%
Armenian	17,935	16,108	23%	34,292	33,636	13%	1.91	2:10	459	436	17%
Georgian	16,360	15,504	17%	32,073	30,859	15%	1.96	2:42	249	249	11%
Creole	16,280	14,258	26%	26,121	23,881	21%	1.60	2:25			
Bangla	16,086	16,333	9%	25,331	27,407	2%	1.57	2:17	2,164	1,795	33%
Cantonese	15,171	13,602	23%	28,947	26,287	22%	1.91	2:11			
Deewa	14,679	17,939	-9%	33,912	41,540	-10%	2.31	3:59			
Swahili	14,636	16,964	-4%	23,138	27,324	-6%	1.58	2:08	3,864	4,436	-4%
Bosnian	13,087	13,306	9%	22,740	24,292	4%	1.74	2:27	220	94	159%
Greek	8,621	10,481	-9%	14,916	18,304	-10%	1.73	1:13			
Kurdi	6,339	7,092	-1%	9,801	12,452	-13%	1.55	2:16			
Shona	4,152	4,558	1%	7,614	8,171	3%	1.83	2:13			
Ndebele	2,642	2,381	23%	4,075	3,640	24%	1.54	1:43			

* English visits and pages viewed for January have been revised to include Middle East Voices traffic.

VOA Social Media Report January 16, 2012 – February 14, 2012				
	Youtube	Facebook		Twitter
Language Service (alphabetical order)	Video Views	Sum of Page Likes (includes all pages)	# of Pages	Followers
Afghan	5,132	68,295	3	1,187
Albanian	199,784	30,311	1	1,486
Armenian	40,135	396	1	42
Azerbaijani	9,679	312	1	1,168
Bosnian	37,379	1,738	1	118
Burmese	268,353	4890 friends	1 (Profile)	1,300
Cantonese	21,486	80	1	230
Central Africa	2,640	488	1	46
Chinese	174,291	4,253	1	12,521
Creole	1,095	227	1	4,783
Deewa	8,577	2,913	2	287
English	1,084,083	77,123	9	53,244
French	192	4,946	2	462
Georgian	13,218	2,476	2	186
Greek	3,382	313	1	774
Hausa	3,086	28,210	2	3,352
Horn	7,475	15,325	4	311
Indonesian	155,549	758,284	2	23,170
Khmer	154,234	16,377	1	3,122
Korean	714	166	1	40
Kurdish	24,413	5,066	2	2,057
Lao	1,010	376	1	na
Macedonian	1,741	8,454	1	174
Persian	722,318	972,429	12	11,714
Portuguese	299	3,764	1	224
Russian	787,143	6,357	3	30,811
Serbian	109,568	4,260	1	270
Somali	10,735	10,845	1	1,288
Spanish	152,306	2,081	1	6,330
Special English	578,659	134,499	1	28,740
Swahili	2,969	2,508	1	231
Thai	3,291	1,558	1	na
Tibetan	80,089	7,292	1	1,576
Turkish	21,622	1,387	2	2,474
Ukrainian	25,044	6,505	1	5,900
Urdu	13,313	1,192	2	1,997
Uzbek	59,552	427	1	588
Vietnamese	307,149	13,839	1	1,478
Zimbabwe	239	883	1	340

GOENGLISH.ME

goEnglish.me, an interactive “learning English” website, is currently available in Indonesian, Chinese, Russian, and Persian versions. A Vietnamese version is currently in development and will launch in winter/spring 2012. The data below is for the month of February, 2012.

goEnglish site	Registered Users	Visits	Average Time on Site (minutes)
Russian	7,490	39,151	5:30
Farsi	88,160	28,731	8:49
Chinese	24,360	11,735	7:51
Indonesian	2,020	3,225	8:11

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA & OUTREACH

- VOA Public Relations assisted National Public Radio in the production of a report on the difficulties facing reporters covering Russia. VOA Director David Ensor was interviewed. Director Ensor published a second blog dealing with the media climate in Russia and highlighting some of the challenges facing reporters as they try to verify information.
- VOA Public Relations made arrangements for Minnesota Public Radio reporter Tom Weber to do a 15- to 20-minute phone interview with VOA stringer Daren Taylor about his recent series on Rhino poaching in Africa.

VOA STUDIO TOUR

- A class of students from the Defense Language Institute, who are learning Persian, toured the VOA Persian Service. – February 2, 2012
- Embassy of Canada employees met with Doug Bernard Johnson, managing editor of VOA's Digital Frontiers project. – February 3
- A delegation of North Korean defectors and South Korean officials met with VOA Korean Service Chief Dong Hyuk Lee. – February 7
- Mr. Naby Bangoura, Spokesperson for the Guinean President, met with Acting French Service Chief Timothee Donangmaye and other service broadcasters. – February 7
- Two State Department officials and two State Department Regional Coordinators met with EAP Division Director Bill Baum and EAP language service chiefs.—February 23
- VOA's PR office took attendees of the Bush Institute's Women's Initiative Fellowship Program on a tour of VOA facilities, and helped organize and prepare for a panel discussion. – February 24

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- VOA Somali Program Available in Canada February 15
- VOA Launches TV Magazine "On Assignment" February 24