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Description of document: U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) Board Meeting minutes, 2017-2019

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Source of document: USAGM FOIA OFFICE
Room 3349
330 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20237
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Fax: (202) 203-4585
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U.S. AGENCY FOR
GLOBAL MEDIA

UNITED STATES
BROADCASTING
BOARD OF
GOVERNORS

330 Independence Avenue SW | Washington, DC 20237 | usagm.gov

Office of the General Counsel

November 12, 2019

RE: Request Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act – FOIA #FOIA20-002

This letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated October 21, 2019 to the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), which the Agency received on the same date. In your request, you asked for

“A copy of the meetings minutes from the Board Meetings of the agency for Global Media between January 2017 and present.”

The Agency has completed its search for and review of records responsive to your request. The following is a list of nonexempt materials responsive to your request:

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Minutes-of-Apr-6-2017.pdf>

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Minutes-of-June-14-2017.pdf>

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Minutes-of-Aug-30-2017.pdf>

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Minutes-of-Nov-15-2017.pdf>

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Minutes-of-March-14-2018.pdf>

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Minutes-of-June-6-2018.pdf>

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Minutes-of-Sept-5-2018.pdf>

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Minutes-of-November-14-2018.pdf>

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Minutes-of-March-6-2019.pdf>

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Minutes-of-June-5-2019.pdf>

There are no chargeable fees associated with this request.

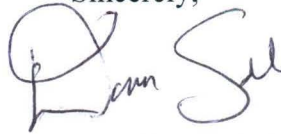
This concludes the Agency's response to your request and it is now closed. You may contact me or the Agency's FOIA Public Liaison at 202-203-4550 for any further assistance and to discuss any aspect of your request. Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001
E-mail at ogis@nara.gov
Telephone at 202-741-5770
Toll free at 1-877-684-6448
Facsimile at 202-741-5769

Finally, if you are not satisfied with this response to your request, you may file an administrative appeal with the Agency by writing to: Chairperson, Access Appeal Committee, USAGM, Suite 3349, 330 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20237. Your appeal must be postmarked or transmitted by facsimile to 202-203-4548 within 90 days of the date of this letter.

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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dana Sade', written over a horizontal line.

Dana Sade
Assistant General Counsel



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors

Date: April 6, 2017

Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of April 6, 2017**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Leon Aron
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh
Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton

Governor Jeffrey Shell was not in attendance. Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman began with some comments on the current Board structure. He noted that on January 24, 2017, the Board voted to name him Chairman and delegated to me the full authorities of the Board Chair under the BBG Board By-Laws. He expressed his gratitude to Jeff Shell for his dedication and leadership of the Board and noted that he was critical to the transformation of the agency. He stated that he will continue to work with Board members and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) John Lansing, to maximize BBG's impact and to advance U.S. foreign policy priorities and national interest. He then thanked the Board, CEO Lansing, and the network heads for the seamless transition.

Chairman Weinstein took a moment to comment on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 ("NDAA"). He stated that, on December 23, 2016, President Obama signed the 2017 NDAA into law, with a signing statement – as is common for large legislation. He noted that the signing statement had raised potential constitutional concerns regarding the NDAA and the Executive Branch appointment and removal authorities. He added that, out of an abundance of caution, the Department of Justice affirmed that the current Board is enduring and

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

will continue to serve alongside the current CEO until a CEO is confirmed by the Senate and appointed by the President.

The Chairman announced the BBG's new Presidential Landing Team, Matt Ciepielowski and Matt Schuck, who joined the agency on January 23. He said they are working with the Board, CEO, BBG senior management, and other relevant agency staff to learn about BBG operations and management in order to ensure an open and transparent transition with the Trump Administration. He added that the Team has been invaluable assets to the agency, making the transition seamless. He also added that the Team's attendance helps them learn the important work the Board is leading.

Chairman Weinstein reported on two unexpected deaths in the BBG family over the past month. He announced that, on March 4, Oscar Barcelo, the International Broadcasting Bureau's (IBB) Regional Marketing Officer for Latin America, had passed away. Mr. Barcelo worked closely with Voice of America's (VOA) Latin America Division, VOA management, and with IBB Office of Marketing. Mr. Barcelo's work extended the Latin America weekly audience to nearly 60 million in 2016 – a major driver of VOA's large jump in reach last year. The Chairman added that, on March 23, Ner Castillo, an equipment mechanic foreman at the Tinang site of the IBB's Philippines Transmitting Station, had passed away due to an on-the-job accident. Mr. Castillo had faithfully worked with the U.S. Government for 32 years. Mr. Castillo maintained the Philippine Station's antennas that transmit BBG programming to listeners in China, Russia, and southern and eastern Asia. The Chairman then asked for a moment of silence for Oscar Barcelo and Ner Castillo.

Following the prior Chairman's tradition, Chairman Weinstein segued to the ongoing threats to BBG journalists around the world by highlighting the following incidents: 1) In Vietnam, Radio Free Asia (RFA) videographer Nguyen Van Hoa was still being detained for "abusing democratic freedoms," and has not been able to contact his family or attorneys; 2) VOA Kurdish Service's reporter, Ahmed Ghafur Hakim, was detained and had his equipment and press credentials seized while trying to cover an incident in Erbil, Iraq, but was later released with no explanation for his detention; 3) In Belarus, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) reporter Halina Abakunchyk was among several journalists detained by police in Belarus on March 12 while reporting on protests against a controversial tax on the unemployed; 4) RFE/RL President Thomas Kent traveled to Kyrgyzstan and met with Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambaev on March 30 after learning that the President had filed two defamation lawsuits against RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service for reports that included quotes from Kyrgyzstan's opposition Ata-Meken (fatherland) Party which were made at a widely reported press conference following the arrest of the Party's leader; 5) two RFE/RL correspondents in southern Russia were attacked on March 28 while they were on assignment to cover a demonstration in an incident that appears to have been at least partially orchestrated by local police; and 6) the trial of Crimean journalist Mykola Semena, an RFE/RL contributor who had been indicted on separatism-related charges by the Russian authorities controlling the Peninsula for an article he wrote criticizing Moscow's seizure of Crimea. On behalf of the Board, Chairman Weinstein condemned all these actions against BBG journalists, which are unconscionable violations of international norms.

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

Moving to Board business, Chairman Weinstein stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on March 23. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

The Chairman described the six items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: draft minutes of the November 30, 2016 meeting of the plenary Board; a resolution honoring VOA's 75th anniversary; a resolution honoring VOA's Russian Service 70th Anniversary; a resolution honoring VOA's Somali Service 10th anniversary; a resolution honoring RFE/RL's Afghan Service 15th anniversary; and a resolution honoring Middle East Broadcasting Networks' (MBN) Radio Sawa 15th anniversary. Governor Kempner moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Aron seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Ann Noonan, Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, to address the Board for three minutes.

At the Chairman's invitation, CEO Lansing began his report with an update on the strategic cooperation of the International Coordinating Committee (ICC) of the BBG. CEO Lansing said that the ICC was established 18 months ago, and its purpose is to organize BBG networks to operate as efficiently as possible, eliminating redundancies and to identify key areas for cooperation in parts of the world that are most closely aligned with U.S. foreign policy, including China and North Korea, Violent Extremism in the Middle East, and Russia's "weaponization of information." At CEO Lansing's request, RFE/RL President Tom Kent provided an update on the new 24/7 Russian-language Current Time network, including the various topics and issues had been covered by the network. The CEO announced VOA's new four-part interactive multimedia report and video series on Boko Haram's terrorist campaign in Nigeria titled, "Boko Haram – Terror Unmasked," and invited VOA Director Amanda Bennett to describe this new project. The CEO noted a key area of focus for him, and for the ICC, is to build better collaborative relationships across BBG's network and asked RFA President Libby Liu to offer a report on RFA's collaboration with other BBG networks. The CEO also noted the BBG's emphasis on using accurate reporting and journalism to counter the violent narratives of ISIS and similar violent extremist groups, and the success of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks' (MBN) "Raise Your Voice" project, a multimedia initiative to counter the propaganda spread by ISIS and to provide a platform for citizens to discuss and engage on topics that underlie the appeal of extremist ideology. He added that MBN has created a new digital initiative following the "Raise Your Voice" model called, "Maghreb Voices," and invited MBN President Brian Conniff to describe the new initiative. Finally, the CEO said that, while the U.S. and Cuba had normalized the relationship, the Island still faces serious challenges when it comes to press and information freedom. To better understand these challenges, the CEO said that BBG and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) had commissioned an independent review of press freedom in Cuba and asked OCB Director Malule Gonzalez to briefly highlight some key findings from the qualitative study.

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

CEO Lansing then announced that the BBG had begun the nomination process for this year's Nathanson Public Diplomacy Scholarship. He noted that the Nathanson Scholarship, provided by former BBG Chairman Marc Nathanson and his wife, Jane Nathanson, identifies emerging leaders and middle management officials in areas related to public diplomacy and international media, and funds their participation in executive training at the nonpartisan Aspen Institute. At the CEO's request, Chief of Staff Rob Fallon described the Socrates Seminars which will be held from July 7 to July 10, 2017 in Aspen, Colorado.

In closing, CEO Lansing reported that, on March 13, the President issued a new Executive Order on a comprehensive plan for reorganizing the Executive Branch. He said, under the Executive Order, the head of each Agency is required to submit to Office of Management and Budget an agency plan to "reorganize governmental functions and eliminate unnecessary agencies ..., components of agencies, and agency programs," in order to improve the "efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of agencies." He stated that the BBG takes this Executive Order seriously and is treating it as such. He commented that it is a good opportunity for the BBG to highlight some of the reforms it had implemented in the past 18 months. He said that his team, including the Landing Team, will be working with the Board to develop an efficient and impactful plan.

At the Chairman's invitation, Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton gave brief comments on the great working relationship between the BBG and his office, the U.S. Department of State's continued support for the statutorily mandated firewall that protect the BBG's editorial independence, and the close collaborations between the BBG and the Department's bureaus to advance U.S. foreign policy goals. He added that he will continue to advocate for BBG staff to have access to key U.S. foreign policy meetings. He expressed his appreciation for BBG's positive influence to affiliates abroad because of its credibility and independence, and for being a model for freedom of expression and free media. On a final note Ambassador Wharton thanked CEO Lansing, with the support of the Board, for his leadership in improving the quality of BBG's product and making the agency more vibrant, responsive, and forward minded such as the 24/7 Russian-language Current Time network and anti-ISIS programs, and expressed interest in programming stream for Syria. He commended CEO Lansing for positioning the BBG to counter state and non-state actors of disinformation around the globe.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on June 14, 2017. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of November 30, 2016 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the November 30, 2016 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

2. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's 75th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's 75th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Russian Service 70th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Russian Service 70th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Somali Service 10th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Somali Service 10th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 5.
5. Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Afghan Service 15th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Afghan Service 15th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 6.
6. Resolution Honoring Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Radio Sawa 15th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Radio Sawa 15th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 7.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Rob Fallon; Interim General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; Director of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Interim Chief Financial Officer John Barkhamer; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Nnake Nweke; IBB Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Director of Research Sonja Gloeckle; Associate Director for Program Support Gary Thatcher; Director of Security Frederick Lang; Supervisory of Physical Security Thomas Allen; Public Affairs/Internal Communications Adeyemi Jimason; White House Liaison to the BBG Matt Ciepielowski; Special Communications Advisor to the BBG Matt Schuck; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Associate Director for Language Programming; Jim Tunnessen, VOA Chief Digital Officer; Maria "Malule" Gonzalez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Pamela Goodnow, RFE/RL Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer; Laura Lew, RFE/RL Risk and Compliance Officer; Anastasia Kolobrodova, RFE/RL Project Officer; Libby Liu, RFA President; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Brian Conniff, MBN President; and Nicholas Snyder, Senior Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Interim Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for April 6, 2017 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of November 30, 2016 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's 75th Anniversary
4. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Russian Service 70th Anniversary
5. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Somali Service 10th Anniversary
6. Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Afghan Service 15th Anniversary
7. Resolution Honoring Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Radio Sawa 15th Anniversary

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 1

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

April 2017 Meeting Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

Thursday, April 6

1:00 – 2:00 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting

- A. Welcome Chairman / Chairman Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda
 - Draft Minutes of November 30, 2016 Meeting
 - Draft Resolution Honoring Voice of America's 75th Anniversary
 - Draft Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Russian Service 70th Anniversary
 - Draft Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Somali Service 10th Anniversary
 - Draft Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Afghan Service 15th Anniversary
 - Draft Resolution Honoring Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Radio Sawa 15th Anniversary
- C. CEO & Director's Report
- D. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: November 30, 2016
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of November 30, 2016**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Jeffrey Shell
Governor Matthew Armstrong
Governor Leon Aron
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh
Governor Kenneth Weinstein
Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel

Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Shell called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman began with some comments on the transition from the Obama Administration to the next Administration. He stated that BBG stands ready to engage with the President-elect's team to ensure BBG's professional and efficient transition into the next Administration. He commented on BBG's achievements during the Obama Administration and affirmed that BBG will continue the good work in the Trump Administration.

Chairman Shell announced the pending legislation that would accompany the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 ("NDAA") and noted that the proposed bill contemplates certain BBG reforms: creation of an Advisory Board that would not include the current BBG Board members; authorization that would give BBG Chief Executive Officer (CEO) full authorities; current CEO would continue to serve until the appointment of a Presidentially-appointed, Senate-confirmed CEO; future grantee Boards would be selected by the CEO, and that the Agency would have the authority to consolidate the grantees into a single legal entity.

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

He expressed the importance of BBG's mission, especially its professional and independent journalism, and emphasized that the Firewall would remain in force under the proposed amendment, and the CEO would be required to uphold and abide by the Firewall. He said that, in his opinion, the pending legislation would likely pass by the Congress in the coming days, and wanted everyone to be aware of it. There followed brief comments from CEO Lansing regarding the importance of BBG's credibility as a source of independent news and information; from Under Secretary Stengel on the BBG's vital mission and the extraordinary leadership by Chairman Shell and CEO Lansing; and from individual Governors regarding their admirations and deep appreciation for the incredible and essential work of the BBG, and their continued support for the BBG as their appointments might cease after this meeting if the pending legislation passes. In closing, the Chairman said that if this were his last meeting, he had failed his goals of having ten members of the public speak at a Board meeting and not having to report on threats to the BBG journalists.

The Chairman segued to the ongoing threats to BBG journalists around the world. He noted that the Tajikistan Foreign Ministry revoked the accreditations of six Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) correspondents in Dushanbe, Tajikistan's capital city, after demanding that RFE/RL remove "within five minutes" a story on its website about the appointment of one of President Emomali Rahmon's daughters to a post in the foreign ministry. He added that the Foreign Ministry gave no explanation and its decision was distressing and totally unacceptable, and that this substantially impacts the RFE/RL operations in Tajikistan as accreditation is required for citizens to work for international media in the country. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman thanked the RFE/RL professionals in Tajikistan and urged them to continue their work with the Board's full endorsement. He then called on the Foreign Ministry to immediately restore the accreditation of our six journalists, and noted that the Board later will consider a resolution of support for RFE/RL's journalists in Dushanbe.

The Chairman also highlighted the following incidents involving other BBG's journalists. In Turkmenistan, RFE/RL Turkmen Service freelancer Saparmamed Nepeskuliev remains in prison and incommunicado while his colleague Soltan Achilova was attacked on October 25, attacked again on November 8, and a third time last Friday. Additionally, RFE/RL Turkmen Service correspondent, Rovshan Yazmuhammedov (who was previously detained by Turkmen officials in 2013) was summoned by police and questioned for several hours about his cooperation with RFE/RL in late October. In total, ten contributors to RFE/RL Turkmen Service have been attacked in a continuing government-inspired campaign while its website has been blocked since 2015, forcing readers to use other means to reach it. In Iraq, a Radio Farda freelancer, Rasool Mahmood was seriously injured on October 20 while reporting from the front lines of the Iraqi army's campaign to drive ISIS out of the city of Mosul. Mr. Mahmood was now in a hospital in Ankara, Turkey, where doctors are trying to save the sight in one of his eyes; a GOFUNDME campaign had been set-up to support Mr. Mahmood and his family. In Crimea, RFE/RL contributor Mykola Semena remains under house arrest in Russia-Annexed Simferopol and was prevented from leaving the peninsula to receive medical care.

On a happier note, Chairman Shell announced the release of Voice of America (VOA) Kurdish Service reporter Hatice Kamer, who was detained by Turkish authorities in Diyarbakir over the

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

weekend on bogus charges. She was covering a mine accident when police confiscated her equipment and accused her of propagandizing against President Erdogan. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman called on Turkish authorities to put an end to the harassment of journalists in that country. He also condemned the threats to BBG's journalists, and those to all journalists, and called on local officials to hold those who are responsible accountable.

Moving to Board business, Chairman Shell stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda, and that later, the Board also received a resolution of support for RFE/RL's journalists in Dushanbe. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

The Chairman described the three items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: draft minutes of the September 28, 2016 meeting of the plenary Board; a resolution for BBG meeting dates in 2017; and a resolution of support for RFE/RL's journalists in Dushanbe. Governor Armstrong moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Under Secretary Stengel seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Adam Clayton Powell III from University of Southern California to address the Board for three minutes. Governor Armstrong commented that he is the Secretary for the Public Diplomacy Council and expressed his gratitude for all the statements made by Mr. Powell III before the Board.

At the Chairman's invitation, CEO Lansing began his report with brief comments on the recent joint programming by both VOA and RFE/RL that has rapidly grown to a 24/7 Russian-language Current Time digital network. At CEO Lansing's request, RFE/RL President Tom Kent and VOA Director Amanda Bennett gave a progress report for Current Time, including the various topics and issues had been covered by the network. The CEO noted the importance of digital and asked Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN) President Brian Conniff to describe how social media platforms enabled MBN to engage audiences in the Middle East and obtain their reactions on post-U.S. Presidential elections.

CEO Lansing turned to the BBG's highest achievement award – 2016 David Burke Distinguished Journalism Awards. He noted that the winners from each of the five BBG networks were recognized for their courage, integrity, and professionalism. While the award presentation was scheduled for the next morning, the CEO invited the network heads to briefly speak about their individual winners.

The CEO announced the recent release of BBG's FY 2016 Performance and Accountability Report (PAR). He stated that the BBG's global weekly audience went from 226 million to 278 million, an increase of 52 million and the largest ever year-to-year increase in audience on all platforms. At the CEO's invitation, Jeff Trimble, head of our Office of Policy and Research, gave highlights on the PAR. There followed brief presentations from Ms. Bennett and Mr. Conniff on some of the impressive growth and performances in their respective areas.

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

Governor Armstrong welcomed and introduced the new Executive Director for U.S. Advisory Commission for Public Diplomacy, Shawn Powers.

Governor Kempner then thanked the staff for their support and professionalism over the years. The Chairman expressed his gratitude to Chief of Staff Rob Fallon and to the Interim Management Team that led the Agency for a brief period which consisted of Andre Mendes, Suzie Carroll, and Rob Bole.

In closing, Chairman Shell stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on March 23, 2017. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of September 28, 2016. The Board adopted the minutes of the September 28, 2016 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution for BBG Meeting Dates in 2017. The Board adopted the resolution for BBG meeting dates in 2017 as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution in Support of the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Correspondents in Tajikistan. The Board adopted the resolution in support of the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty correspondents in Tajikistan as set forth in Attachment 4.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Rob Fallon; Interim General Counsel and Board Secretary Elizabeth Parish; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; Interim Chief Financial Officer John Barkhamer; Senior Advisor on Communications Nasserie Carew; Jeffrey Trimble, IBB Deputy Director; Laurie Moy, Writer-Editor (Multimedia); Nnake Nweke, Director of the Office of Internet Freedom; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Associate Director for Language Programming; Bridget Serchak, VOA Director of Public Relations; Maria “Malule” Gonzalez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Thomas Kent, President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Pamela Goodnow, RFE/RL Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer; Stephanie Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Director; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Brian Conniff, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); and Joshua Lipsky, Senior Advisor for BBG, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Jeffrey Shell
Chairman



Broadcasting
Board of
Governors

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

Witnessed:

Elizabeth Parish
Interim Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for November 30, 2016 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of September 28, 2016 Board Meeting
3. Resolution for BBG Meeting Dates in 2017
4. Resolution in Support of the RFE/RL Correspondents in Tajikistan

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 3

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VOICE OF AMERICA

April 6, 2017

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) is the largest U.S. international media, funded through the generosity of the U.S. taxpayers, providing news and information in 47 languages to a measured weekly audience of 236 million people; and broadcast on its own facilities and those of over 2350 affiliated stations around the world;

WHEREAS, the VOA is committed to providing comprehensive coverage of the news and telling audience the truth, including America's story, and has covered seminal events in American and world history, from World War II, to the Cuban Missile crisis, civil rights, the Vietnam war, Watergate, the Cold War, the fight against global terrorism, and many other historic and critical moments;

WHEREAS, the VOA first aired in German, in February 1942 shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, with the words, "The news may be good or bad. We shall tell you the truth;"

WHEREAS, VOA exemplifies the principles of a free press; and in pursuit of a free press, VOA reporters and stringers have been killed, detained, harassed, or expelled from the country in which they are reporting;

WHEREAS, President John F. Kennedy spoke of VOA in the context of the 1946 United Nations General Assembly resolution stating that "Freedom of information is a fundamental human right," saying that "this is our touchstone as well, this is the code of the Voice of America ... we seek a free flow of information across national boundaries and oceans, across iron curtains and stone walls ... the Voice of America thus carries a heavy responsibility. Its burden of truth is not easy to bear;"

WHEREAS, Congress passed and President Ford signed into law the VOA Charter in 1976 that is still in use today, more than 40 years later, declaring that VOA will serve as a consistently reliable and authoritative source of news; VOA news will be accurate, objective and comprehensive; VOA will represent America, not any single segment of American society, and will therefore present a balanced and comprehensive project of significant American thought and institutions; and VOA will present the policies of the United States clearly and effectively, and will also present responsible discussions and opinion on these policies;

WHEREAS, President Ronald Reagan said of VOA in 1987, "To millions in closed societies, your broadcasts are ... the voice of truth. We do not think a mind can or should be imprisoned ... let us remember that many listeners, listeners in these closed societies, tune in to VOA at grave personal risk;"

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush said, “Throughout its history, the Voice of America has applied the power of technology to the advance of liberty. It has used every means possible – shortwave, television, and now the Internet – to bypass the barriers of tyrants ... No one knows what new information technologies will be available sixty years from now, but two things we do know. First, that the Voice of America will find a way to use them, and second, through those means – though the means of delivery may change – the message never will ... It’s a message of freedom, and freedom is worth defending;”

WHEREAS, in the 21st century, VOA is committed to producing content for digital, television and radio platforms that can be easily accessed by mobile phone and on social media, in addition to the traditional mediums of satellite, cable, and radio;

WHEREAS, in October 2016, VOA jointly launched with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty a new 24/7 Russian-language digital network *Current Time* that aims to provide audiences in Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Moldova, and elsewhere across Eastern Europe, that currently reaches dozens of media outlets in nine countries and continues to expand its reach, while provide factual news and real-time fact checking of false narratives;

WHEREAS, in 2016, VOA audiences increased by a record 50 million people per week to a total of 236 million, with the greatest audience increases in Indonesian and Spanish languages and in several African nations, and on social media in countries like Cambodia, and research surveys found that nearly 90% of users considered VOA’s programming trustworthy; and

WHEREAS, VOA is currently enhancing its modern, 24/7 digital-first newsroom; increasing the number of stories available across all 47 language services through a “One VOA” policy; strongly recommitting to telling America’s story around the world while expanding in-depth reporting on our country’s vibrant entrepreneurial culture, cutting-edge health, medicine and education systems as well as our vibrant American diaspora communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Voice of America.

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 4

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOICE OF AMERICA'S RUSSIAN SERVICE

April 6, 2017

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting in Russian on February 17, 1947 to provide accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information to the Russian-language audiences;

WHEREAS, VOA's Russian Service has served for decades as a vital communications link with the Russian people in support of freedom and democracy during the Cold War, and through the challenges Russia faces today;

WHEREAS, VOA's Russian Service has successfully adopted television, online, mobile and social media platforms to reach even greater numbers of Russian-language speaking people;

WHEREAS, VOA Russian is one of the leading source of news and information for Russians about United States policy, and expert analysis on Russia, Eurasia, the United States and the world;

WHEREAS, VOA Russian is a unique source of news and information for Russians about American society and its achievements in democratic governance, business, medicine, science, technology and the arts, which can serve as an inspiration and a model for Russia;

WHEREAS, VOA Russian remains a respected source of objective and accurate news and information about Russia, Eurasia, the United States and the world, with a major focus on human rights, religious and cultural rights, freedom of speech, and democratic values and practices;

WHEREAS, VOA's Russian Service broadcasts daily to millions of people in Russia, countries neighboring Russia and Russian speakers around the world; and

WHEREAS, VOA's Russian Service produces one hour daily live TV show *Current Time America* that is broadcast on the 24/7 Russian-language digital network Current Time that provides international and domestic news for the Russian-speaking population globally.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Voice of America's Russian Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO commend and congratulate both the current and former members of the Voice of America's Russian Service for their dedication in serving the Russian people and fostering friendship and the open communication of information and ideas between them and the United States.

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 5

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOICE OF AMERICA'S SOMALI SERVICE

April 6, 2017

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting in Somali on February 12, 2007 to provide accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information to the Somali people;

WHEREAS, VOA's Somali Service has served for the last decade as a vital communications link with the Somali people in support of freedom and democracy during the last 10 years, during the years of Somalia's lawless years, and through the challenges Somalia faces today;

WHEREAS, VOA's Somali Service has successfully adopted web cast television, online, mobile and social media platforms to reach even greater numbers of Somalis;

WHEREAS, VOA Somali is a leading source of news and information for Somalis about United States policy, and expert analysis on Somalia, Arab countries, the United States and the world;

WHEREAS, VOA Somali is a unique source of news and information for Somalis about American society and its achievements in democratic governance, business, medicine, science, technology and the arts, which can serve as an inspiration and a model for Somalis;

WHEREAS, VOA Somali remains a respected source of objective and accurate news and information about Somalia and East Africa, many parts of diaspora including the United States and the rest of the world, with a major focus on human rights, social and cultural rights, freedom of speech, and democratic values and practices;

WHEREAS, VOA's Somali Service continues to broadcast daily to more than 20 million people in Somalia and Somali speakers in East Africa, Middle East and around the world; and

WHEREAS, VOA's Somali Service is among the leading international broadcasters in Somali and, surpassing its competitors with audience reach on Radio, Internet, weekly TV and mobile, with arguably the most popular and influential radio programs in the Somali language.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Voice of America's Somali Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO commend and congratulate both the current and former members of the Voice of America's Somali Service for their dedication in serving the Somali people and fostering friendship and the open communication of information and ideas between them and the United States.

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 6

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S AFGHAN SERVICE - RADIO AZADI

April 6, 2017

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) launched Dari- and Pashto-language broadcasts to the people of Afghanistan on January 30, 2002, and will be celebrating the 15th anniversary of these programs in 2017;

WHEREAS, these broadcasts, known popularly as Radio Azadi, follow in the tradition of RFE/RL's original "Radio Free Afghanistan" broadcasts from 1985 to 1993, and are widely appreciated by the people of Afghanistan for its commitment to journalistic excellence and the vital public service it provides its audience on all platforms – radio, television, and digital media;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Radio Azadi is considered the most trustworthy source of local news and information in Afghanistan, and remains the most popular radio station in the country;

WHEREAS, Radio Azadi has gained a notable digital and social audience for its content, with 2.5 million followers and 3.8 million engaged users of its Dari- and Pashto-language Facebook pages and a 2016 monthly average of 1.64 million page views and 863,000 visits to its Dari- and Pashto-language website, azadiradio.org;

WHEREAS, Radio Azadi has consistently worked to live up to the statement by the highly regarded former King of Afghanistan, aired during the Service's first broadcast, who expressed his confidence that Azadi would "play a crucial historic role serving the people of Afghanistan and the region;"

WHEREAS, Radio Azadi provides accurate information on domestic and regional politics, extremism, corruption, warlordism, gender issues, human rights, and other pressing topics that are under-reported or misreported by other media, and its weekly call-in shows give young Afghans experience in exchanging ideas, hearing alternative views and tolerating debate;

WHEREAS, Radio Azadi serves as an information bridge between Afghan citizens and their government and contributes to the establishment of stability and good governance in Afghanistan, by reporting on government activities and giving listeners a chance to hold government officials accountable during live interviews and discussions; and

WHEREAS, Afghan Culture Minister Kamal Sadaat recently thanked Radio Azadi for its "enormous contribution to freedom of speech, promoting democracy, and bringing people's voices to the government and that of the authorities to the people," while listener Aziz Kargar Ghazniwal congratulated Radio Azadi for "delivering programs that contribute to our freedom;"

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 15th anniversary of RFE/RL's Afghan Service, Radio Azadi.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the Afghan Service for their dedication to professional journalism.

Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 7

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO SAWA OF THE MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING NETWORKS

April 6, 2017

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa was launched on March 22, 2002, is part of Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. and will be celebrating its 15th anniversary in 2017;

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa brings millions of people across the Middle East and North Africa accurate and objective news and information that is vital to the region;

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa's courageous and dedicated journalists provide exceptional reporting from conflict zones across the region including Iraq, Libya, Darfur and Yemen;

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa engages and interacts with its audience through call-in programs, such as *Morning Papers* and *What's Your Opinion*, and social media, providing a robust discussion of events in a free and respectful environment;

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa's website and Facebook page reach millions of readers, providing unbiased reporting to the younger generation through platforms they regularly use;

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa's internationally recognized, award-winning reports from across the region and the U.S. are a staple of its unique programming;

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa highlights topics not reported on other media outlets, such as human rights, freedom of speech, and religious tolerance;

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa's informational programs such as *Free Zone* and *Sawa Magazine* serve as an outlet where people across the Middle East and North Africa can hear in-depth information about critical issues facing the region and the world;

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa is frequently cited in the Arab media as a source of news;

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa's correspondents' human interest stories bring credible depiction of facts and generate voluntary civic action; and

WHEREAS, Radio Sawa has more listeners across the region than any other radio station.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO that we celebrate and commemorate the 15th anniversary of Radio Sawa.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of Radio Sawa for their dedication to professional journalism.



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors

Date: June 14, 2017

Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of June 14, 2017**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Leon Aron
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner (via telephone)
Governor Karen Kornbluh

Governor Jeffrey Shell and Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton were not in attendance. Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman began with a sad announcement concerning Congressman Steve Scalise and others who were injured after a gunman opened fire at a congressional baseball practice. On behalf of the Board, he expressed condolences to the victims and asked for a moment of silence.

Chairman Weinstein recognized the strength of the BBG team and commended the team's success as he announced the departure of Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN) President Brian Conniff. He complimented on the growth of MBN under Mr. Conniff's leadership in the past 11 years, noting MBN as a modern, impactful organization that responds effectively to the region's evolving media environment. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman thanked Mr. Conniff for his service, leadership and friendship, and presented Mr. Conniff with a Certificate of Appreciation. The Chairman then announced the appointment of Ambassador Alberto Fernandez as the new President of MBN, highlighting the Ambassador's recent position with the Middle East Media Research Institute and various roles at the U.S. Department of State. He added that the Ambassador is widely regarded as one of the most knowledgeable and impactful U.S. voices in the Arabic-language media, and is also a fluent Arabic speaker. At the Chairman's invitation, Ambassador Fernandez gave brief remarks and expressed his enthusiasm

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

working with the Board, BBG Chief Executive Officer (CEO) John Lansing, and BBG team in mid-July. There followed remarks by Mr. Conniff, including his long career in U.S. international media (USIM) and his strong belief in fulfilling the needs of USIM's global audiences.

The Chairman segued to the ongoing threats to the press around the world. He noted the following incidents: 1) In Cambodia, Prime Minister Hun Sen called journalists "foreign servants," and a member of the Cambodian National Assembly accused Voice of America (VOA) and other media of seeking to destroy the reputation of the country's leadership; 2) In Russia, lawmakers accused the Russian-language services of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and VOA, including CNN, of "engaging in propaganda and sowing confusion in the Russian electoral process" during the September 2016 parliamentary elections, and that Russian officials continue to block RFE/RL freelancers from official events, using lack of accreditation as an excuse, including Alexy Navalny who was covering a protest in support of opposition activist but was pulled out of the area and threatened; and 3) In Azerbaijan, a district court ruling in Baku, provided legal justification for the Azerbaijani government's censorship of RFE/RL Azerbaijani Service's website that began on March 27.

The Chairman also noted some examples of BBG journalists falling under threat, or open attack: 1) In Venezuela, VOA Spanish Service reporter Alvaro Algarra has been the victim of harassment and intimidation over the past several months while covering protests in Caracas, and most recently, while recording a protest in the center of Caracas, a platoon of national guard officers stopped Mr. Algarra, took his bag and money, and ordered him to stop reporting; 2) In Angola, reporters for VOA Portuguese to Africa Service, including producer Siona Junior and others who were preparing special election programming in Angola, had been harassed and threatened by government officials since April; 3) In Armenia, RFE/RL Armenian Service reporter Sisak Gabrielian was attacked a second time in six weeks, while reporting on allegations of vote buying by the ruling party during that day's municipal elections; 4) In China, Ai Lun, a Beijing-based news assistant for VOA Mandarin Service has been intimidated and harassed by Chinese security personnel in several times throughout the year, and most recently, the authorities interrogated Ai Lun on his background, VOA personnel, and coverage.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein called for immediate release of three of BBG journalists that remain imprisoned: RFE/RL's Mykola Semena in Crimea; RFE/RL's Saparmamed Nepeskuliev in Turkmenistan; RFE/RL's Stanislav Aseyev in Ukraine; and Radio Free Asia's Nguyễn Văn Hoá in Vietnam. He also called the harassment for all journalists to come to a stop.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on June 1. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

The Chairman described the six items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: draft minutes of the April 6, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board; a resolution honoring VOA Swahili Service's 55th anniversary; a resolution honoring VOA Azerbaijani Service's 35th anniversary; a

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

resolution honoring VOA Kurdish Service's 25th anniversary; and a resolution honoring RFE/RL North Caucasus Service 15th anniversary. Governor Crocker moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Kornbluh seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Sasha Gong and Huchen Zhang of VOA Mandarin Service each to address the Board for three minutes.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting. Mr. Lansing announced the appointment of Jeffrey Trimble as Deputy Director of the BBG. He reported that the Agency's human resource department had retained an independent, reputable law firm to conduct an investigation aimed at determining the facts around VOA Mandarin's interview of Guo Wengui in May. He said that since the investigation was ongoing, the BBG will not comment further, and that all should reserve judgment on all fronts until the investigation is concluded. He stated that Matt Ciepielowski is leading an effort to address the President's Executive Order on a comprehensive plan for reorganizing the Executive Branch and had begun soliciting internal and external input for the Agency's reform plan. He informed the Board that, at the request of VOA Director Amanda Bennett and RFE/RL President Tom Kent, the Agency had commissioned an external, independent content review of VOA's Persian News Network and RFE/RL's Radio Farda to ensure that their Iran coverage remains completely objective and fact-based.

CEO Lansing gave an update on the strategic cooperation of the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) of the BBG. VOA Director Amanda Bennett announced the opening of a new Silicon Valley bureau in San Francisco, and described and played a video clip from *Off the Highway* series as part of VOA's intensified focus on telling America's story. RFE/RL President Tom Kent depicted the impact of RFE/RL's investigative reporting by presenting video clips of recent stories on child abuse, rural poverty and human trafficking. RFA President Libby Liu highlighted the collaboration of RFA and VOA during the recent Cambodian elections. Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) Director Malule Gonzalez presented a video clip and described the success of a recent documentary about the Cuban pilots who flew planes during the Bay of Pigs invasion. MBN President Brian Conniff noted and showed a video clip of a new Alhurra program called "Exiting ISIS," a thirteen episode series of interviews with ISIS defectors.

In conclusion, CEO Lansing stated that the BBG's participation in this year's Nathanson Public Diplomacy Scholarship program had been renewed for a second year, and announced this year's winners, including Vivian Chakarian of VOA, Oscar Rodriguez of OCB, Maryana Drach of RFE/RL, Rohit Mahajan of RFA, Omar Mahmood of MBN, and Kate Neeper of the International Broadcasting Bureau.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on August 30, 2017. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of April 6, 2017 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the April 6, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Swahili Service 55th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Swahili Service 55th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Azerbaijani Service 35th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Azerbaijani Service 35th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Kurdish Service 25th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Kurdish Service 25th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 5.
5. Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's North Caucasus Service 15th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's North Caucasus Service 15th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 6.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Rob Fallon; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; Director of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Nnake Nweke; BBG Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Andre Mendes; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Director of Research Sonja Gloeckle; Supervisory Program Analyst Mollie King; Program Analyst Kate Neepner; Management and Program Analyst Theresa Beatty; Budget Director Frank Filipkowski; Writer-Editor (Multimedia) Laurie Moy; Public Affairs/Internal Communications Adeyemi Jimason; White House Liaison to the BBG Matt Ciepielowski; Communications Advisor to the BBG Matt Schuck; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Bridget Serchak, VOA Director of Public Relations; Maria "Malule" Gonzalez, OCB Director; Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Pamela Goodnow, RFE/RL Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer; Stephanie Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Director; Libby Liu, RFA President; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Brian Conniff, MBN President; Nicholas Snyder, Senior Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs; and Ilan Berman, Senior Vice President of the American Foreign Policy Council.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for June 14, 2017 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of April 6, 2017 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Swahili Service 55th Anniversary
4. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Azerbaijani Service 35th Anniversary
5. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Kurdish Service 25th Anniversary
6. Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's North Caucasus Service 15th Anniversary

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 1

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

June 2017 Meeting Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

Wednesday, June 14

12:00 – 1:00 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting

- A. Welcome Chairman / Chairman Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda
 - Draft Minutes of April 6, 2017 Meeting
 - Draft Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Swahili Service 55th Anniversary
 - Draft Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Azerbaijani Service 35th Anniversary
 - Draft Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Kurdish Service 25th Anniversary
 - Draft Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's North Caucasus Service 15th Anniversary
- C. Public Comment
- D. CEO & Director's Report
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: April 6, 2017
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of April 6, 2017**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Leon Aron
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh
Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton

Governor Jeffrey Shell was not in attendance. Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman began with some comments on the current Board structure. He noted that on January 24, 2017, the Board voted to name him Chairman and delegated to me the full authorities of the Board Chair under the BBG Board By-Laws. He expressed his gratitude to Jeff Shell for his dedication and leadership of the Board and noted that he was critical to the transformation of the agency. He stated that he will continue to work with Board members and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) John Lansing, to maximize BBG's impact and to advance U.S. foreign policy priorities and national interest. He then thanked the Board, CEO Lansing, and the network heads for the seamless transition.

Chairman Weinstein took a moment to comment on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 ("NDAA"). He stated that, on December 23, 2016, President Obama signed the 2017 NDAA into law, with a signing statement – as is common for large legislation. He noted that the signing statement had raised potential constitutional concerns regarding the NDAA and the Executive Branch appointment and removal authorities. He added that, out of an

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

abundance of caution, the Department of Justice affirmed that the current Board is enduring and will continue to serve alongside the current CEO until a CEO is confirmed by the Senate and appointed by the President.

The Chairman announced the BBG's new Presidential Landing Team, Matt Ciepielowski and Matt Schuck, who joined the agency on January 23. He said they are working with the Board, CEO, BBG senior management, and other relevant agency staff to learn about BBG operations and management in order to ensure an open and transparent transition with the Trump Administration. He added that the Team has been invaluable assets to the agency, making the transition seamless. He also added that the Team's attendance helps them learn the important work the Board is leading.

Chairman Weinstein reported on two unexpected deaths in the BBG family over the past month. He announced that, on March 4, Oscar Barcelo, the International Broadcasting Bureau's (IBB) Regional Marketing Officer for Latin America, had passed away. Mr. Barcelo worked closely with Voice of America's (VOA) Latin America Division, VOA management, and with IBB Office of Marketing. Mr. Barcelo's work extended the Latin America weekly audience to nearly 60 million in 2016 – a major driver of VOA's large jump in reach last year. The Chairman added that, on March 23, Ner Castillo, an equipment mechanic foreman at the Tinang site of the IBB's Philippines Transmitting Station, had passed away due to an on-the-job accident. Mr. Castillo had faithfully worked with the U.S. Government for 32 years. Mr. Castillo maintained the Philippine Station's antennas that transmit BBG programming to listeners in China, Russia, and southern and eastern Asia. The Chairman then asked for a moment of silence for Oscar Barcelo and Ner Castillo.

Following the prior Chairman's tradition, Chairman Weinstein segued to the ongoing threats to BBG journalists around the world by highlighting the following incidents: 1) In Vietnam, Radio Free Asia (RFA) videographer Nguyen Van Hoa was still being detained for "abusing democratic freedoms," and has not been able to contact his family or attorneys; 2) VOA Kurdish Service's reporter, Ahmed Ghafur Hakim, was detained and had his equipment and press credentials seized while trying to cover an incident in Erbil, Iraq, but was later released with no explanation for his detention; 3) In Belarus, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) reporter Halina Abakunchyk was among several journalists detained by police in Belarus on March 12 while reporting on protests against a controversial tax on the unemployed; 4) RFE/RL President Thomas Kent traveled to Kyrgyzstan and met with Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambaev on March 30 after learning that the President had filed two defamation lawsuits against RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service for reports that included quotes from Kyrgyzstan's opposition Ata-Meken (fatherland) Party which were made at a widely reported press conference following the arrest of the Party's leader; 5) two RFE/RL correspondents in southern Russia were attacked on March 28 while they were on assignment to cover a demonstration in an incident that appears to have been at least partially orchestrated by local police; and 6) the trial of Crimean journalist Mykola Semena, an RFE/RL contributor who had been indicted on separatism-related charges by the Russian authorities controlling the Peninsula for an article he wrote criticizing Moscow's seizure of Crimea. On behalf of the Board, Chairman Weinstein condemned all these actions against BBG journalists, which are unconscionable violations of international norms.

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

Moving to Board business, Chairman Weinstein stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on March 23. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

The Chairman described the six items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: draft minutes of the November 30, 2016 meeting of the plenary Board; a resolution honoring VOA's 75th anniversary; a resolution honoring VOA's Russian Service 70th Anniversary; a resolution honoring VOA's Somali Service 10th anniversary; a resolution honoring RFE/RL's Afghan Service 15th anniversary; and a resolution honoring Middle East Broadcasting Networks' (MBN) Radio Sawa 15th anniversary. Governor Kempner moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Aron seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Ann Noonan, Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, to address the Board for three minutes.

At the Chairman's invitation, CEO Lansing began his report with an update on the strategic cooperation of the International Coordinating Committee (ICC) of the BBG. CEO Lansing said that the ICC was established 18 months ago, and its purpose is to organize BBG networks to operate as efficiently as possible, eliminating redundancies and to identify key areas for cooperation in parts of the world that are most closely aligned with U.S. foreign policy, including China and North Korea, Violent Extremism in the Middle East, and Russia's "weaponization of information." At CEO Lansing's request, RFE/RL President Tom Kent provided an update on the new 24/7 Russian-language Current Time network, including the various topics and issues had been covered by the network. The CEO announced VOA's new four-part interactive multimedia report and video series on Boko Haram's terrorist campaign in Nigeria titled, "Boko Haram – Terror Unmasked," and invited VOA Director Amanda Bennett to describe this new project. The CEO noted a key area of focus for him, and for the ICC, is to build better collaborative relationships across BBG's network and asked RFA President Libby Liu to offer a report on RFA's collaboration with other BBG networks. The CEO also noted the BBG's emphasis on using accurate reporting and journalism to counter the violent narratives of ISIS and similar violent extremist groups, and the success of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks' (MBN) "Raise Your Voice" project, a multimedia initiative to counter the propaganda spread by ISIS and to provide a platform for citizens to discuss and engage on topics that underlie the appeal of extremist ideology. He added that MBN has created a new digital initiative following the "Raise Your Voice" model called, "Maghreb Voices," and invited MBN President Brian Conniff to describe the new initiative. Finally, the CEO said that, while the U.S. and Cuba had normalized the relationship, the Island still faces serious challenges when it comes to press and information freedom. To better understand these challenges, the CEO said that BBG and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) had commissioned an independent review of press freedom in Cuba and asked OCB Director Malule Gonzalez to briefly highlight some key findings from the qualitative study.

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

CEO Lansing then announced that the BBG had begun the nomination process for this year's Nathanson Public Diplomacy Scholarship. He noted that the Nathanson Scholarship, provided by former BBG Chairman Marc Nathanson and his wife, Jane Nathanson, identifies emerging leaders and middle management officials in areas related to public diplomacy and international media, and funds their participation in executive training at the nonpartisan Aspen Institute. At the CEO's request, Chief of Staff Rob Fallon described the Socrates Seminars which will be held from July 7 to July 10, 2017 in Aspen, Colorado.

In closing, CEO Lansing reported that, on March 13, the President issued a new Executive Order on a comprehensive plan for reorganizing the Executive Branch. He said, under the Executive Order, the head of each Agency is required to submit to Office of Management and Budget an agency plan to "reorganize governmental functions and eliminate unnecessary agencies ..., components of agencies, and agency programs," in order to improve the "efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of agencies." He stated that the BBG takes this Executive Order seriously and is treating it as such. He commented that it is a good opportunity for the BBG to highlight some of the reforms it had implemented in the past 18 months. He said that his team, including the Landing Team, will be working with the Board to develop an efficient and impactful plan.

At the Chairman's invitation, Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton gave brief comments on the great working relationship between the BBG and his office, the U.S. Department of State's continued support for the statutorily mandated firewall that protect the BBG's editorial independence, and the close collaborations between the BBG and the Department's bureaus to advance U.S. foreign policy goals. He added that he will continue to advocate for BBG staff to have access to key U.S. foreign policy meetings. He expressed his appreciation for BBG's positive influence to affiliates abroad because of its credibility and independence, and for being a model for freedom of expression and free media. On a final note Ambassador Wharton thanked CEO Lansing, with the support of the Board, for his leadership in improving the quality of BBG's product and making the agency more vibrant, responsive, and forward minded such as the 24/7 Russian-language Current Time network and anti-ISIS programs, and expressed interest in programming stream for Syria. He commended CEO Lansing for positioning the BBG to counter state and non-state actors of disinformation around the globe.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on June 14, 2017. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of November 30, 2016 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the November 30, 2016 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

2. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's 75th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's 75th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Russian Service 70th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Russian Service 70th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Somali Service 10th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Somali Service 10th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 5.
5. Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Afghan Service 15th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Afghan Service 15th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 6.
6. Resolution Honoring Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Radio Sawa 15th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Radio Sawa 15th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 7.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Rob Fallon; Interim General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; Director of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Interim Chief Financial Officer John Barkhamer; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Nnake Nweke; IBB Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Director of Research Sonja Gloeckle; Associate Director for Program Support Gary Thatcher; Director of Security Frederick Lang; Supervisory of Physical Security Thomas Allen; Public Affairs/Internal Communications Adeyemi Jimason; White House Liaison to the BBG Matt Ciepielowski; Special Communications Advisor to the BBG Matt Schuck; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Associate Director for Language Programming; Jim Tunnessen, VOA Chief Digital Officer; Maria "Malule" Gonzalez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Pamela Goodnow, RFE/RL Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer; Laura Lew, RFE/RL Risk and Compliance Officer; Anastasia Kolobrodova, RFE/RL Project Officer; Libby Liu, RFA President; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Brian Conniff, MBN President; and Nicholas Snyder, Senior Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for April 6, 2017 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of November 30, 2016 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's 75th Anniversary
4. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Russian Service 70th Anniversary
5. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Somali Service 10th Anniversary
6. Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Afghan Service 15th Anniversary
7. Resolution Honoring Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Radio Sawa 15th Anniversary

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 3

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOICE OF AMERICA'S SWAHILI SERVICE

June 14, 2017

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting in Swahili on May 15, 1962 to provide accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information to the Swahili-speaking people;

WHEREAS, VOA's Swahili Service has served for more than five decades as a vital communications link with the Swahili-speaking people in support of freedom and democracy during the last 55 years, during the years of several political and social changes, and the challenges Swahili-speaking people face today;

WHEREAS, VOA's Swahili Service has successfully adopted web cast television, online, mobile and social media platforms to reach even greater numbers of listeners;

WHEREAS, VOA Swahili is a leading source of news and information for the Swahili-speaking people about United States policy, and expert analysis on Swahili-speaking countries, the African continent, the United States and the world;

WHEREAS, VOA Swahili is a unique source of news and information for the Swahili-speaking people about American society and its achievements in democratic governance, business, medicine, science, technology and the arts, which can serve as an inspiration and a model for Swahili speakers;

WHEREAS, VOA Swahili remains a respected source of objective and accurate news and information about Swahili-speaking countries in East Africa and parts of Central Africa, many parts of diaspora including the United States and the rest of the world, with a major focus on human rights, social and cultural rights, freedom of speech, and democratic values and practices; and

WHEREAS, VOA's Swahili Service is among the leading international broadcasters in Swahili and, remains a top contender among international competitors with increasing audience reach on Radio, Internet, weekly TV and mobile, with arguably the most popular and influential radio programs in international Swahili language broadcasting.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 55th anniversary of the Voice of America's Swahili Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO commend and congratulate both the current and former members of the Voice of America's Swahili Service for their dedication in serving the Swahili-speaking people and fostering friendship and the open communication of information and ideas between them and the United States.

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 4

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOICE OF AMERICA'S AZERBAIJANI SERVICE

June 14, 2017

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting in Azerbaijani in June of 1982 to provide accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information to the Azerbaijani people;

WHEREAS, VOA's Azerbaijani Service has served as a vital communications link with the Azerbaijani people in support of freedom and democracy during the last 35 years, during the years of transition from Communism, and through the challenges of authoritarianism Azerbaijan faces today;

WHEREAS, VOA's Azerbaijani Service has successfully adopted web cast television, online, mobile and social media platforms to reach even greater numbers of Azerbaijanis;

WHEREAS, VOA Azerbaijani is a leading source of news and information for Azerbaijanis about United States policy, and expert analysis on Azerbaijan, the United States and the world;

WHEREAS, VOA Azerbaijani is a unique source of news and information for Azerbaijanis about American society and its achievements in democratic governance, business, medicine, science, technology and the arts, which can serve as an inspiration and a model for Azerbaijanis;

WHEREAS, VOA Azerbaijani remains a respected source of objective and accurate news and information about Azerbaijani and the wider region, with a major focus on human rights, social and cultural rights, freedom of speech, and democratic values and practices;

WHEREAS, VOA's Azerbaijani Service continues to broadcast daily to millions of people in Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani speakers in Iran, Russia and around the world; and

WHEREAS, VOA Azerbaijani Service is among the leading international broadcasters in Azerbaijani language.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 35th anniversary of Voice of America's Azerbaijani Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO commend and congratulate both the current and former members of the Voice of America's Azerbaijani Service for their dedication in serving the Azerbaijani people and fostering friendship and the open communication of information and ideas between them and the United States.

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 5

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOICE OF AMERICA'S KURDISH SERVICE

June 14, 2017

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting in Kurdish on April 25, 1992 to provide accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information to the Kurdish people;

WHEREAS, VOA's Kurdish Service has served for the last 25 years as a vital communications link with the Kurdish people in support of freedom and democracy;

WHEREAS, VOA Kurdish primarily targets a mass audience of Radio, TV and web news consumers, with a focus on policy makers, journalists (the media) and those who are interested in international news and U.S. policies and perspectives toward Iraqi Kurdistan and the region. Although the original target audience is the Iraqi Kurdish population, the Service also produces special programming on issues relevant to Kurds in Turkey, Syria and Iran which are not covered by local media;

WHEREAS, VOA's Kurdish Service is the only international broadcaster that speaks to the Kurds of the Middle East in their main dialects, Sorani and Kurmanji. VOA Kurdish primarily targets a mass audience of Radio, TV and web news consumers, with a focus on policy makers, journalists (the media) and those who are interested in international news and U.S. policies and perspectives toward Iraqi Kurdistan and the region. There is a hunger for American perspectives. Now that the Kurds are U.S. partners in the fight against ISIS, the need is more vital. In their continuous fight against ISIS, Kurdish forces took control of many areas in the region from ISIS. People want to know where the U.S. government stands on issues related to the Kurds such as their future as a nation without a country. ISIS in its videos has used Kurdish speaking members to convey their messages. VOA Kurdish needs to communicate with Kurds on extremism;

WHEREAS, VOA Kurdish is a unique source of news and information for Kurds about American society and its achievements in democratic governance, business, medicine, science, technology and the arts, which can serve as an inspiration and a model for Kurdish people;

WHEREAS, VOA Kurdish Service is viewed as a reliable source with comprehensive discussions on daily issues;

WHEREAS, VOA's Kurdish Service continues to broadcast daily to more than 30 million people in Iraq, Middle East and around the world; and

WHEREAS, VOA's Kurdish Service is among the leading international broadcasters in Kurdish and, surpassing its competitors with audience reach on Radio, Internet, three weekly TV shows and mobile, with arguably the most popular and influential radio and programs in the Kurdish language.

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Voice of America' Kurdish Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO commend and congratulate both the current and former members of the Voice of America's Kurdish Service for their dedication in serving the Kurdish people and fostering friendship and the open communication of information and ideas between them and the United States.

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 6

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S NORTH CAUCASUS SERVICE

June 14, 2017

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) North Caucasus Service was created by an Act of Congress in late 2000, was launched on April 3, 2002 and is celebrating its 15th anniversary in 2017;

WHEREAS, the North Caucasus Service resumed, after a 25-year hiatus, RFE/RL's decades-long tradition of providing news and information that is consistently accurate, impartial, and respectful of the human rights of all persons in this war-torn region;

WHEREAS, the North Caucasus Service broadcast radio programming in the Avar, Chechen, Circassian, and Russian languages into the North Caucasus region until June 2016, and continues to produce digital content in the Chechen and Russian languages for distribution via the Radio Marsho and Kavkaz.Realii websites and on social media platforms;

WHEREAS, the North Caucasus Service is the only international media organization to provide objective news and analysis to its audiences in one of the most violent and dangerous regions in the world;

WHEREAS, the North Caucasus Service—in spite of a decade of accreditation denials by Russian authorities—was one of the few outlets with a journalist reporting live on the 2004 Beslan hostage tragedy from beginning to end;

WHEREAS, a 2004 investigation by the North Caucasus Service about Russian detainees at Guantanamo Bay in 2004 resulted in the first-ever comprehensive list of those detainees;

WHEREAS, following the May 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, the North Caucasus Service was the first media to interview the mother, father, and uncle of bombers Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, and North Caucasus Service reporting on the Tsarnaev family was widely quoted in international media;

WHEREAS, in early 2015, as a step toward preserving Chechnya's literary heritage, the North Caucasus Service launched an online library available for free to users with both text and audio versions of classics selected from Chechen poetry and prose, as well as works from contemporary authors;

WHEREAS, the North Caucasus Service monitors and reports on the participation of Chechens in armed conflicts in the Middle East, both on the side of armed rebel groups and as Russian servicemen; and

Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting

WHEREAS, the informed reporting of the North Caucasus Service remains crucial for the well-being of the peoples of the region, and dramatically relevant to the interests of the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 15th anniversary of RFE/RL's North Caucasus Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the North Caucasus Service team for their dedication to professional journalism.



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors

Date: August 30, 2017

Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of August 30, 2017**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Jeffrey Shell
Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton

Governor Leon Aron and Governor Karen Kornbluh were not in attendance. Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman announced the retirement of Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton at the end of September. He said that this will be a big loss for both the U.S. Department of State and BBG, and that Ambassador Wharton is a true patriot and a wonderful colleague. He added that, in recent years, the Board had benefited by its strong partnership with the State Department, and particularly the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. He noted that, from the time of his appointment on the Board, Ambassador Wharton has shown a keen understanding of the importance of the BBG's work and its challenges, and has been enormously helpful to the success of the BBG. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman thanked Ambassador Wharton for his service and invited him to give brief remarks. Ambassador Wharton expressed his appreciation for serving on the Board for a brief period and his strong belief in the BBG's mission. He stated that the BBG's mission remains vital due to its credibility and independence, and it serves as a model for freedom of expression and free media. On a final note, the Ambassador added that he will find ways to continue to support the BBG.

The Chairman outlined the ongoing threats to the press around the world. He noted that, since the last Board meeting, some of BBG's journalists had been harassed, beaten, and intimidated.

Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting

He highlighted following incidents: 1) In China, on August 16, Radio Free Asia (RFA) journalist Palden Gyal and his family planned to visit relatives during a stopover in Guangzhou on their way back to the U.S. from a family vacation, but airport customs and security detained Mr. Gyal and forced him to turn over his cell phone and instructed him to leave China that evening, which prevented him from seeing his China-based family, including his 80-year-old mother; 2) Also in China, on August 14, Voice of America (VOA) Mandarin Service's Beijing Correspondent Yibing Feng and his news assistant Ai Lun were questioned by what appeared to be Chinese plainclothes investigators and later taken to a police station where they were held and interrogated for more than four hours; 3) In Dar Es Salaam, on August 17, Khalid Abubakar, a VOA Swahili stringer who identified himself as a VOA journalist to the police, was arrested and beaten by police while trying to cover a story of a traffic standoff between police and drivers in downtown Dar Es Salaam; 4) In Nairobi, on August 10, VOA Nairobi correspondent Jill Craig and Nairobi Bureau TV Producer Amos Wangwa were threatened by plain clothed police while reporting on the announcement of election results and were held for several hours; 5) In Crimea, on August 3, the presiding judge for Crimean journalist and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Contributor Mykola Semena again delayed the trial – pushing it back to August 31 – for the article Mr. Semena wrote criticizing Moscow's seizure of the Black Sea Peninsula from Ukraine in 2014; 6) In Vietnam, RFA contributor and blogger Nguyễn Ngọc Già was serving a four-year prison term with another three years of probation for the nebulous charge of “propaganda against the state”; 7) Also in Vietnam, RFA videographer Nguyen Van Hoá was being held in violation of Vietnam's penal code for “abusing democratic freedoms to infringe on the interests of the state,” which carries a maximum sentence of seven years in prison; and 8) In Turkmenistan, RFE/RL photographer and contributor Saparmamed Nepeskuliev remains detained by Turkmenistan's National Security Ministry, where he has been incommunicado for more than two years.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein mentioned two journalists who had gone missing: 1) Stanislav Aseyev, blogger and contributor to RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service, went missing since June 2, 2017, when he was forcibly disappeared by Russia-backed separatists in Ukraine's war-torn Eastern Donetsk region; and 2) Middle East Broadcasting Networks' (MBN) Alhurra TV correspondent Bashar Fahmi went missing in Syria five years ago after an August 2012 firefight in Aleppo.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on August 17. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

The Chairman noted that the only item on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration was the draft minutes of the June 14, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board. Governor Kempner moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Ambassador Wharton seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited the following members of the public to address the Board for

Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting

three minutes: Ann Noonan, Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting; Yan Zhao of Zhaoyan Broadcasting and his translator Xiu Qun of Zhaoyan Broadcasting; and Adam Powell, University of Southern California.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting. Mr. Lansing began with an announcement on the departure of his Chief of Staff, Rob Fallon, who will be leaving the Agency in September to join the Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands as its Director of External Relations. There followed brief remarks by Mr. Fallon.

CEO Lansing stated that the BBG networks advance U.S. national interest by providing audiences in closed societies, or where free media is not yet fully established, with consistently accurate, compelling, and professional journalism. He noted that, in this rapidly evolving global media environment, the work of U.S. international media is so critical. He then invited the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of the BBG. RFE/RL President Tom Kent depicted RFE/RL's reporting in Central Asia and the importance of such reporting to its mission. Office of Cuba Broadcasting Director Malule Gonzalez previewed the upcoming Cuba Internet Freedom Conference in Miami from November 7 to November 8. RFA Managing Director for East Asia Min Mitchell gave a progress report on the DPRK project. MBN President Alberto Fernandez, who joined the BBG as MBN's new President on July 17, spoke about his strategy for MBN and some of his new initiatives. VOA Director Amanda Bennett noted an increased focus by VOA to tell America's story and described *My American Story*, a 26 episode documentary series featuring a wide variety of Russian speakers who came to the U.S. to start a new life. In closing, CEO Lansing invited his Executive Assistant Yoruba Mitchell to give an update on the partnership between Peace Corps and VOA by which teaching materials and lesson plans designed by VOA Learning English staff are provided to Peace Corps volunteers in order for them to conduct English training in remote areas around the world.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on November 15, 2017. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of June 14, 2017 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the June 14, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Rob Fallon; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Nnake Nweke; BBG

Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting

Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Deputy Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Congressional Liaison Marta McLellan Ross; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Contractor for BBG Public Affairs Gigi Frias; Writer-Editor (Multimedia) Laurie Moy; Executive Assistant Yoruba Mitchell; Senior Advisor to the BBG Jeffrey Shapiro; Associate Director for Program Support Gary Thatcher; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Maria “Malule” Gonzalez, OCB Director; Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Pamela Goodnow, RFE/RL Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer; Min Mitchell, RFA Managing Director for East Asia; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, MBN President; Anne Noble, MBN General Counsel; Deirdre Kline, MBN Director of Communications; and Stephanie Forman Morimura, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for August 30, 2017 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of June 14, 2017 Board Meeting

Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 1

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

August 2017 Meeting Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

Wednesday, August 30

2:15 – 3:15 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting

- A. Chairman Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda
 - Draft Minutes of June 14, 2017 Meeting
- C. Public Comment
- D. CEO & Director's Report
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: June 14, 2017
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of June 14, 2017**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Leon Aron
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner (via telephone)
Governor Karen Kornbluh

Governor Jeffrey Shell and Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton were not in attendance. Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman began with a sad announcement concerning Congressman Steve Scalise and others who were injured after a gunman opened fire at a congressional baseball practice. On behalf of the Board, he expressed condolences to the victims and asked for a moment of silence.

Chairman Weinstein recognized the strength of the BBG team and commended the team's success as he announced the departure of Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN) President Brian Conniff. He complimented on the growth of MBN under Mr. Conniff's leadership in the past 11 years, noting MBN as a modern, impactful organization that responds effectively to the region's evolving media environment. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman thanked Mr. Conniff for his service, leadership and friendship, and presented Mr. Conniff with a Certificate of Appreciation. The Chairman then announced the appointment of Ambassador Alberto Fernandez as the new President of MBN, highlighting the Ambassador's recent position with the Middle East Media Research Institute and various roles at the U.S. Department of State. He added that the Ambassador is widely regarded as one of the most knowledgeable and impactful U.S. voices in

Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting

the Arabic-language media, and is also a fluent Arabic speaker. At the Chairman's invitation, Ambassador Fernandez gave brief remarks and expressed his enthusiasm working with the Board, BBG Chief Executive Officer (CEO) John Lansing, and BBG team in mid-July. There followed remarks by Mr. Conniff, including his long career in U.S. international media (USIM) and his strong belief in fulfilling the needs of USIM's global audiences.

The Chairman segued to the ongoing threats to the press around the world. He noted the following incidents: 1) In Cambodia, Prime Minister Hun Sen called journalists "foreign servants," and a member of the Cambodian National Assembly accused Voice of America (VOA) and other media of seeking to destroy the reputation of the country's leadership; 2) In Russia, lawmakers accused the Russian-language services of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and VOA, including CNN, of "engaging in propaganda and sowing confusion in the Russian electoral process" during the September 2016 parliamentary elections, and that Russian officials continue to block RFE/RL freelancers from official events, using lack of accreditation as an excuse, including Alexy Navalny who was covering a protest in support of opposition activist but was pulled out of the area and threatened; and 3) In Azerbaijan, a district court ruling in Baku, provided legal justification for the Azerbaijani government's censorship of RFE/RL Azerbaijani Service's website that began on March 27.

The Chairman also noted some examples of BBG journalists falling under threat, or open attack: 1) In Venezuela, VOA Spanish Service reporter Alvaro Algarra has been the victim of harassment and intimidation over the past several months while covering protests in Caracas, and most recently, while recording a protest in the center of Caracas, a platoon of national guard officers stopped Mr. Algarra, took his bag and money, and ordered him to stop reporting; 2) In Angola, reporters for VOA Portuguese to Africa Service, including producer Siona Junior and others who were preparing special election programming in Angola, had been harassed and threatened by government officials since April; 3) In Armenia, RFE/RL Armenian Service reporter Sisak Gabrielian was attacked a second time in six weeks, while reporting on allegations of vote buying by the ruling party during that day's municipal elections; 4) In China, Ai Lun, a Beijing-based news assistant for VOA Mandarin Service has been intimidated and harassed by Chinese security personnel in several times throughout the year, and most recently, the authorities interrogated Ai Lun on his background, VOA personnel, and coverage.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein called for immediate release of three of BBG journalists that remain imprisoned: RFE/RL's Mykola Semena in Crimea; RFE/RL's Saparmamed Nepeskuliev in Turkmenistan; RFE/RL's Stanislav Aseyev in Ukraine; and Radio Free Asia's Nguyễn Văn Hoá in Vietnam. He also called the harassment for all journalists to come to a stop.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on June 1. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

The Chairman described the six items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: draft minutes of the April 6, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board; a resolution honoring VOA Swahili

Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting

Service's 55th anniversary; a resolution honoring VOA Azerbaijani Service's 35th anniversary; a resolution honoring VOA Kurdish Service's 25th anniversary; and a resolution honoring RFE/RL North Caucasus Service 15th anniversary. Governor Crocker moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Kornbluh seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Sasha Gong and Huchen Zhang of VOA Mandarin Service each to address the Board for three minutes.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting. Mr. Lansing announced the appointment of Jeffrey Trimble as Deputy Director of the BBG. He reported that the Agency's human resource department had retained an independent, reputable law firm to conduct an investigation aimed at determining the facts around VOA Mandarin's interview of Guo Wengui in May. He said that since the investigation was ongoing, the BBG will not comment further, and that all should reserve judgment on all fronts until the investigation is concluded. He stated that Matt Ciepielowski is leading an effort to address the President's Executive Order on a comprehensive plan for reorganizing the Executive Branch and had begun soliciting internal and external input for the Agency's reform plan. He informed the Board that, at the request of VOA Director Amanda Bennett and RFE/RL President Tom Kent, the Agency had commissioned an external, independent content review of VOA's Persian News Network and RFE/RL's Radio Farda to ensure that their Iran coverage remains completely objective and fact-based.

CEO Lansing gave an update on the strategic cooperation of the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) of the BBG. VOA Director Amanda Bennett announced the opening of a new Silicon Valley bureau in San Francisco, and described and played a video clip from *Off the Highway* series as part of VOA's intensified focus on telling America's story. RFE/RL President Tom Kent depicted the impact of RFE/RL's investigative reporting by presenting video clips of recent stories on child abuse, rural poverty and human trafficking. RFA President Libby Liu highlighted the collaboration of RFA and VOA during the recent Cambodian elections. Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) Director Malule Gonzalez presented a video clip and described the success of a recent documentary about the Cuban pilots who flew planes during the Bay of Pigs invasion. MBN President Brian Conniff noted and showed a video clip of a new Alhurra program called "Exiting ISIS," a thirteen episode series of interviews with ISIS defectors.

In conclusion, CEO Lansing stated that the BBG's participation in this year's Nathanson Public Diplomacy Scholarship program had been renewed for a second year, and announced this year's winners, including Vivian Chakarian of VOA, Oscar Rodriguez of OCB, Maryana Drach of RFE/RL, Rohit Mahajan of RFA, Omar Mahmood of MBN, and Kate Neeper of the International Broadcasting Bureau.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on August 30, 2017. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of April 6, 2017 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the April 6, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Swahili Service 55th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Swahili Service 55th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Azerbaijani Service 35th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Azerbaijani Service 35th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Kurdish Service 25th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Voice of America's Kurdish Service 25th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 5.
5. Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's North Caucasus Service 15th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's North Caucasus Service 15th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 6.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Rob Fallon; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; Director of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Nnake Nweke; BBG Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Andre Mendes; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Director of Research Sonja Gloeckle; Supervisory Program Analyst Mollie King; Program Analyst Kate Neepner; Management and Program Analyst Theresa Beatty; Budget Director Frank Filipkowski; Writer-Editor (Multimedia) Laurie Moy; Public Affairs/Internal Communications Adeyemi Jimason; White House Liaison to the BBG Matt Ciepielowski; Communications Advisor to the BBG Matt Schuck; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Bridget Serchak, VOA Director of Public Relations; Maria "Malule" Gonzalez, OCB Director; Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Pamela Goodnow, RFE/RL Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer; Stephanie Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Director; Libby Liu, RFA President; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Brian Conniff, MBN President; Nicholas Snyder, Senior Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs; and Ilan Berman, Senior Vice President of the American Foreign Policy Council.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for June 14, 2017 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of April 6, 2017 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Swahili Service 55th Anniversary
4. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Azerbaijani Service 35th Anniversary
5. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's Kurdish Service 25th Anniversary
6. Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's North Caucasus Service 15th Anniversary



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors

Date: November 15, 2017

Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of November 15, 2017**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Ryan Crocker (by telephone)
Governor Michael Kempner (by telephone)
Governor Karen Kornbluh
Acting Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Public Affairs Susan Stevenson

Governor Leon Aron and Governor Jeff Shell were not in attendance. Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman welcomed Susan Stevenson, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Public Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. He noted that Ambassador Wharton had retired at the end of September, and that Steven Goldstein had been nominated by the President as the new Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. He stated that, while Mr. Goldstein awaits his appointment confirmation, Ms. Stevenson was representing and carrying out the Secretary's responsibilities with respect to the BBG. He added that the BBG has benefited by its strong partnership with the State Department, and particularly the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and invited Ms. Stevenson for brief remarks. Ms. Stevenson expressed that the cooperation between the State Department and BBG is essential while maintaining and respecting the Firewall. She noted that the collaboration in the Global Engagement Center (GEC) is an example of the perfect cooperation between the State Department and BBG. She noted further that an assignment of a BBG detailee currently at GEC allows the State Department and BBG to take advantage of their respective strengths, and to ensure that they leverage resources to efficiently and effectively combat disinformation and counter terrorism while making sure they do not duplicate efforts.

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

The Chairman said that the Board recognizes the difficult working conditions many of our journalists operate in, and the importance of highlighting incidents of threats to the journalist since the last Board meeting.

Chairman Weinstein noted the horrific bomb blast in Mogadishu on October 14 that impacted the Voice of America (VOA). Somali stringer Abdulkadir Mohamed Abdulle was injured, while freelance cameraman Ali Nur Siad working with Abdulle on assignment for VOA, was killed in the blast. Also killed that day was Ahmed Abdikarin Eyow, a valued member of the Somali community in Minneapolis and trusted friend of VOA. Eyow was instrumental in making VOA's town hall between Somali diaspora in Minnesota and citizens in Mogadishu possible. The Chairman then asked for a moment of silence in honor of those brave men.

In addition to the terrible event in Mogadishu, Chairman Weinstein also noted a number of incidents in which BBG journalists were targeted: 1) In Cambodia, two former Radio Free Asia (RFA) journalists had been arrested, and it was reported that they are under suspicion of working for RFA; 2) In Turkmenistan, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Saparmamed Nepeskuliev remains in prison, and Stanislav Aseyev continues to be held by pro-Russian separatists in Donetsk; 3) In China's Xinjiang Province, three RFA reporters have had family members jailed or detained in the last few months – a retaliation against family members is a common tactic to try to silence reporters; 4) In Ukraine, RFE/RL Ukrainian Service's "Schemes" program journalist Mykhailo Tkach and his TV crew were attacked on November 7 by masked bodyguards at the Kyiv airport while reporting on the arrival from Russia of powerful Ukrainian politician and businessman Viktor Medvedchuk, who leads the pro-Russian Ukrainian Choice Organization; 5) Also in Ukraine, RFE/RL "Schemes" journalist Oleksandr Chornovalov were being followed by unknown men for consecutive days and, on September 15, Tkach and a cameraman were physically assaulted by members of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko's security guard; 6) In Pakistan, there has been a dramatic increase in threats again journalists working at VOA's Radio Deewa and RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal and Radio Azadi, including RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal taken special measures to protect its reporters in northwest Pakistan after a separatist group threatened to attack Pakistani journalists whom they claim are biased in their news coverage in favor of the government, and in 2017, no fewer than four Radio Mashaal journalists have been threatened, stalked, kidnapped for up to 72 hours, fired upon, or otherwise harassed, both by the Taliban and by Pakistani intelligence agency officials; and 7) In Africa, VOA Portuguese to Africa stringer Moniz Muquebele was detained by police, who questioned and beat him, and on October 12, Swahili stringer Kennes Bwire was one of four local journalists robbed outside their homes after reporting on parliamentary resistance to removing presidential age limits.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on November 1. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

The Chairman noted that there were three items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: draft minutes of the August 30, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board; a draft

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

resolution honoring 35th anniversary of Voice of America broadcasts in Amharic-Language; and a proposed 2018 BBG Board meeting schedule. Governor Kornbluh moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Acting Assistant Secretary Stevenson seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited the following members of the public to address the Board for three minutes: Adam Powell, University of Southern California; Gang Liu, Chinese Dissident; and Xianminxiong Xiong, journalist for Boxun News.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting. Mr. Lansing announced the appointment of Matthew Walsh as Chief of Staff and Dr. Haroon Ullah as BBG's new Chief Strategy Officer.

CEO Lansing stated that the BBG fosters and sustains free and democratic societies by exemplifying and supporting free media, and that the BBG also advances U.S. national interest by providing audiences in closed societies, or where free media is not yet fully established, with consistently accurate, compelling, and professional journalism. He then invited the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of the BBG. Office of Cuba Broadcasting Acting Director Andre Mendes highlighted the second Cuba Internet Freedom Conference in Miami. VOA Director Amanda Bennett summarized the documentary roll-out of VOA's *Boko Haram: A Journey from Evil*, and spoke briefly about VOA's recent project with Greta Van Susteren. RFE/RL President Tom Kent described the current situation for operating in Russia. RFA Executive Editor Bay Fang depicted how RFA is providing context for the complex situation for the Rohingya by previewing an impactful video that combines difficult reporting by both RFA's Myanmar-based reporters and Bengali stringers for Benar News. MBN President Alberto Fernandez spoke about his work to improve MBN through a series of initiatives and his plans for MBN's future.

The CEO noted the release of the Fiscal Year 2017 Performance Accountability Report (PAR), which the BBG has continued to maintain its record high reach of nearly 280 million unique audience viewers (per week). He said that part of BBG's significant reach and impact was its skyrocketing digital reach, as exemplified by *Current Time* which had been viewed over 300 million times this year. At the CEO's invitation, Chief Strategy Officer Haroon Ullah presented some highlights in the PAR.

In closing, CEO Lansing discussed the winners of this year's David Burke Distinguished Journalism Award which recognizes courage, integrity and originality in reporting by journalists within the BBG networks, enlightening and informing listeners and exhibiting a commitment to the free exchange of ideas. The winners included: VOA Middle East Correspondent Heather Murdock for the strength, courage and journalistic skill she demonstrated while documenting the drive by coalition forces to retake the city of Mosul from ISIS; Marti journalist Ricardo Quintana for documenting the difficult and dangerous immigration routes that many Cuban migrants took in their attempt to reach the U.S.; employees of RFE/RL's Uzbek Service for their tireless and courageous determination to break stories and provide Uzbekistan's citizens with a means to

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

speak truth to power, despite grave risks to themselves and their families; RFA Albert Hong, Jaewan Noh, and Hee Jung Yang of the Korean Service for their fastidious investigative reporting that exposed a forced labor scheme by the North Korean government in seven countries; and Alhurra-Iraq correspondent Abdul Hamid Zebari and cameramen Yaser Salim and John Saeed, for taking extreme risks to accurately and objectively report on Iraq's deepening catastrophe as a result of ISIS's inhumane actions.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on March 14, 2018. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of August 30, 2017 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the August 30, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 35th Anniversary of Voice of America Broadcasts in Amharic-Language. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 35th anniversary of Voice of America broadcasts in Amharic-language as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution for BBG Meeting Dates in 2018. The Board adopted the resolution for BBG meeting dates in 2018 as set forth in Attachment 4.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Nnake Nweke; BBG Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Acting Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Contractor for BBG Public Affairs Gigi Frias; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Bridget Serchak, VOA Director of Public Relations; Andre Mendes, OCB Acting Director; Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Bay Fang, RFA Executive Editor; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, MBN President; and Stephanie Forman Morimura, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for November 15, 2017 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of August 30, 2017 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 35th Anniversary of Voice of America Broadcasts in Amharic-Language
4. Proposed 2018 BBG Board Meeting Schedule

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 1

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

November 2017 Meeting Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

Wednesday, November 15

1:00 - 2:00 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting

- A. Chairman Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda (Board and CEO Vote)
 - Draft Minutes of August 30, 2017 Meeting
 - Draft Resolution Honoring 35th Anniversary of Voice of America Broadcasts in Amharic-Language
 - Proposed 2018 BBG Board Meeting Schedule
- C. Public Comment
- D. CEO & Director's Report
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: August 30, 2017
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of August 30, 2017**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Jeffrey Shell
Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton

Governor Leon Aron and Governor Karen Kornbluh were not in attendance. Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman announced the retirement of Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Bruce Wharton at the end of September. He said that this will be a big loss for both the U.S. Department of State and BBG, and that Ambassador Wharton is a true patriot and a wonderful colleague. He added that, in recent years, the Board had benefited by its strong partnership with the State Department, and particularly the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. He noted that, from the time of his appointment on the Board, Ambassador Wharton has shown a keen understanding of the importance of the BBG's work and its challenges, and has been enormously helpful to the success of the BBG. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman thanked Ambassador Wharton for his service and invited him to give brief remarks. Ambassador Wharton expressed his appreciation for serving on the Board for a brief period and his strong belief in the BBG's mission. He stated that the BBG's mission remains vital due to its credibility and independence, and it serves as a model for freedom of expression and free media. On a final note, the Ambassador added that he will find ways to continue to support the BBG.

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

The Chairman outlined the ongoing threats to the press around the world. He noted that, since the last Board meeting, some of BBG's journalists had been harassed, beaten, and intimidated. He highlighted following incidents: 1) In China, on August 16, Radio Free Asia (RFA) journalist Palden Gyal and his family planned to visit relatives during a stopover in Guangzhou on their way back to the U.S. from a family vacation, but airport customs and security detained Mr. Gyal and forced him to turn over his cell phone and instructed him to leave China that evening, which prevented him from seeing his China-based family, including his 80-year-old mother; 2) Also in China, on August 14, Voice of America (VOA) Mandarin Service's Beijing Correspondent Yibing Feng and his news assistant Ai Lun were questioned by what appeared to be Chinese plainclothes investigators and later taken to a police station where they were held and interrogated for more than four hours; 3) In Dar Es Salaam, on August 17, Khalid Abubakar, a VOA Swahili stringer who identified himself as a VOA journalist to the police, was arrested and beaten by police while trying to cover a story of a traffic standoff between police and drivers in downtown Dar Es Salaam; 4) In Nairobi, on August 10, VOA Nairobi correspondent Jill Craig and Nairobi Bureau TV Producer Amos Wangwa were threatened by plain clothed police while reporting on the announcement of election results and were held for several hours; 5) In Crimea, on August 3, the presiding judge for Crimean journalist and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Contributor Mykola Semena again delayed the trial – pushing it back to August 31 – for the article Mr. Semena wrote criticizing Moscow's seizure of the Black Sea Peninsula from Ukraine in 2014; 6) In Vietnam, RFA contributor and blogger Nguyễn Ngọc Già was serving a four-year prison term with another three years of probation for the nebulous charge of "propaganda against the state"; 7) Also in Vietnam, RFA videographer Nguyen Van Hoá was being held in violation of Vietnam's penal code for "abusing democratic freedoms to infringe on the interests of the state," which carries a maximum sentence of seven years in prison; and 8) In Turkmenistan, RFE/RL photographer and contributor Saparmamed Nepeskuliev remains detained by Turkmenistan's National Security Ministry, where he has been incommunicado for more than two years.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein mentioned two journalists who had gone missing: 1) Stanislav Aseyev, blogger and contributor to RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service, went missing since June 2, 2017, when he was forcibly disappeared by Russia-backed separatists in Ukraine's war-torn Eastern Donetsk region; and 2) Middle East Broadcasting Networks' (MBN) Alhurra TV correspondent Bashar Fahmi went missing in Syria five years ago after an August 2012 firefight in Aleppo.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on August 17. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

The Chairman noted that the only item on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration was the draft minutes of the June 14, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board. Governor Kempner moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Ambassador Wharton seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited the following members of the public to address the Board for three minutes: Ann Noonan, Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting; Yan Zhao of Zhaoyan Broadcasting and his translator Xiu Qun of Zhaoyan Broadcasting; and Adam Powell, University of Southern California.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting. Mr. Lansing began with an announcement on the departure of his Chief of Staff, Rob Fallon, who will be leaving the Agency in September to join the Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands as its Director of External Relations. There followed brief remarks by Mr. Fallon.

CEO Lansing stated that the BBG networks advance U.S. national interest by providing audiences in closed societies, or where free media is not yet fully established, with consistently accurate, compelling, and professional journalism. He noted that, in this rapidly evolving global media environment, the work of U.S. international media is so critical. He then invited the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of the BBG. RFE/RL President Tom Kent depicted RFE/RL's reporting in Central Asia and the importance of such reporting to its mission. Office of Cuba Broadcasting Director Malule Gonzalez previewed the upcoming Cuba Internet Freedom Conference in Miami from November 7 to November 8. RFA Managing Director for East Asia Min Mitchell gave a progress report on the DPRK project. MBN President Alberto Fernandez, who joined the BBG as MBN's new President on July 17, spoke about his strategy for MBN and some of his new initiatives. VOA Director Amanda Bennett noted an increased focus by VOA to tell America's story and described *My American Story*, a 26 episode documentary series featuring a wide variety of Russian speakers who came to the U.S. to start a new life. In closing, CEO Lansing invited his Executive Assistant Yoruba Mitchell to give an update on the partnership between Peace Corps and VOA by which teaching materials and lesson plans designed by VOA Learning English staff are provided to Peace Corps volunteers in order for them to conduct English training in remote areas around the world.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on November 15, 2017. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of June 14, 2017 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the June 14, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Rob Fallon; General Counsel and Board Secretary David

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Nnake Nweke; BBG Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Deputy Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Congressional Liaison Marta McLellan Ross; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Contractor for BBG Public Affairs Gigi Frias; Writer-Editor (Multimedia) Laurie Moy; Executive Assistant Yoruba Mitchell; Senior Advisor to the BBG Jeffrey Shapiro; Associate Director for Program Support Gary Thatcher; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Maria “Malule” Gonzalez, OCB Director; Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Pamela Goodnow, RFE/RL Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer; Min Mitchell, RFA Managing Director for East Asia; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, MBN President; Anne Noble, MBN General Counsel; Deirdre Kline, MBN Director of Communications; and Stephanie Forman Morimura, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for August 30, 2017 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of June 14, 2017 Board Meeting

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 3

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOICE OF AMERICA BROADCASTS IN AMHARIC-LANGUAGE

November 15, 2017

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information in the Amharic language to audiences in Ethiopia and Eritrea on September 26, 1982;

WHEREAS, VOA broadcasts in Amharic-language also reach diaspora populations in surrounding countries and the world on multiple media platforms, including radio, digital and mobile;

WHEREAS, Amharic, Afan Oromo and Tigrigna comprise the languages of VOA's Horn of Africa Service, the leading international broadcaster in Ethiopia with a weekly audience of more than five million adults;

WHEREAS, survey results indicated that more than 90 percent of VOA Horn of Africa Service's listeners say the "station is reliable and trustworthy," and that it has "increased their understanding of current events;"

WHEREAS, survey respondents inside Ethiopia and the diaspora consistently report that VOA is practically the sole source of independent news about political events in their country, in languages most Ethiopians and Eritreans can understand;

WHEREAS, VOA broadcasts local, regional, U.S. and international news, as well as an array of programming about Ethiopian, Eritrean and American culture, politics, current affairs, economics, health, education, entertainment and more;

WHEREAS, VOA broadcasts in Amharic-language have been providing comprehensive coverage of stories of great concern to its audiences, including Ethiopia's worst drought in 50 years, the migrant crisis, unrest and ethnic conflict and disputes between the Ethiopian government and opposition groups; and

WHEREAS, VOA broadcasts in Amharic-language have made significant progress on its digital platforms, with the website year-over-year traffic increasing by 14 percent, from 9.9 million in 2016 to 11.5 million in 2017.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer that we celebrate and commemorate the 35th anniversary of Voice of America broadcasts in Amharic-language.

Minutes of November 15, 2017 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 4

BBG MEETING DATES IN 2018

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT THE COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

March 14 (Wednesday)

June 6 (Wednesday)

August 29 (Wednesday)

November 14 (Wednesday)



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors

Date: March 14, 2018

Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of March 14, 2018**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Leon Aron (by telephone)
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh

Governor Jeffrey Shell and the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs were not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman began by acknowledging that BBG journalists risk their lives and livelihoods every day to report the truth. He said that, since the last Board meeting, there have been many disturbing attacks on our journalists and their families. The Chairman then played a video about BBG's current threats to press that can be found [here](#) (threats to press video plays at the 1:11 mark).

a[Begin video script]

[Begin video script]

In recent months, BBG networks and the journalists who work for them, have experienced menacing, dangerous, and systematic threats.

China

In China, relatives of six U.S.-based journalists with Radio Free Asia's (RFA) Uyghur Service have been detained and disappeared by Chinese authorities. These relatives living in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region are being held in re-education camps, which act as open-air detention facilities holding thousands of Uyghurs at a time. The staff members with relatives being held are: Shohret Hoshur, Gulchehra "Guli" Hoja, Kurban Niyaz, Eset Sulaiman, Jelil Kashgary, and Mamatjan Juma. Four of these six RFA staff members are U.S. citizens.

Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

Cambodia

In Cambodia, pressure continues and restrictions are increasing after media crackdowns that led to the closure of RFA's Phnom Penh bureau in September. Two former RFA journalists Uon Chhin and Sothearin Yeang were arrested in November and charged with espionage. They have been denied bail twice, and their families are worried about the appalling conditions in prison. The government has stopped renewing Voice of America (VOA) press credentials and VOA Khmer stringer Reaksey Hul was recently escorted off the parliament premises.

Vietnam

In Vietnam, two RFA contributors are being held. Nguyễn Ngọc Già, a blogger and contributor, was sentenced to a four-year prison term with another three years on probation for carrying out "propaganda against the state." Videographer and contributor, Nguyễn Văn Hoá, was being held for "abusing democratic freedoms to infringe on the interests of the state," an offense that carries a maximum sentence of seven years in prison.

Nigeria

The wife and son of a VOA Hausa stringer Nasiru Yakubu were kidnapped on February 28, when attackers stormed their Kaduna home. A neighbor who tried to help was killed in the process. Thankfully, on March 2, Mr. Yakubu confirmed that his family was released.

Burundi

VOA Central Africa stringer Eloge Kaneza learned he had been added to the kill list. He has since been evacuated out of the country.

Egypt

In Egypt, the state-run media have led organized attacks on local and foreign press, including Alhurra. In the attack, they try to discredit the network by erroneously describing it as the television channel sponsored by the Pentagon and intelligence agencies.

Ukraine

Mykola Semena, a contributor for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), continues to be prohibited from working as a journalist after he was convicted of "separatism" last year. On December 18, the Russia-controlled Supreme Court of Crimea upheld those charges. While Mr. Semena still faces a suspended 2½ year prison sentence, the court shortened, from three years to two, the period during which Mr. Semena is prohibited from working as a journalist. Blogger and contributor for RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service, Stanislav Aseyev, has been missing since June 2, 2017. He was forcibly disappeared by Russia-backed separatists in Ukraine's war-torn eastern Donetsk region. Elsewhere in Ukraine, reporter Serhii Nuzhnenko was pepper-sprayed by a police officer, a correspondent's apartment was vandalized, and a stringer was detained and interrogated by border guards.

Pakistan

The Islamabad bureau of RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal was forced to close on Jan 19 after government intelligence accused RFE/RL of airing programs "against the interest of Pakistan."



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

Authorities have tried to force Radio Mashaal staff to make statements against RFE/RL. Meanwhile, VOA reporters in Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad are taking precautionary measures after a variety of threats have come in.

Turkmenistan

Saparmamed Nepsukliev, a photographer and contributor for RFE/RL's Turkmen Service, continues to be held after he was detained by agents of Turkmenistan's National Security Ministry on July 7, 2015, in Avaza. No one has seen or heard from him since.

The BBG demands a stop to the systematic harassment of our journalists, and that those who are being unlawfully held be released immediately.

[End video script]

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on February 23, 2018. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Governor Crocker moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Kempner seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Ann Noonan of the Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting to address the Board for three minutes.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing stated that the BBG unveiled its 2018-2022 Strategic Plan on February 12, 2018, timed with the release of the President's FY 2019 Budget Request. He said that the Plan is a comprehensive roadmap for moving the agency's priorities forward, including significantly increasing BBG's audience reach. He noted that, while the agency remains independent, it had chosen to align its Plan with the new National Security Strategy and the Administration's management priorities of effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability. He added that the BBG networks are operationalizing the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan through their own engaging, cross-platform content.

The CEO then invited the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of the BBG.

VOA Director Amanda Bennett spoke about VOA's new weekly program, *Plugged in with Greta Van Susteren*, and introduced Ms. Susteren to the Board. Director Bennett continued by saying that Ms. Susteren is working for VOA on a pro bono basis because she is passionate about



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

the work of the network and favors the neutral, issues-oriented, serious journalism that it delivers.

RFE/RL President Tom Kent described the network's new projects to help counter violent extremism in Central Asia and the Balkans. The projects are designed to be highly agile in order to engage audiences on highly relevant issues as soon as they emerge in the news. President Kent also touched on RFE/RL's cross-platform, all-sides coverage in the run-up to the Russian presidential elections.

Andre Mendes, Acting Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, highlighted some of the unique and creative ways that the Martis get their content on the island despite the challenging operating environment. Acting Director Mendes showed a video featuring improvements to programming and the distribution of news and information denied to the Cuban people by their government.

RFA President Libby Liu discussed the network's coverage of the development of facial recognition software that ostensibly boosts the power of the Chinese surveillance state. She also described the threats and intimidation that RFA journalists face in reporting about China.

Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, spoke about the network's smart, fresh programming that stems from his new strategy for targeted broadcasting in the pan-Arab media space.

In closing, CEO Lansing pointed out how the ICC was breaking new ground and that he was pleased with the first-rate quality work from the networks.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on June 6, 2018. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of November 15, 2017 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the November 15, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 75th Anniversary of Voice of America's Serbian Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 75th anniversary of Voice of America's Serbian Service as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Honoring 60th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bangla Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 60th anniversary of Voice of America's Bangla Service as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution Honoring 5th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bambara Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 5th anniversary of Voice of America's Bambara Service as set forth in Attachment 5.



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

5. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Azerbaijani Service – Azadliq Radiosu. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Azerbaijani Service – Azadliq Radiosu as set forth in Attachment 6.
6. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Russian Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Russian Service as set forth in Attachment 7.
7. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Turkmen Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Turkmen Service as set forth in Attachment 8.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Chief Strategy Officer and Acting Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Haroon Ullah; BBG Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; BBG Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Acting Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Deputy Chief Financial Officer John Barkhamer; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Congressional Liaison Marta McLellan Ross; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Bridget Serchak, VOA Director of Public Relations; Andre Mendes, OCB Acting Director; Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Libby Liu, RFA President; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, MBN President; Deirdre Kline, MBN Director of Communications; and Stephanie Forman Morimura, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

Attachments:

1. Agenda for March 14, 2018 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of November 15, 2017 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 75th Anniversary of Voice of America's Serbian Service
4. Resolution Honoring 60th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bangla Service
5. Resolution Honoring 5th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bambara Service
6. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Azerbaijani Service – Azadliq Radiosu
7. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Russian Service
8. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Turkmen Service

Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 1

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

March 2018 Meeting Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

Wednesday, March 14

1:00 - 2:00 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting

- A. Chairman Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda
 - Minutes of November 15, 2017 Board Meeting
 - Resolution Honoring 75th Anniversary of Voice of America's Serbian Service
 - Resolution Honoring 60th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bangla Service
 - Resolution Honoring 5th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bambara Service
 - Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Azerbaijani Service – Azadliq Radiosu
 - Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Russian Service
 - Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Turkmen Service
- C. Public Comment
- D. CEO & Director's Report
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: November 15, 2017
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of November 15, 2017**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Ryan Crocker (by telephone)
Governor Michael Kempner (by telephone)
Governor Karen Kornbluh
Acting Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Public Affairs Susan Stevenson

Governor Leon Aron and Governor Jeff Shell were not in attendance. Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman welcomed Susan Stevenson, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Public Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. He noted that Ambassador Wharton had retired at the end of September, and that Steven Goldstein had been nominated by the President as the new Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. He stated that, while Mr. Goldstein awaits his appointment confirmation, Ms. Stevenson was representing and carrying out the Secretary's responsibilities with respect to the BBG. He added that the BBG has benefited by its strong partnership with the State Department, and particularly the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and invited Ms. Stevenson for brief remarks. Ms. Stevenson expressed that the cooperation between the State Department and BBG is essential while maintaining and respecting the Firewall. She noted that the collaboration in the Global Engagement Center (GEC) is an example of the perfect cooperation between the State Department and BBG. She noted further that an assignment of a BBG detailee currently at GEC allows the State Department and BBG to take advantage of their respective strengths, and to



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

ensure that they leverage resources to efficiently and effectively combat disinformation and counter terrorism while making sure they do not duplicate efforts.

The Chairman said that the Board recognizes the difficult working conditions many of our journalists operate in, and the importance of highlighting incidents of threats to the journalist since the last Board meeting.

Chairman Weinstein noted the horrific bomb blast in Mogadishu on October 14 that impacted the Voice of America (VOA). Somali stringer Abdulkadir Mohamed Abdulle was injured, while freelance cameraman Ali Nur Siad working with Abdulle on assignment for VOA, was killed in the blast. Also killed that day was Ahmed Abdikarin Eyow, a valued member of the Somali community in Minneapolis and trusted friend of VOA. Eyow was instrumental in making VOA's town hall between Somali diaspora in Minnesota and citizens in Mogadishu possible. The Chairman then asked for a moment of silence in honor of those brave men.

In addition to the terrible event in Mogadishu, Chairman Weinstein also noted a number of incidents in which BBG journalists were targeted: 1) In Cambodia, two former Radio Free Asia (RFA) journalists had been arrested, and it was reported that they are under suspicion of working for RFA; 2) In Turkmenistan, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Saparmamed Nepeskuliev remains in prison, and Stanislav Aseyev continues to be held by pro-Russian separatists in Donetsk; 3) In China's Xinjiang Province, three RFA reporters have had family members jailed or detained in the last few months – a retaliation against family members is a common tactic to try to silence reporters; 4) In Ukraine, RFE/RL Ukrainian Service's "Schemes" program journalist Mykhailo Tkach and his TV crew were attacked on November 7 by masked bodyguards at the Kyiv airport while reporting on the arrival from Russia of powerful Ukrainian politician and businessman Viktor Medvedchuk, who leads the pro-Russian Ukrainian Choice Organization; 5) Also in Ukraine, RFE/RL "Schemes" journalist Oleksandr Chornovalov were being followed by unknown men for consecutive days and, on September 15, Tkach and a cameraman were physically assaulted by members of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko's security guard; 6) In Pakistan, there has been a dramatic increase in threats against journalists working at VOA's Radio Deewa and RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal and Radio Azadi, including RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal taken special measures to protect its reporters in northwest Pakistan after a separatist group threatened to attack Pakistani journalists whom they claim are biased in their news coverage in favor of the government, and in 2017, no fewer than four Radio Mashaal journalists have been threatened, stalked, kidnapped for up to 72 hours, fired upon, or otherwise harassed, both by the Taliban and by Pakistani intelligence agency officials; and 7) In Africa, VOA Portuguese to Africa stringer Moniz Muquebele was detained by police, who questioned and beat him, and on October 12, Swahili stringer Kennes Bwire was one of four local journalists robbed outside their homes after reporting on parliamentary resistance to removing presidential age limits.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on November 1. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

The Chairman noted that there were three items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: draft minutes of the August 30, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board; a draft resolution honoring 35th anniversary of Voice of America broadcasts in Amharic-Language; and a proposed 2018 BBG Board meeting schedule. Governor Kornbluh moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Acting Assistant Secretary Stevenson seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited the following members of the public to address the Board for three minutes: Adam Powell, University of Southern California; Gang Liu, Chinese Dissident; and Xianminxiong Xiong, journalist for Boxun News.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting. Mr. Lansing announced the appointment of Matthew Walsh as Chief of Staff and Dr. Haroon Ullah as BBG's new Chief Strategy Officer.

CEO Lansing stated that the BBG fosters and sustains free and democratic societies by exemplifying and supporting free media, and that the BBG also advances U.S. national interest by providing audiences in closed societies, or where free media is not yet fully established, with consistently accurate, compelling, and professional journalism. He then invited the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of the BBG. Office of Cuba Broadcasting Acting Director Andre Mendes highlighted the second Cuba Internet Freedom Conference in Miami. VOA Director Amanda Bennett summarized the documentary roll-out of VOA's *Boko Haram: A Journey from Evil*, and spoke briefly about VOA's recent project with Greta Van Susteren. RFE/RL President Tom Kent described the current situation for operating in Russia. RFA Executive Editor Bay Fang depicted how RFA is providing context for the complex situation for the Rohingya by previewing an impactful video that combines difficult reporting by both RFA's Myanmar-based reporters and Bengali stringers for Benar News. MBN President Alberto Fernandez spoke about his work to improve MBN through a series of initiatives and his plans for MBN's future.

The CEO noted the release of the Fiscal Year 2017 Performance Accountability Report (PAR), which the BBG has continued to maintain its record high reach of nearly 280 million unique audience viewers (per week). He said that part of BBG's significant reach and impact was its skyrocketing digital reach, as exemplified by *Current Time* which had been viewed over 300 million times this year. At the CEO's invitation, Chief Strategy Officer Haroon Ullah presented some highlights in the PAR.

In closing, CEO Lansing discussed the winners of this year's David Burke Distinguished Journalism Award which recognizes courage, integrity and originality in reporting by journalists within the BBG networks, enlightening and informing listeners and exhibiting a commitment to



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

the free exchange of ideas. The winners included: VOA Middle East Correspondent Heather Murdock for the strength, courage and journalistic skill she demonstrated while documenting the drive by coalition forces to retake the city of Mosul from ISIS; Marti journalist Ricardo Quintana for documenting the difficult and dangerous immigration routes that many Cuban migrants took in their attempt to reach the U.S.; employees of RFE/RL's Uzbek Service for their tireless and courageous determination to break stories and provide Uzbekistan's citizens with a means to speak truth to power, despite grave risks to themselves and their families; RFA Albert Hong, Jaewan Noh, and Hee Jung Yang of the Korean Service for their fastidious investigative reporting that exposed a forced labor scheme by the North Korean government in seven countries; and Alhurra-Iraq correspondent Abdul Hamid Zebari and cameramen Yaser Salim and John Saeed, for taking extreme risks to accurately and objectively report on Iraq's deepening catastrophe as a result of ISIS's inhumane actions.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on March 14, 2018. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of August 30, 2017 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the August 30, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 35th Anniversary of Voice of America Broadcasts in Amharic-Language. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 35th anniversary of Voice of America broadcasts in Amharic-language as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution for BBG Meeting Dates in 2018. The Board adopted the resolution for BBG meeting dates in 2018 as set forth in Attachment 4.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Nnake Nweke; BBG Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Acting Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Contractor for BBG Public Affairs Gigi Frias; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Bridget Serchak, VOA Director of Public Relations; Andre Mendes, OCB Acting Director; Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Bay Fang, RFA Executive Editor; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, MBN



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

President; and Stephanie Forman Morimura, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for November 15, 2017 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of August 30, 2017 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 35th Anniversary of Voice of America Broadcasts in Amharic-Language
4. Proposed 2018 BBG Board Meeting Schedule



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 3

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOICE OF AMERICA'S SERBIAN SERVICE

March 14, 2018

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting in Serbo-Croatian on March 26, 1943, to provide accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information to the peoples of the former Yugoslavia;

WHEREAS, VOA's Yugoslav Service served for decades as a vital communications link to the Balkans and promoted freedom and democracy during a turbulent period in the region;

WHEREAS, after the breakup of the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, VOA's Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Slovene Services were established;

WHEREAS, VOA Serbian was the first VOA language service to begin with regular television programming on December 11, 1996;

WHEREAS, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of VOA Serbian's Open Studio television newscast, in December 2006, then-Senator Joseph Biden entered a statement of congratulations into the Congressional Record, praising the Voice of America's valuable role in Serbia's evolution and in providing an important source of information during the darkest periods of Serb history, adding that the "events in Serbia during the last decade provide compelling evidence of how courageous journalism can serve as a catalyst for democratic change;"

WHEREAS, VOA's Serbian Service expanded its programming with the aim of countering growing Russian propaganda and penetration by Russia and Russia-sponsored media into Serbian and Montenegrin media space over the last five years, and reported extensively on Montenegro's bid to join NATO, which was completed successfully in 2017;

WHEREAS, VOA Serbian remains a respected source of objective and accurate information on the Balkan region, the United States and the world, with a major focus on democratic consolidation and ethnic reconciliation;

WHEREAS, VOA Serbian continues to broadcast to more than 10 million Serbs in Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Macedonia, as well as to Serbian and other South Slavic diasporas world-wide, as Serbian is also understood by speakers of other South Slavic languages; and



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

WHEREAS, VOA Serbian is the leading international broadcaster in the target area, surpassing its competitors with its audience reach on multiple platforms – television, Internet, social media and mobile.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Voice of America's Serbian Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO commend and congratulate both the current and former members of the Voice of America's Serbian Service for their dedication in serving the peoples of Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and other countries of the former Yugoslavia, and fostering friendship and the open communication of information and ideas between them and the United States.



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 4

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOICE OF AMERICA'S BANGLA SERVICE

March 14, 2018

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting in Bangla on January 1, 1958 to provide accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information to the Bangla speaking people in the then East Pakistan, which later became Bangladesh after the 1971 Liberation war, and West Bengal, a neighboring state in India;

WHEREAS, VOA's Bangla Service has served for decades as a vital communications link with the Bengali people in support of freedom and democracy, also during the War of Independence in 1971, and through the challenges Bangladesh faces today;

WHEREAS, VOA's Bangla Service has successfully adopted television, online, mobile and social media platforms to reach even greater numbers of Bangla speaking people around the globe;

WHEREAS, VOA Bangla is a leading source of news and information for Bangladesh and three neighboring states of India – West Bengal, Tripura, and Assam, about United States policy, and expert analysis on Bangladesh, South Asia, the United States and the world;

WHEREAS, VOA Bangla is a unique source of news and information for Bengalis about American society and its achievements in democratic governance, business, medicine, science, technology and the arts, which can serve as an inspiration and a model for Bangladesh;

WHEREAS, VOA Bangla remains a respected source of objective and accurate news and information about Bangladesh, South Asia, the United States and the world, with a major focus on human rights, religious and cultural rights, freedom of speech, and democratic values and practices;

WHEREAS, VOA's Bangla Service continues to broadcast daily to more than sixteen million people in Bangladesh and Bangla speaking people around the world and has over the past few years conducted several journalist training sessions and town hall meetings in different parts of Bangladesh on Women's Empowerment, Mother and Child Health Care, Youth Development, Health Reporting, and Journalistic Code; and

WHEREAS, VOA's Bangla Service is among the leading international broadcasters in Bangla-language, surpassing its competitors with audience reach on Radio, Television, Internet and mobile, with arguably one of the most popular and influential television programs in the Bangla language.



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Voice of America's Bangla Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO commend and congratulate both the current and former members of the Voice of America's Bangla Service for their dedication in serving the Bengali people and fostering friendship and the open communication of information and ideas between them and the United States.



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 5

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOICE OF AMERICA'S BAMBARA SERVICE

March 14, 2018

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting in Bambara on March 4, 2013 to provide accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information to the people of Mali;

WHEREAS, VOA's Bambara Service has served as a vital communications link with Malians in support of freedom and democracy, and through the challenges Mali faces today;

WHEREAS, VOA's Bambara Service has successfully adopted radio, online, mobile and social media platforms to reach even greater numbers of Malians;

WHEREAS, VOA Bambara is a leading source of news and information for Malians about United States policy, and expert analysis on Mali, Africa, the United States and the world;

WHEREAS, VOA Bambara is a unique source of news and information for Malians about American society and its achievements in democratic governance, business, medicine, science, technology and the arts, which can serve as an inspiration and a model for Mali;

WHEREAS, VOA Bambara remains a respected source of objective and accurate news and information about Mali, the Sahel region, Africa, the United States and the world, with a major focus on human rights, religious tolerance, countering violent extremism, freedom of speech, and democratic values and practices;

WHEREAS, the VOA Bambara Service reaches more than 800,000 adults in southern Mali weekly; and

WHEREAS, the VOA Bambara Service is one of the main sources of independent news in the Bambara language for the people of Mali.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 5th anniversary of the Voice of America's Bambara Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Broadcasting Board of Governors and CEO commend and congratulate both the current and former members of the Voice of America's Bambara Service for their dedication in serving the people of Mali and fostering open communication of information and ideas between them and the United States.



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 6

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S AZERBAIJANI SERVICE

March 14, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Azerbaijani Service, known locally as Azadliq radios, began broadcasting to Azerbaijan on March 5, 1953;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service has for 65 years produced journalism that promotes transparency, accountability, and pluralism in Azerbaijan, addressed issues that are absent on official media where the government controls the flow of information, and served as a guardian of the Azerbaijani nation's national and democratic values and pre-Soviet legacy of independence;

WHEREAS, the government of Azerbaijan has taken extreme measures to suppress free and independent media, including closing illegally raiding and closing RFE/RL's Baku bureau, jailing former RFE/RL contributor Khadija Ismayilova, and intermittently blocking the Azerbaijani Service's websites within the country;

WHEREAS, brave Azerbaijani Service journalists and freelancers continue to persevere with newsgathering in Azerbaijan and succeed at expanding content production and delivery from Azerbaijan via the use of new media platforms;

WHEREAS, with more than 60 million views in 2017 and almost 185,000 subscribers, RFE/RL Azerbaijani Service's YouTube channel is one of the top 3 media channels in South Caucasus, due to digital video innovation that has made high-quality, web-friendly videos and a daily 15-minute news show key products of the Service;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service is a major source of investigative reporting within the country, including delving into the highest levels of government corruption by revealing Azeri ministers' family businesses and offshore account holders linked to President Ilham Aliyev's family, reporting which were widely cited by major international media organizations; and

WHEREAS, with its objectivity and professional reporting, RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service provides a credible and influential alternative to the official media and serves as a role model for aspiring journalists and independent journalism within Azerbaijan.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service.



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service for their dedication to its audiences and to the mission of providing independent information and reporting to audiences in Azerbaijan.



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 7

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S RUSSIAN SERVICE

March 14, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Russian-language broadcasts to the peoples of the Soviet Union—known first to its audiences as Radio Liberation (Radio Osvobozhdeniye) and later renamed Radio Liberty (Radio Svoboda)—began on March 1, 1953;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL Russian Service's coverage of Josef Stalin's death on March 5, 1953, just four days after its first broadcast, was immediately instrumental in establishing its reputation as an alternative to the Soviet Union's heavily censored news;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Russian Service broadcasting has, for the past 65 years, played a vital role in providing professional news and analysis that is otherwise unavailable within Russia, where free media is consistently suppressed – and has been praised by human rights activists and international organizations for its work;

WHEREAS, the initial goal of RFE/RL's Russian Service to provide citizens with uncensored news remains equally relevant today as an alternative to Kremlin-controlled media;

WHEREAS, many East European and Russian leaders have testified to the importance of RFE/RL broadcasts in helping end the Cold War, including former Russian leader Boris Yeltsin who, on August 27, 1991, signed an official decree granting the Russian Service permission to open a permanent bureau in Moscow citing its “role in objectively informing the citizens of the RSFSR and the world community about the course of democratic processes in Russia;”

WHEREAS, this decree was annulled by Russian President Vladimir Putin on October 4, 2002, and to this date remains the only Russian presidential decree to be annulled by a presidential successor;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Russian Service is now sharply limited in its ability to distribute content in Russia and in 2017 was named as a ‘foreign agent’ by the government of the Russian Federation, yet continues to innovate in order to reach its audiences despite these roadblocks;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Russian Service has made great strides with digital and video products that humanize the Russian people and tell their stories with empathy and professionalism, including the award-winning Signs of Life video documentary series, and the newly launched Siberia.Realities hyperlocal website;



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Russian Service has provided wide-ranging coverage and analysis of Russian politics, corruption, and social welfare in a balanced and fact-based way that is otherwise not present in Russia, and serves also as a forum where thoughtful discussion and intellectual discourse on these issues can take place; and

WHEREAS, the professional reporting of the Russian Service remains crucial for the Russian people, and reinforces that free information is a critical component to democracy.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Russian Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of RFE/RL's Russian Service for their commitment to their audiences and their dedication to professional journalism.



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 8

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S TURKMEN SERVICE

March 14, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Turkmen Service broadcast its first daily program on March 2, 1953 with the commitment to provide professional, uncensored news to the people of Turkmenistan;

WHEREAS, with its reporting the Turkmen Service has for 65 years promoted a message of freedom, democracy, human rights, and respect for the rule of law within a country where authoritarianism reigns and the domestic media is entirely state-controlled;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Turkmen Service is the only international and independent media outlet reporting on Turkmenistan in the Turkmen language, and its broadcasting is the main source of independent and reliable information about what happens in the country for audiences both inside Turkmenistan and abroad;

WHEREAS, the brave RFE/RL correspondents who work within the country are regularly questioned, detained, and otherwise harassed, including contributor Saparmamed Nepeskuliev, who disappeared in the city of Avaza in July 2015, and has been held virtually incommunicado since his disappearance;

WHEREAS, the Turkmen government has permanently blocked access to RFE/RL Turkmen Service's websites and other digital platforms inside the country, yet the Service has successfully attracted audiences via proxy servers and innovation with new media tools;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Turkmen Service provides comprehensive coverage of Turkmenistan's political situation, and encourages public discourse and accountability by authorities via covering events and issues most relevant to ordinary Turkmens, including local development issues, power shortages, and natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, the Turkmen government has been spurred to action as a result of the Service's reporting, including in August 2017 when the Turkmen Service was the only media to report on a landslide and water surge that swept through a village in Baharden district of Akhal province, killing some 30 people – and two weeks later Turkmenistan's President Berdimuhamedow, during a cabinet meeting, approved measures to tackle natural disasters in order to prevent damages and casualties during future torrents and flooding.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's



Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting

Turkmen Service, as it plays an essential role not only with reporting in the country but also in providing the world a window into this long-closed society.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of RFE/RL's Turkmen Service for their bravery in reporting the news despite extreme obstacles, and their commitment to the mission of providing free news and information to Turkmen audiences.





From: Broadcasting Board of Governors

Date: June 6, 2018

Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of June 6, 2018**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh (by telephone)
Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Heather Nauert

Governors Leon Aron and Jeffrey Shell were not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman began by welcoming Heather Nauert, Acting Under Secretary of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, who represents Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on the Board. The Chairman noted that the Board has benefited from its strong partnership with the State Department and invited Heather to make brief remarks. Acting Under Secretary Nauert praised the BBG's first-rate journalists and acknowledged the importance of more collaboration and communication between the BBG and State.

Chairman Weinstein announced the appointment of Tomás P. Regalado as the new Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB). He noted that, for over 20 years, Mr. Regalado served the city of Miami, Florida, as a journalist, City Commissioner, and two-term Mayor. BBG Chief Executive Officer (CEO) John Lansing then performed a swear-in office ceremony for Mr. Regalado. At the Chairman's invitation, Mr. Regalado expressed his thanks for all the support and reaffirmed his commitment to creating a new era for the Martis.

The Chairman then pivoted to another personnel matter involving the departure of BBG Deputy Director Jeff Trimble. He thanked Mr. Trimble for his 21 years of dedication and service to U.S. international media and presented him with a career achievement award.

Chairman Weinstein said that the Board recognizes the difficult working conditions many of our journalists operate in, and the importance of highlighting incidents of threats to the journalist since the last Board meeting. He noted that the BBG had mourned the loss of a number of its journalists and welcomed the release of a contributor for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL). There followed a video of current threats to press outlining the following: 1) In May, three RFE/RL journalists paid the ultimate price. All three, Sabawoon Kakar, Abadullah Hananzai, and Maharram Durrani were killed in a Kabul, Afghanistan terrorist attack targeting journalists; 2) While reporting on political events in Burundi, three VOA reporters were harassed by security officials; 3) On May 18, while reporting on a fatal plane crash in Cuba, independent journalists Cesar San Martin and Rudy Cabrera were detained by authorities for almost 24 hours; 4) In May, longtime RFE/RL Turkmen contributor Sultan Achilova was attacked despite a claim from the Turkmen government that RFE/RL can operate freely in the country; 5) Current Time journalist Alexei Aleksandrov and RFE/RL contributor Zosya Rodvevich were detained by police while covering political demonstrations on May 5; 6) Three RFE/RL Armenian Service staff, Naira Bulghadarian, Anatoly Yeghiazarian, and Arus Hakobian, were assault by government security forces on April 21 and 22 while reporting on massive government protests in the capital; 7) Radio Free Asia (RFA) Cambodian Service journalists Yeang Sothearin and Uon Cchin remain behind bars on trumped up charges; 8) In Vietnam, RFA contributor Nguyễn Ngọc Già and videographer Nguyễn Văn Hoà remain jailed for doing their jobs; 9) In Ukraine, RFE/RL contributor Stanislav Aseyev continues to be held in an undisclosed location by Russian-backed separatists; 10) In Syria, Alhurra correspondent Bashar Fahmi has been missing since August 2012; and 11) in Western China, 40 family members of six RFA Uyghur Service employees have been sent to reeducation camps. Their whereabouts and wellbeing are unknown.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on May 23, 2018. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Governor Kempner moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Crocker seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Adam Clayton Powell, III, President of the Public Diplomacy Council and Director of Washington Programs for the University of Southern California's Annenberg Center, to address the Board for three minutes.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing began by reiterating his appreciation of Emilio Vazquez for stepping in as Acting Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting and expressed his excitement for OCB's next chapter under Mr. Regalado's leadership.

Before inviting the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of the BBG, CEO Lansing pointed out that establishing the ICC was one of his first acts when he joined the BBG in 2015. Since then, the ICC has served as a force multiplier in the work that the BBG does around the world.

CEO Lansing recently asked the ICC to consider a global reporting project that all five BBG networks could collectively work on. The complex story they chose to tell is that of the rising power of China around the world. The project, called “Dragon’s Reach: Tracking China’s Economic Power Play,” shows how China is using soft power and economic might to influence the developing world and regional partners.

Voice of America (VOA) Director Amanda Bennett spoke about “Dragon’s Reach” and VOA’s leading coordination role to make this first-of-its-kind project possible. VOA’s project lead, Yolanda Lopez, spoke about how the multiple components of this project came together seamlessly and proceeded to show a short video clip.

Acting OCB Director Emilio Vazquez showed a video that highlighted some of the unique and creative content the Martis are producing and distributing to Cuban audiences despite the challenging operating environment on the Island.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) President Tom Kent described the network’s coverage of protests and political unrest in both Russia and Armenia. In both examples, RFE/RL served as trusted surrogate media when the official state-run media remained largely silent and could not or would not tell the truth.

Radio Free Asia (RFA) President Libby Liu gave an update on the threats and intimidation that RFA’s Uyghur Service journalists face in reporting about China. Despite the persecution faced by their families back in China, the Uyghur Service’s journalists continue to report on the repression of their people by Chinese authorities as well as the continued development of government surveillance tactics.

Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, spoke about the network’s engaging coverage of important events in Arab-speaking regions, including recent elections in Iraq. In its reporting, MBN aimed to highlight topics that were not well-covered by other media outlets, including corruptions and citizens’ hopes for the future.

In closing, CEO Lansing updated the Board on the 2018 Nathanson Public Diplomacy Scholarship recipients. The Nathanson Scholarship, funded by former BBG Chairman Marc Nathanson and his wife, Jane Nathanson, identifies emerging leaders and middle management officials in areas related to public diplomacy and international media for participation in executive training at the nonpartisan Aspen Institute.

In a final comment, Governor Kempner noted the BBG’s extraordinary arc of success over the years made possible by improvements in collaboration, quality of content, and coverage.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at MBN headquarters in Springfield, VA, on August 29, 2018. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of March 14, 2018 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the March 14, 2018 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Armenian Service – Azatutyun Radiokayan. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Armenian Service – Azatutyun Radiokayan as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Georgian Service – Radio Tavisupleba. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Georgian Service – Radio Tavisupleba as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kazakh Service – Radio Azattyq. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Kazakh Service – Radio Azattyq as set forth in Attachment 5.
5. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kyrgyz Service – Radio Azattyk. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service – Radio Azattyk as set forth in Attachment 6.
6. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Tajik Service – Radio Ozodi. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Tajik Service – Radio Ozodi as set forth in Attachment 7.
7. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Uzbek Service – Radio Ozodlik. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Uzbek Service – Radio Ozodlik as set forth in Attachment 8.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Chief Strategy Officer and Acting Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Haroon Ullah; BBG Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; BBG Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Congressional Liaison Marta McLellan Ross; Research Analyst Pradeep Mistry; Special Assistant Chelsea Milko; Special Assistant Yuna Jacobson; Writer-Editor Laurie Moy; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Associate Director for Program Support; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Yolanda Lopez, VOA Director of Central News; Tomas P. Regalado, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Emilio Vazquez, OCB Staff Director; Thomas Kent, President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Christine Fetzko, RFE/RL Chief of Staff; Stephanie

Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Director; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Pam Goodnow, RFE/RL Chief Financial Officer; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Bay Fang, RFA Executive Editor; Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); Deirdre Kline, MBN Director of Communications; and Stephanie Forman Morimura, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the June 6, 2018 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of March 14, 2018 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Armenian Service – Azatutyun Radiokayan
4. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Georgian Service – Radio Tavisupleba
5. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kazakh Service – Radio Azattyq
6. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kyrgyz Service – Radio Azattyk
7. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Tajik Service – Radio Ozodi
8. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Uzbek Service – Radio Ozodlik

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

June 2018 Meetings Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT THE COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

Wednesday, June 6

12:30 - 1:30 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting

- A. Chairman Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda
 - Draft Minutes of March 14, 2018 Meeting
 - Draft Resolution Honoring the 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Armenian Service – Azatutyun Radiokayan
 - Draft Resolution Honoring the 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Georgian Service – Radio Tavisupleba
 - Draft Resolution Honoring the 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kazakh Service – Radio Azattyq
 - Draft Resolution Honoring the 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kyrgyz Service – Radio Azattyk
 - Draft Resolution Honoring the 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Tajik Service – Radio Ozodi
 - Draft Resolution Honoring the 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Uzbek Service – Radio Ozodlik
- C. Public Comment
- D. CEO & Director's Report
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: March 14, 2018
Subject: Minutes of the BBG Meeting of March 14, 2018

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Leon Aron (by telephone)
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh

Governor Jeffrey Shell and the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs were not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman began by acknowledging that BBG journalists risk their lives and livelihoods every day to report the truth. He said that, since the last Board meeting, there have been many disturbing attacks on our journalists and their families. The Chairman then played a video about BBG's current threats to press highlighting the following:

China

In China, relatives of six U.S.-based journalists with Radio Free Asia's (RFA) Uyghur Service have been detained and disappeared by Chinese authorities. These relatives living in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region are being held in re-education camps, which act as open-air detention facilities holding thousands of Uyghurs at a time. The staff members with relatives being held are: Shohret Hoshur, Gulchehra "Guli" Hoja, Kurban Niyaz, Eset Sulaiman, Jelil Kashgary, and Mamatjan Juma. Four of these six RFA staff members are U.S. citizens.

Cambodia

In Cambodia, pressure continues and restrictions are increasing after media crackdowns that led to the closure of RFA's Phnom Penh bureau in September. Two former RFA journalists Uon Chhin and Sothearin Yeang were arrested in November and charged with espionage. They have been denied bail twice, and their families are worried about the appalling conditions in prison. The government has stopped renewing Voice of America (VOA) press credentials and VOA Khmer stringer Reaksey Hul was recently escorted off the parliament premises.

Vietnam

In Vietnam, two RFA contributors are being held. Nguyễn Ngọc Già, a blogger and contributor, was sentenced to a four-year prison term with another three years on probation for carrying out "propaganda against the state." Videographer and contributor, Nguyễn Văn Hoá, was being held for "abusing democratic freedoms to infringe on the interests of the state," an offense that carries a maximum sentence of seven years in prison.

Nigeria

The wife and son of a VOA Hausa stringer Nasiru Yakubu were kidnapped on February 28, when attackers stormed their Kaduna home. A neighbor who tried to help was killed in the process. Thankfully, on March 2, Mr. Yakubu confirmed that his family was released.

Burundi

VOA Central Africa stringer Eloge Kaneza learned he had been added to the kill list. He has since been evacuated out of the country.

Egypt

In Egypt, the state-run media have led organized attacks on local and foreign press, including Alhurra. In the attack, they try to discredit the network by erroneously describing it as the television channel sponsored by the Pentagon and intelligence agencies.

Ukraine

Mykola Semena, a contributor for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), continues to be prohibited from working as a journalist after he was convicted of "separatism" last year. On December 18, the Russia-controlled Supreme Court of Crimea upheld those charges. While Mr. Semena still faces a suspended 2½ year prison sentence, the court shortened, from three years to two, the period during which Mr. Semena is prohibited from working as a journalist. Blogger and contributor for RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service, Stanislav Aseyev, has been missing since June 2, 2017. He was forcibly disappeared by Russia-backed separatists in Ukraine's war-torn eastern Donetsk region. Elsewhere in Ukraine, reporter Serhii Nuzhnenko was pepper-sprayed by a police officer, a correspondent's apartment was vandalized, and a stringer was detained and interrogated by border guards.

Pakistan

The Islamabad bureau of RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal was forced to close on Jan 19 after government intelligence accused RFE/RL of airing programs "against the interest of Pakistan."

Authorities have tried to force Radio Mashaal staff to make statements against RFE/RL. Meanwhile, VOA reporters in Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad are taking precautionary measures after a variety of threats have come in.

Turkmenistan

Saparmamed Nepsukliev, a photographer and contributor for RFE/RL's Turkmen Service, continues to be held after he was detained by agents of Turkmenistan's National Security Ministry on July 7, 2015, in Avaza. No one has seen or heard from him since.

The BBG demands a stop to the systematic harassment of our journalists, and that those who are being unlawfully held be released immediately.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on February 23, 2018. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Governor Crocker moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Kempner seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Ann Noonan of the Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting to address the Board for three minutes.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing stated that the BBG unveiled its 2018-2022 Strategic Plan on February 12, 2018, timed with the release of the President's FY 2019 Budget Request. He said that the Plan is a comprehensive roadmap for moving the agency's priorities forward, including significantly increasing BBG's audience reach. He noted that, while the agency remains independent, it had chosen to align its Plan with the new National Security Strategy and the Administration's management priorities of effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability. He added that the BBG networks are operationalizing the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan through their own engaging, cross-platform content.

The CEO then invited the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of the BBG.

VOA Director Amanda Bennett spoke about VOA's new weekly program, Plugged in with Greta Van Susteren, and introduced Ms. Susteren to the Board. Director Bennett continued by saying that Ms. Susteren is working for VOA on a pro bono basis because she is passionate about the work of the network and favors the neutral, issues-oriented, serious journalism that it delivers. RFE/RL President Tom Kent described the network's new projects to help counter violent extremism in Central Asia and the Balkans. The projects are designed to be highly agile in order to engage audiences on highly relevant issues as soon as they emerge in the news. President Kent

also touched on RFE/RL's cross-platform, all-sides coverage in the run-up to the Russian presidential elections.

Andre Mendes, Acting Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, highlighted some of the unique and creative ways that the Martis get their content on the island despite the challenging operating environment. Acting Director Mendes showed a video featuring improvements to programming and the distribution of news and information denied to the Cuban people by their government.

RFA President Libby Liu discussed the network's coverage of the development of facial recognition software that ostensibly boosts the power of the Chinese surveillance state. She also described the threats and intimidation that RFA journalists face in reporting about China.

Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, spoke about the network's smart, fresh programming that stems from his new strategy for targeted broadcasting in the pan-Arab media space.

In closing, CEO Lansing pointed out how the ICC was breaking new ground and that he was pleased with the first-rate quality work from the networks.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on June 6, 2018. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of November 15, 2017 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the November 15, 2017 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 75th Anniversary of Voice of America's Serbian Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 75th anniversary of Voice of America's Serbian Service as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Honoring 60th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bangla Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 60th anniversary of Voice of America's Bangla Service as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution Honoring 5th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bambara Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 5th anniversary of Voice of America's Bambara Service as set forth in Attachment 5.
5. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Azerbaijani Service – Azadliq Radosu. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Azerbaijani Service – Azadliq Radosu as set forth in Attachment 6.
6. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Russian Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Russian Service as set forth in Attachment 7.

7. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Turkmen Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Turkmen Service as set forth in Attachment 8.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Chief Strategy Officer and Acting Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Haroon Ullah; BBG Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; BBG Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Acting Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Deputy Chief Financial Officer John Barkhamer; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Congressional Liaison Marta McLellan Ross; Public Affairs Specialist Chelsea Milko; Amanda Bennett, VOA Director; Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Bridget Serchak, VOA Director of Public Relations; Andre Mendes, OCB Acting Director; Thomas Kent, RFE/RL President; Libby Liu, RFA President; Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); Deirdre Kline, MBN Director of Communications; and Stephanie Forman Morimura, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for March 14, 2018 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of November 15, 2017 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 75th Anniversary of Voice of America's Serbian Service
4. Resolution Honoring 60th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bangla Service
5. Resolution Honoring 5th Anniversary of Voice of America's Bambara Service
6. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Azerbaijani Service – Azadliq Radiosu
7. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Russian Service
8. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Turkmen Service

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S ARMENIAN SERVICE –
AZATUTYUN RADIOKAYAN**

JUNE 6, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Armenian Service, known locally as Azatutyun Radiokayan, began broadcasting to Armenia on March 18, 1953;

WHEREAS, the Armenian Service has for 65 years produced high quality journalism that promotes transparency, accountability, and pluralism in Armenia – and has been praised not only by human rights activists and international organizations for its work, but also by heads of U.S. and EU diplomatic missions in Armenia;

WHEREAS, despite constitutional guarantees, media freedom remains a significant challenge for Armenia, as international watchdogs such as Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders place the country in the Not Free/Partly Free category;

WHEREAS, Armenian Service's journalists have been attacked while covering street protests and elections in three consecutive years (2015 -2017), but have bravely continued their work and stayed on-air in the face of attacks and violence;

WHEREAS, with its technological edge, RFE/RL and its Armenian Service have modeled journalistic innovation in Armenia, and become the country's leader in online video reporting, with its YouTube video channel surpassing 32 million views in 2017, while Facebook video views exploded to 105 million in the same year;

WHEREAS, the Armenian Service features live TV coverage of all major events in the country that is regularly re-broadcast by other media outlets in Armenia, including two weeks of non-stop coverage of the July 2016 capture of the police headquarters building in Yerevan by gunmen and ensuing hostage situation that resulted in over 5.6 million visitors during that period, a record-breaking number for the Service's website; and

WHEREAS, the Armenian Service reaches audiences not only in Armenia, but among the eight million members of the worldwide Armenian diaspora community

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Armenian Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the Armenian Service for their dedication to its audiences and to the mission of providing independent information and reporting to audiences in Armenia.

ATTACHMENT 4

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S GEORGIAN SERVICE – RADIO TAVISUPLEBA

JUNE 6, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Georgian Service, known locally as Radio Tavisupleba, first started broadcasting on March 18, 1953 to provide accurate, fact-based, professional reporting to the people of Georgia;

WHEREAS, with its reporting the Georgian Service has served as a rare source of balanced journalism in a country where much of the press openly supports, both editorially and through the selection of news, either the government or the opposition;

WHEREAS, the Georgian Service has expanded from a radio operation to a modern multimedia broadcaster, diversifying its media mix with popular TV programs and social media reporting;

WHEREAS, the Georgian Service is a critical source of information for audiences in Georgia who seek objective reporting and analysis about what is happening in their country and in the region;

WHEREAS, Georgian Service journalists have been lauded for reporting that reflects the highest journalistic standards and contributed to human understanding and peace, with many of the honors recognizing the service's attention to the role of gender in society, issues of domestic violence, and minority rights;

WHEREAS, the Service's daily one-hour Russian-language program "Ekho Kavkaza" (Echo of the Caucasus), launched in November 2009 and targeting audiences in Georgia's breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, has firmly established itself as a trustworthy, impartial, and informative media outlet, bridging the gap of mistrust between the ethnic groups living in the conflict zones; and

WHEREAS, the Georgian Service's broadcasting promotes U.S. interests by showcasing the importance of Western values, democratic ideals, and inclusivity via informative, professional, and engaging programming.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Georgian Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the Georgian Service for its high-quality, professional reporting.

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S KAZAKH SERVICE – RADIO AZATTYQ**

JUNE 6, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Kazakh Service, known locally as Radio Azattyq, began broadcasting to Kazakhstan on March 18, 1953;

WHEREAS, the Kazakh Service has, for the past 65 years, been praised by human rights activists and international organizations for the vital role it has played in providing professional news and analysis that is otherwise unavailable within Kazakhstan, where free media is consistently suppressed;

WHEREAS, operating in a market with few independent media outlets, the Kazakh Service seeks to promote democracy and human rights and set the news agenda in a country where local media do not fully, or adequately, cover a range of topics, including such as land reform, human rights abuses, and persecution of civil society activists and journalists, due to their sensitive nature;

WHEREAS, the Kazakh Service produces compelling stories in both Kazakh and Russian and provides a platform for audiences in Kazakhstan to engage and share ideas, which helps bring real change into the lives of its audience;

WHEREAS, the Kazakh Service serves as a shining example of fair, balanced, and highly professional journalism in a country where Freedom House classifies the media environment as not free and authorities frequently target independent journalists; and

WHEREAS, the Kazakh Service and its journalists have often been recognized for their excellence, including the presentation of the International Women's Media Foundation's (IWMF) 2017 Courage in Journalism Award to journalist Saniya Toiken; the naming of journalist Sanat Urnaliyev's investigative TV documentary on the 2014 mass poisoning of children in Berezovka, Kazakhstan as a finalist in the 2017 New York Festivals International TV & Film Awards; and the presentation of the 2009 Online Journalism Award to the Kazakh Service for "standing in defense of citizen's rights to seek and receive information."

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Kazakh Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the Kazakh Service for their dedication to its audiences and to the mission of providing independent information and reporting to audiences in Kazakhstan.

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S KYRGYZ SERVICE – RADIO AZATTYK**

JUNE 6, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Kyrgyz Service, known locally as Radio Azattyk, began broadcasting to Kyrgyzstan on March 18, 1953;

WHEREAS, the Kyrgyz Service has for 65 years produced journalism that bridges divides within Kyrgyz society by providing influential audiences with informed reporting and balanced debate on topics that other media ignore, including minority rights, government corruption, and Islamic radicalism;

WHEREAS, the Kyrgyz Service continues to offer its audience a unique and alternative media platform covering both domestic and international events on TV, radio, internet, and social media in Kyrgyzstan, where objective news, open discussion, and responsible debate are in high demand as civil society and free media in the country experience growing pressure;

WHEREAS, due to the Kyrgyz Service's openness to change and constant innovation across platforms, it has experienced positive growth and success, including expanded viewership and audience engagement, with a measured reach of some 40% of the general population of Kyrgyzstan and garnering more than a million subscribers on social media;

WHEREAS, the Kyrgyz Service provides an invaluable contribution to U.S. international media and press freedom, with its Bishkek Bureau serving as a news hub for RFE/RL's Central Asia reporting and allowing the Service to bring on-the-ground reporting to its audiences in the region;

WHEREAS, many external organizations have recognized and reinforced the Kyrgyz Service's excellence in reporting, with the Service winning numerous awards including a 2016 Webby People's Choice Award and a Silver Medal at the 2017 New York Festivals International TV & Film Awards; and

WHEREAS, the Kyrgyz Service strengthens democratic values and institutions in Kyrgyzstan by emphasizing objectivity and serving as a model of professional journalism, providing original, mission-oriented reporting, analysis, and critical coverage of events in the country and throughout the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the Kyrgyz Service for their dedication to its audiences and to the mission of providing independent news and information to audiences in Kyrgyzstan.

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S TAJIK SERVICE – RADIO OZODI**

JUNE 6, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Tajik Service, known locally as Radio Ozodi, began broadcasting to Tajikistan on March 18, 1953;

WHEREAS, the Tajik Service is one of the most trusted media outlets in Tajikistan, connecting citizens with political and civil society leaders in support of greater pluralism and better governance, playing an important and unique role in the advancement of better-informed public opinion in Tajik society by having the courage to openly raise sensitive and relevant issues;

WHEREAS, for 65 years the Tajik Service has produced mission-oriented journalism, promoting democratic values in all fields – politics, economy, human rights – and above all, the right to freedom and a decent life;

WHEREAS, the Tajik Service offers audiences unbiased, fact-based reporting as an alternative to both Russian disinformation and extremist propaganda which is prevalent in the region, serving a critical role in U.S. national security;

WHEREAS, the Tajik Service was the first local media organization to report openly and comprehensively about the role of the Islamist State (ISIS) militant group in the region, documenting dozens of cases of Tajik-born “jihadists” who joined the ranks of ISIS to fight in Iraq and Syria;

WHEREAS, the Tajik Service's excellence in reporting has been recognized by external organizations including the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, which in 2017 recognized two Tajik Service correspondents for excellence in reporting on Islamic extremism; YouTube's recognition in November 2017 of the Service's page exceeding 100,000 subscribers; and the UN Development Agency's 2015 recognition of the Service's reporting on the rights of the disabled; and

WHEREAS, with its professional reporting on local and regional issues, the Tajik Service's coverage of sensitive political, economic, social and cultural issues has helped widen the space for freedom of speech in Tajikistan.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Tajik Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the Tajik Service for their dedication to the mission of providing independent information and reporting to audiences in Tajikistan.

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S UZBEK SERVICE – RADIO OZODLIK**

JUNE 6, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Uzbek Service, known locally as Radio Ozodlik, began broadcasting to Uzbekistan on March 18, 1953;

WHEREAS, the Uzbek Service has for 65 years produced journalism that shines a light into Uzbek society, exposing news and information that would otherwise not be reported by state-controlled media in Uzbekistan;

WHEREAS, despite operating in one of the most restricted societies in the world, the Uzbek Service has successfully cultivated a wide network of contacts and sources inside of Uzbekistan to uncover news and engage with audiences, pursuing constant innovation and dedication to its mission;

WHEREAS, the Uzbek Service circumvents government restrictions upon access to its content via the use of modern anti-censorship tools as well as a focus on news-gathering and content distribution across mobile and social media platforms;

WHEREAS, the Uzbek Service has demonstrable impact within Uzbekistan, addressing issues that would otherwise be absent from the media market in Uzbekistan, engages in accountability journalism by exposing both disinformation and corruption at all levels of Uzbek government, and empowers people to take an active role in addressing their issues directly to the government via several popular programs; and

WHEREAS, the Uzbek Service has garnered trust among its audiences in Uzbekistan, leading to millions of views of the Service's reporting and record-breaking levels of audience engagement across social media. The Service's work was recognized via YouTube recognizing the Service with a silver plate for surpassing 100,000 subscribers.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we commemorate and applaud the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Uzbek Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO celebrate and thank current and former members of the Uzbek Service for their dedication to the mission of providing independent news, context and analysis to audiences in Uzbekistan.



From: Board of Governors

Date: September 5, 2018

Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of September 5, 2018**

The Board of Governors for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) met today in the Cohen Building (USAGM headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the USAGM website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Leon Aron
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh (by telephone)
Governor Jeffrey Shell
Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Chief of Staff for Acting Under Secretary Heather Nauert

Governor Ryan Crocker was not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the internet at the USAGM website. A digital recording of this meeting can be found at the agency's new website—www.usagm.gov.

The Chairman began by announcing that, as of August 22, the Broadcasting Board of Governors changed its name to the U.S. Agency for Global Media.

Chairman Weinstein pivoted to another announcement on a personnel matter involving the departure of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) President Tom Kent. He thanked Mr. Kent for his contributions to RFE/RL and to U.S. international media more broadly, including improving and amplifying the work of RFE/RL at a critical and challenging moment in U.S. foreign policy. The Chairman and CEO Lansing then presented Mr. Kent with a certificate of appreciation.

The Chairman turned to the topic of threats to press. The Board recognizes that threats against journalists around the world continue at an alarming rate, and USAGM journalists are no exception. In recent months, journalists from China to Nicaragua, Turkmenistan, to Cambodia, have felt increasing pressure.

Ukraine

RFE/RL contributor Stanislav Aseyev continues to be held by Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine. On July 20, Senator Marco Rubio tweeted a call for his release and

Congressional Freedom of the Press Caucus co-chairs Representative Adam Schiff and Representative Steve Chabot issued a statement also calling for Aseyev's release.

Turkmenistan

The United Nation Human Rights Commission has issued a decision finding the Turkmen government responsible for the death of RFE/RL Turkmen Service's contributor Ogulsapar Muradova, who was in custody 12 years ago. This long overdue ruling is significant because of the continuing government actions taken against RFE/RL Turkmen Service's correspondents.

Vietnam

Three Voice of America (VOA) Vietnamese reporters were arrested and detained in June as they covered violent demonstrations in Vietnam that erupted after the government announced plans to create economic zones that protestors said would favor Chinese investors. Despite this, they were able to file dramatic footage showing police surrendering to local protestors in Binh Thuan province, vehicles on fire, and burned down government property. Their videos were viewed more than three million times, documenting what turned out to be a rare violent protest and the largest demonstration in Vietnam in decades.

On July 5, authorities in Vietnam arrested independent blogger and political contributor to VOA Le Anh Hung and charged him with "abusing democratic freedoms to infringe upon the interests of the State, lawful rights, and interests of organizations and/or citizens. He is a key figure of Vietnam's radio community and a member of the Independent Journalists Association of Vietnam.

Radio Free Asia (RFA) Vietnamese videographer Nguyen Van Hoa, who continues to be held in prison, was reportedly beaten by authorities while in prison. Nguyen is currently serving a seven-year sentence.

China

In August, two VOA Mandarin Service's journalists were harassed and briefly detained after interviewing 84-year-old professor Sun Wenguang, a critic of the Chinese government. This follows a dramatic event that played out live on VOA's air, as the professor was forcibly detained in his house while giving a live telephone interview.

Also in China, the family members of several RFA Uyghur Service's journalists continue to be held in "re-education camps."

Nicaragua

VOA Spanish reporters Gesell Tobias and Iacopo Luzi survived a week of reporting amid multiple stops and detentions by police, paramilitary, and military personnel in Nicaragua. In one incident, they were briefly detained, and their passports and press IDs were confiscated.

Cambodia

In Cambodia, restrictions on press freedom were tightest ever, leading up to the July 29 election. Dozens of independent radio stations were closed, and RFA was forced to cease operations in the country.

VOA Khmer Service's D.C.-based reporter Khemara Pov Sok traveled to Cambodia to cover the election and to provide extra support to the local bureau staff. While there, this image came out labeling Khemara and other international reporters, including some from RFA, as enemies of the people. The image was widely distributed on Facebook, and Khemara received several threatening phone calls.

Shortly after the election, two former RFA Khmer Service's journalists, Uon Chhin and Yeang Sothearin, who had been jailed for eight months on trumped-up charges, were released on bail in Phnom Penh. While their release is welcome, these former journalists should never have been put in this predicament in the first place.

The Chairman spoke for all Board Members present by stating he abhors the harassment, imprisonment, and attempt to silence USAGM journalists.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on August 22, 2018. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Governor Kempner moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Aron seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Adam Clayton Powell, III, President of the Public Diplomacy Council and Director of Washington Programs for the University of Southern California's Annenberg Center, to address the Board for three minutes.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing began by noting how the agency has significantly expanded the way it works in the last few years. Collaborative programs, a digital-first focus, and new research and strategy have all contributed to a meaningful impact on audiences. The agency's brand evolution from BBG to USAGM captures that progression and builds on the work of all employees. CEO Lansing shared two videos that described the above.

CEO Lansing then turned to the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of USAGM.

VOA Director Amanda Bennett spoke about VOA and RFE/RL's collaboration on a new 24/7 Persian-language global network, *VOA 365*. The network will leverage the existing strong brands from both networks. A soft launch with a news program was expect this fall and a hard launch was expected in January 2019. The aim of the network is to grow USAGM's audience in Iran and target the Iranian diaspora around the world. VOA Director Bennett touched on VOA's new

English-language learning content for the Rohingya refugees living in and around Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and its plans to expanding broadcasting in that region.

Office of Cuba Broadcasting Director Tomas Regalado talked about expanded live news programming for the Martis and showed a video highlighting some of the energizing content the Martis are producing and distributing to Cuban audiences on the Island.

RFE/RL President Tom Kent described the network's coverage of repressive governments wanting to rewrite history. Along with covering today's news, RFE/RL also painstakingly gives its audiences an honest record of the past in hopes of inspiring the values of democracy and tolerance and promoting a better present day.

RFA President Libby Liu gave an update on how RFA's Cambodia Service continues to report on the Hun Sen regime in midst of difficult circumstances. Despite the systematic dismantling of free press in Cambodia, RFA continues to change the information landscape in that country. RFA President Liu showed a video about how RFA's journalist continue to shed a light on authoritarian abuses in that country.

Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, spoke about the network's resurgence among pan-Arab media and dynamic new programming. He noted that some transformations had occurred around the network, including refreshing Alhurra TV's content and look. Ambassador Fernandez then showed a video about the new shows, studios, and digital platforms as part of the network's relaunch.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein noted the extraordinary momentum and collaboration within USAGM. He expressed his appreciation to CEO Lansing for his strategic leadership and to the hardworking staff, some of whom put their lives at risk every day to report the truth.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at MBN headquarters in Springfield, VA, on November 14, 2018. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of June 6, 2018 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the June 6, 2018 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 55th Anniversary of Voice of America's English to Africa Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 55th anniversary of Voice of America's English to Africa Service as set forth in Attachment 3.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Chief Strategy Officer Haroon Ullah; Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Congressional Liaison Marta McLellan Ross; Research Analyst Pradeep Mistry; Special Assistant Chelsea Milko; Writer-Editor Laurie Moy; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Tomas P. Regalado, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Thomas Kent, President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Christine Fetzko, RFE/RL Chief of Staff; Stephanie Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Director; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Laura Lew, RFE/RL Risk & Compliance Officer; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); and Joe Tordella, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the September 5, 2018 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of June 6, 2018 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 55th Anniversary of Voice of America's English to Africa Service

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

September 2018 Meetings Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT THE COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

Wednesday, September 5

10:30 – 11:30 Broadcasting Board of Governors’ Open Meeting (BBG Conference Room)

- A. Chairman Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda
 - Draft Minutes of June 6, 2018 Board Meeting
 - Draft Resolution Honoring the 55th Anniversary of Voice of America’s English to Africa Service
- C. Public Comment
- D. CEO & Director’s Report
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting



ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: June 6, 2018
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of June 6, 2018**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh (by telephone)
Acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Heather Nauert

Governors Leon Aron and Jeffrey Shell were not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

The Chairman began by welcoming Heather Nauert, Acting Under Secretary of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, who represents Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on the Board. The Chairman noted that the Board has benefited from its strong partnership with the State Department and invited Heather to make brief remarks. Acting Under Secretary Nauert praised the BBG's first-rate journalists and acknowledged the importance of more collaboration and communication between the BBG and State.

Chairman Weinstein announced the appointment of Tomás P. Regalado as the new Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB). He noted that, for over 20 years, Mr. Regalado served the city of Miami, Florida, as a journalist, City Commissioner, and two-term Mayor. BBG Chief Executive Officer (CEO) John Lansing then performed a swear-in office ceremony for Mr. Regalado. At the Chairman's invitation, Mr. Regalado expressed his thanks for all the support and reaffirmed his commitment to creating a new era for the Martis.

The Chairman then pivoted to another personnel matter involving the departure of BBG Deputy Director Jeff Trimble. He thanked Mr. Trimble for his 21 years of dedication and service to U.S. international media and presented him with a career achievement award.

Chairman Weinstein said that the Board recognizes the difficult working conditions many of our journalists operate in, and the importance of highlighting incidents of threats to the journalist since the last Board meeting. He noted that the BBG had mourned the loss of a number of its journalists and welcomed the release of a contributor for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL). There followed a video of current threats to press outlining the following: 1) In May, three RFE/RL journalists paid the ultimate price. All three, Sabawoon Kakar, Abadullah Hananzai, and Maharram Durrani were killed in a Kabul, Afghanistan terrorist attack targeting journalists; 2) While reporting on political events in Burundi, three VOA reporters were harassed by security officials; 3) On May 18, while reporting on a fatal plane crash in Cuba, independent journalists Cesar San Martin and Rudy Cabrera were detained by authorities for almost 24 hours; 4) In May, longtime RFE/RL Turkmen contributor Sultan Achilova was attacked despite a claim from the Turkmen government that RFE/RL can operate freely in the country; 5) Current Time journalist Alexei Aleksandrov and RFE/RL contributor Zosya Rodvevich were detained by police while covering political demonstrations on May 5; 6) Three RFE/RL Armenian Service staff, Naira Bulghadarian, Anatoly Yeghiazarian, and Arus Hakobian, were assault by government security forces on April 21 and 22 while reporting on massive government protests in the capital; 7) Radio Free Asia (RFA) Cambodian Service journalists Yeang Sothearin and Uon Cchin remain behind bars on trumped up charges; 8) In Vietnam, RFA contributor Nguyễn Ngọc Già and videographer Nguyễn Văn Hoá remain jailed for doing their jobs; 9) In Ukraine, RFE/RL contributor Stanislav Aseyev continues to be held in an undisclosed location by Russian-backed separatists; 10) In Syria, Alhurra correspondent Bashar Fahmi has been missing since August 2012; and 11) in Western China, 40 family members of six RFA Uyghur Service employees have been sent to reeducation camps. Their whereabouts and wellbeing are unknown.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on May 23, 2018. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Governor Kempner moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Crocker seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Adam Clayton Powell, III, President of the Public Diplomacy Council and Director of Washington Programs for the University of Southern California's Annenberg Center, to address the Board for three minutes.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing began by reiterating his appreciation of Emilio Vazquez for stepping in as Acting Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting and expressed his excitement for OCB's next chapter under Mr. Regalado's leadership.

Before inviting the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of the BBG, CEO Lansing pointed out that establishing the ICC was one of his first acts when he joined the BBG in 2015. Since then, the ICC has served as a force multiplier in the work that the BBG does around the world.

CEO Lansing recently asked the ICC to consider a global reporting project that all five BBG networks could collectively work on. The complex story they chose to tell is that of the rising power of China around the world. The project, called "Dragon's Reach: Tracking China's Economic Power Play," shows how China is using soft power and economic might to influence the developing world and regional partners.

Voice of America (VOA) Director Amanda Bennett spoke about "Dragon's Reach" and VOA's leading coordination role to make this first-of-its-kind project possible. VOA's project lead, Yolanda Lopez, spoke about how the multiple components of this project came together seamlessly and proceeded to show a short video clip.

Acting OCB Director Emilio Vazquez showed a video that highlighted some of the unique and creative content the Martis are producing and distributing to Cuban audiences despite the challenging operating environment on the Island.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) President Tom Kent described the network's coverage of protests and political unrest in both Russia and Armenia. In both examples, RFE/RL served as trusted surrogate media when the official state-run media remained largely silent and could not or would not tell the truth.

Radio Free Asia (RFA) President Libby Liu gave an update on the threats and intimidation that RFA's Uyghur Service journalists face in reporting about China. Despite the persecution faced by their families back in China, the Uyghur Service's journalists continue to report on the repression of their people by Chinese authorities as well as the continued development of government surveillance tactics.

Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, spoke about the network's engaging coverage of important events in Arab-speaking regions, including recent elections in Iraq. In its reporting, MBN aimed to highlight topics that were not well-covered by other media outlets, including corruptions and citizens' hopes for the future.

In closing, CEO Lansing updated the Board on the 2018 Nathanson Public Diplomacy Scholarship recipients. The Nathanson Scholarship, funded by former BBG Chairman Marc Nathanson and his wife, Jane Nathanson, identifies emerging leaders and middle management

officials in areas related to public diplomacy and international media for participation in executive training at the nonpartisan Aspen Institute.

In a final comment, Governor Kempner noted the BBG's extraordinary arc of success over the years made possible by improvements in collaboration, quality of content, and coverage. Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at MBN headquarters in Springfield, VA, on August 29, 2018. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of March 14, 2018 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the March 14, 2018 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Armenian Service – Azatutyun Radiokayan. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Armenian Service – Azatutyun Radiokayan as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Georgian Service – Radio Tavisupleba. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Georgian Service – Radio Tavisupleba as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kazakh Service – Radio Azattyq. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Kazakh Service – Radio Azattyq as set forth in Attachment 5.
5. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kyrgyz Service – Radio Azattyk. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service – Radio Azattyk as set forth in Attachment 6.
6. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Tajik Service – Radio Ozodi. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Tajik Service – Radio Ozodi as set forth in Attachment 7.
7. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Uzbek Service – Radio Ozodlik. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Uzbek Service – Radio Ozodlik as set forth in Attachment 8.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Chief Strategy Officer and Acting Director of the Office of Internet Freedom Haroon Ullah; BBG Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; BBG Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Congressional Liaison Marta McLellan Ross; Research Analyst Pradeep Mistry; Special Assistant Chelsea Milko;

Special Assistant Yuna Jacobson; Writer-Editor Laurie Moy; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Associate Director for Program Support Gary Thatcher; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Program Director; Yolanda Lopez, VOA Director of Central News; Tomas P. Regalado, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Emilio Vazquez, OCB Staff Director; Thomas Kent, President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Christine Fetzko, RFE/RL Chief of Staff; Stephanie Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Director; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Pam Goodnow, RFE/RL Chief Financial Officer; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Bay Fang, RFA Executive Editor; Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); Deirdre Kline, MBN Director of Communications; and Stephanie Forman Morimura, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the June 6, 2018 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of March 14, 2018 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Armenian Service – Azatutyun Radiokayan
4. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Georgian Service – Radio Tavisupleba
5. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kazakh Service – Radio Azattyq
6. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kyrgyz Service – Radio Azattyk
7. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Tajik Service – Radio Ozodi
8. Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Uzbek Service – Radio Ozodlik

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF
VOICE OF AMERICA'S ENGLISH TO AFRICA SERVICE**

September 5, 2018

WHEREAS, the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting in English to Africa on August 4, 1963, to provide accurate, balanced and comprehensive news and information to the African people;

WHEREAS, the VOA's English to Africa Service has served for decades as a vital communications link with the African people in support of freedom and democracy, and through the challenges African countries face today;

WHEREAS, the VOA's English to Africa Service has successfully adopted television, online, mobile and social media platforms to reach even greater numbers of English-speaking Africans;

WHEREAS, VOA English to Africa is a leading source of news and information for African audiences about United States policy, and expert news and analysis on Africa and the rest of the world;

WHEREAS, VOA English to Africa is a unique source of news and information about African and American society and their achievements in democratic governance, business, medicine, science, technology and the arts, which can serve as an inspiration to audiences;

WHEREAS, VOA English to Africa remains a respected source of objective and accurate news and information about Africa, the United States and the world, with a major focus on political and economic news, human rights, humanitarian affairs, and democratic practices;

WHEREAS, the VOA English to Africa Service continues to broadcast daily to more than 27 million people across Africa and to diaspora audiences around the world; and

WHEREAS, VOA English to Africa Service is among the leading international broadcasters on the continent of Africa.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Governors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that we celebrate and commemorate the 55th anniversary of the Voice of America's English to Africa Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Governors and CEO commend and congratulate both the current and former members of the Voice of America's English to Africa Service for their dedication in serving African audiences and fostering the open communication of information and ideas between them and the United States.



From: Board of Governors

Date: November 14, 2018

Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of November 14, 2018**

The Board of Governors for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) met today at the headquarters of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks in Springfield, Virginia. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the USAGM website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh (by telephone)
Governor Jeffrey Shell
Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Chief of Staff for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs

Governors Leon Aron and Jeffrey Shell were not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the internet at the USAGM website. A digital recording of this meeting can be found at the agency's new website—www.usagm.gov.

The Chairman began by noting that it has been three years since the Board last convened at MBN headquarters and, since that time, there have been some incredible changes, including a revitalized look and feel for Alhurra Television, taking place under the leadership of MBN President Alberto Fernandez.

The Chairman turned to the topic of threats to press. He noted that at every meeting the Board focuses on the sacrifices of USAGM journalists, but that they were not the only ones risking their lives to report the news. He spoke for the Board and all of USAGM leadership when he said that the brutal murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi is abhorrent and inexcusable. This portends a dangerous worldwide trend. Khashoggi's killers must be brought to justice. Like Khashoggi, the Chairman added that USAGM journalists understand the importance of telling the truth and they take great risks to provide it. He then asked the Board to turn their attention to a short video about some of the recent threats that USAGM journalists faced since the last Board meeting.

Turkey

In October, Voice of America's (VOA) Uzbek stringer Mr. Abdumalik Bobaev was detained by Turkish police while he was trying to cover an event outside the Saudi Embassy in Istanbul. He was released the next day, but has been forbidden to leave Turkey.

Ukraine

In August, a Ukrainian court granted the country's [prosecutor-general access to 17 months' worth of mobile phone data](#) belonging to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) investigative journalist Natalie Sedletska. Ms. Sedletska's program, [Schemes: Corruption in Details](#) had been reporting on [several investigations](#) involving [senior Ukrainian officials](#), including the [prosecutor-general](#), Yuriy Lutsenko. The data he sought included texts, recordings and locations, which would have compromised the confidentiality of Ms. Sedletska's sources. On September 19, a European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) stepped in with an "interim measure" halting the move until further notice.

Also in Ukraine, Stanislav Aseyev, a Ukrainian blogger and RFE/RL contributor, continues to be held by Russia-backed separatists. USAGM and its Board are joined by increasing number of high-level support in calling for his release, including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Desir, and the U.S. delegation to OSCE's Human Dimension Implementation meeting.

Middle East

As the anticipated relaunch of Alhurra became regional news, virulently pro-Iranian media outlets organized a campaign to attack Alhurra and its relaunch. These outlets have used rumor, innuendo and outright false information to argue that Alhurra's mission would change. Despite the campaign, Alhurra's successful relaunch was well-received throughout the region.

Russia

Bashkortostan-based online newspaper "Ekonomika I Myi" ("Economics and Us") published an attack on RFE/RL's idel.reele regional website and one of its journalists. The article sought to undermine the journalistic credibility of correspondent Artur Asafiev, and cast idel.reele and RFE/RL's Russian Service as enemies of the Russian state. It noted the Justice Ministry's "foreign agent" finding and drew conspiracy theories linking the network to Boris Nemtsov and Alexei Navalny, World War II fascism, and radical Islam.

Vietnam

Radio Free Asia (RFA) contractor Nguyen Van Hoa, who is serving a seven-year sentence, continues to be held in deplorable conditions in a Vietnamese prison. In a letter dated September 19, he writes that he was forced to give false testimony against a political activist, he has been beaten, and he is continuously denied the freedom to exercise his faith while in prison. RFA and USAGM leadership are concerned about his condition and call for his immediate release.

Turning to Board business, Chairman Weinstein stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on October 31, 2018. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Ms. Jennifer Hall Godfrey moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Kempner seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Anne Noonan of the Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, to address the Board for three minutes.

Next, Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing began by noting how the USAGM advances U.S. national interest by providing audiences in closed societies, or where free media is not yet fully established, with consistently accurate, compelling, and professional journalism. He noted that USAGM networks pursue this mission through their own engaging content on television, radio, internet, social and mobile platforms.

CEO Lansing then turned to the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of USAGM.

VOA Director Amanda Bennett spoke about VOA 365, led by VOA in collaboration with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, targeting audiences inside Iran and the global Iranian diaspora in major cities around the world. The network will aim to reach Iran's young, diverse audiences in Iran and around the globe to deliver modern graphics, fresh content, and live simultaneous translation of major current affairs events.

RFE/RL Acting President and Editor-in-Chief Nenad Pejic talked about the impact broadcasters are having in RFE/RL target countries and how it is changing the power dynamic between average people, government officials, and the media. He also described the recent series of cyber-attacks on USAGM sites, mainly Current Time.

Office of Cuba Broadcasting Director Tomas Regalado has been implementing positive programming changes for the Martis. He briefly highlighted new programming at TV Marti that includes 15 new programs. He noted that, in 2019, it will be a big year for the Martis as they will be diligently covering 60 years of Castro in Cuba.

RFA President Libby Liu gave an update on how RFA continues to break news on China's Surveillance State, the incarceration of Muslim minorities, and the massive expansion of orphanages/boarding facilities for Muslim children. She reported that RFA also continues to inform the rest of the nation about what the Surveillance State and the Social Credit System mean to even majority Han Chinese citizens.

Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), described the network's recent transformation, including a completely new on-air look and feel for Alhurra Television and the addition of several hours of new and highly-regarded content. He noted that, for the first time ever, MBN is now broadcasting live programming out of its new

bureau in Dubai, straight to audiences around the Middle East. He invited MBN's Senior Vice President for News, Nart Bouran, to walk the Board through the details of how the network's transformation agenda was implemented.

CEO Lansing shifted gears to update the Board about USAGM's submission to the Office of Management and Budget of its annual Performance and Accountability Report (PAR), providing consolidated performance and financial information for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. This integrated presentation of the agency's program performance, financial accountability, and managerial effectiveness is intended to assist Congress, the President, and the public in assessing USAGM's performance relative to its mission and strategic goals and stewardship of the resources entrusted to it. The FY18 PAR details substantial improvements in the agency's global reach, finding that the programming by USAGM's five networks was consumed by a worldwide audience of 345 million people in 58 languages each week, an unprecedented year-on-year increase of 67 million people. CEO Lansing then asked Acting Chief Strategy Officer Shawn Powers for additional details of the latest research and global reach, specifically in the key strategic countries such as China, Iran, Russia, and Ethiopia.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting will be held at USAGM headquarters in Washington, D.C., on March 6, 2019. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of September 5, 2018 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the September 5, 2018 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring the 20th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Broadcasting in the Persian Language. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 20th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty broadcasting in the Persian language as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Proposing Board Meeting Dates in 2019. The Board adopted the resolution proposing Board meeting dates in 2019 as set forth in Attachment 4.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Acting Chief Strategy Officer Shawn Powers; Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Special Assistant Chelsea Milko; Writer-Editor Laurie Moy; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Negussie Mengesha, VOA Director of Africa Division; Tomas P. Regalado, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Nenad Pejic, Acting President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and Editor-in-Chief; Stephanie Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Director; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto

Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); Kelley Sullivan, MBN Vice President for Administration and Finance; Deirdre Kline, MBN Communications Director; Nart Bouran, MBN Senior Vice President for News; and Joe Tordella, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the November 14, 2018 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of September 5, 2018 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 20th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Broadcasting in the Persian Language
4. Resolution Proposing Board Meeting Dates in 2019

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS
November 2018 Meetings Agenda

Wednesday, November 14

Location: Middle East Broadcasting Networks
Suite D
7600 Boston Blvd
Springfield, VA 22153

10:00 - 11:00 Board of Governors' Open Meeting (MBN Multipurpose Room)

- A. Chairman Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda
 - Draft Minutes of September 5, 2018 Board Meeting
 - Draft Resolution Honoring the 20th Anniversary of
Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Broadcasting in the Persian Language
 - Proposed Board Meeting Dates in 2019
- C. Public Comment
- D. CEO & Director's Report
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Board of Governors
Date: September 5, 2018
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of September 5, 2018**

The Board of Governors for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) met today in the Cohen Building (USAGM headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the USAGM website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Leon Aron
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh (by telephone)
Governor Jeffrey Shell
Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Chief of Staff for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs

Governor Ryan Crocker was not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the internet at the USAGM website. A digital recording of this meeting can be found at the agency's new website—www.usagm.gov.

The Chairman began by announcing that, as of August 22, the Broadcasting Board of Governors changed its name to the U.S. Agency for Global Media.

Chairman Weinstein pivoted to another announcement on a personnel matter involving the departure of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) President Tom Kent. He thanked Mr. Kent for his contributions to RFE/RL and to U.S. international media more broadly, including improving and amplifying the work of RFE/RL at a critical and challenging moment in U.S. foreign policy. The Chairman and CEO Lansing then presented Mr. Kent with a certificate of appreciation.

The Chairman turned to the topic of threats to press. The Board recognizes that threats against journalists around the world continue at an alarming rate, and USAGM journalists are no exception. In recent months, journalists from China to Nicaragua, Turkmenistan, to Cambodia, have felt increasing pressure.

Ukraine

RFE/RL contributor Stanislav Aseyev continues to be held by Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine. On July 20, Senator Marco Rubio tweeted a call for his release and Congressional Freedom of the Press Caucus co-chairs Representative Adam Schiff and Representative Steve Chabot issued a statement also calling for Aseyev's release.

Turkmenistan

The United Nation Human Rights Commission has issued a decision finding the Turkmen government responsible for the death of RFE/RL Turkmen Service's contributor Ogulsapar Muradova, who was in custody 12 years ago. This long overdue ruling is significant because of the continuing government actions taken against RFE/RL Turkmen Service's correspondents.

Vietnam

Three Voice of America (VOA) Vietnamese reporters were arrested and detained in June as they covered violent demonstrations in Vietnam that erupted after the government announced plans to create economic zones that protestors said would favor Chinese investors. Despite this, they were able to file dramatic footage showing police surrendering to local protestors in Binh Thuan province, vehicles on fire, and burned down government property. Their videos were viewed more than three million times, documenting what turned out to be a rare violent protest and the largest demonstration in Vietnam in decades.

On July 5, authorities in Vietnam arrested independent blogger and political contributor to VOA Le Anh Hung and charged him with "abusing democratic freedoms to infringe upon the interests of the State, lawful rights, and interests of organizations and/or citizens. He is a key figure of Vietnam's radio community and a member of the Independent Journalists Association of Vietnam.

Radio Free Asia (RFA) Vietnamese videographer Nguyen Van Hoa, who continues to be held in prison, was reportedly beaten by authorities while in prison. Nguyen is currently serving a seven-year sentence.

China

In August, two VOA Mandarin Service's journalists were harassed and briefly detained after interviewing 84-year-old professor Sun Wenguang, a critic of the Chinese government. This follows a dramatic event that played out live on VOA's air, as the professor was forcibly detained in his house while giving a live telephone interview.

Also in China, the family members of several RFA Uyghur Service's journalists continue to be held in "re-education camps."

Nicaragua

VOA Spanish reporters Gesell Tobias and Iacopo Luzi survived a week of reporting amid multiple stops and detentions by police, paramilitary, and military personnel in Nicaragua. In one incident, they were briefly detained, and their passports and press IDs were confiscated.

Cambodia

In Cambodia, restrictions on press freedom were tightest ever, leading up to the July 29 election. Dozens of independent radio stations were closed, and RFA was forced to cease operations in the country. VOA Khmer Service's D.C.-based reporter Khemara Pov Sok traveled to Cambodia to cover the election and to provide extra support to the local bureau staff. While there, this image came out labeling Khemara and other international reporters, including some from RFA, as enemies of the people. The image was widely distributed on Facebook, and Khemara received several threatening phone calls.

Shortly after the election, two former RFA Khmer Service's journalists, Uon Chhin and Yeang Sothearin, who had been jailed for eight months on trumped-up charges, were released on bail in Phnom Penh. While their release is welcome, these former journalists should never have been put in this predicament in the first place.

The Chairman spoke for all Board Members present by stating he abhors the harassment, imprisonment, and attempt to silence USAGM journalists.

Turning to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on August 22, 2018. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Governor Kempner moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Aron seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Adam Clayton Powell, III, President of the Public Diplomacy Council and Director of Washington Programs for the University of Southern California's Annenberg Center, to address the Board for three minutes.

Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing began by noting how the agency has significantly expanded the way it works in the last few years. Collaborative programs, a digital-first focus, and new research and strategy have all contributed to a meaningful impact on audiences. The agency's brand evolution from BBG to USAGM captures that progression and builds on the work of all employees. CEO Lansing shared two videos that described the above.

CEO Lansing then turned to the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of USAGM.

VOA Director Amanda Bennett spoke about VOA and RFE/RL's collaboration on a new 24/7 Persian-language global network, *VOA 365*. The network will leverage the existing strong brands from both networks. A soft launch with a news program was expected this fall and a hard launch was expected in January 2019. The aim of the network is to grow USAGM's audience in Iran and target the Iranian diaspora around the world. VOA Director Bennett touched on VOA's new

English-language learning content for the Rohingya refugees living in and around Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and its plans to expanding broadcasting in that region.

Office of Cuba Broadcasting Director Tomas Regalado talked about expanded live news programming for the Martis and showed a video highlighting some of the energizing content the Martis are producing and distributing to Cuban audiences on the Island.

RFE/RL President Tom Kent described the network's coverage of repressive governments wanting to rewrite history. Along with covering today's news, RFE/RL also painstakingly gives its audiences an honest record of the past in hopes of inspiring the values of democracy and tolerance and promoting a better present day.

RFA President Libby Liu gave an update on how RFA's Cambodia Service continues to report on the Hun Sen regime in midst of difficult circumstances. Despite the systematic dismantling of free press in Cambodia, RFA continues to change the information landscape in that country. RFA President Liu showed a video about how RFA's journalist continue to shed a light on authoritarian abuses in that country.

Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, spoke about the network's resurgence among pan-Arab media and dynamic new programming. He noted that some transformations had occurred around the network, including refreshing Alhurra TV's content and look. Ambassador Fernandez then showed a video about the new shows, studios, and digital platforms as part of the network's relaunch.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein noted the extraordinary momentum and collaboration within USAGM. He expressed his appreciation to CEO Lansing for his strategic leadership and to the hardworking staff, some of whom put their lives at risk every day to report the truth.

Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at MBN headquarters in Springfield, VA, on November 14, 2018. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of June 6, 2018 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the June 6, 2018 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 55th Anniversary of Voice of America's English to Africa Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 55th anniversary of Voice of America's English to Africa Service as set forth in Attachment 3.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs

Nasserie Carew; Chief Strategy Officer Haroon Ullah; Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Congressional Liaison Marta McLellan Ross; Research Analyst Pradeep Mistry; Special Assistant Chelsea Milko; Writer-Editor Laurie Moy; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Tomas P. Regalado, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Thomas Kent, President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Christine Fetzko, RFE/RL Chief of Staff; Stephanie Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Director; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Laura Lew, RFE/RL Risk & Compliance Officer; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); and Joe Tordella, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the September 5, 2018 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of June 6, 2018 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 55th Anniversary of Voice of America's English to Africa Service

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY BROADCASTING IN THE PERSIAN LANGUAGE**

November 14, 2018

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) began broadcasting in the Persian language to the peoples of Iran on October 30, 1998;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Persian Service, broadcasting as Radio Azadi, quickly grew to produce six hours of daily programming to Iran focused on local and regional news and analysis, as well as cultural content banned by Iran's Islamic government;

WHEREAS, Radio Azadi was incorporated into U.S. Agency for Global Media's first joint broadcasting venture, Radio Farda, in December 2002;

WHEREAS, Radio Farda was consolidated under RFE/RL management in July 2008, continuing its mission to break through government censorship to deliver accurate news and provide a platform for informed discussion and debate;

WHEREAS, Radio Farda broadcasts via terrestrial and digital platforms a mix of news, current affairs, and cultural programming along with popular Persian and Western music designed to appeal to a young audience, reaching 15.7 percent of adult Iranians in 2018;

WHEREAS, Radio Farda has built a massive online audience for its multimedia content, with an average of 12.7 million visits and 24.1 million page views every month in Fiscal Year 2018 to its website radiofarda.com, of which almost 2/3 of all traffic originates within Iran despite an official government ban that forces Iranians to use circumvention software to access the site;

WHEREAS, Radio Farda has moved aggressively into both social media—with more than 3.5 million followers on social platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Telegram—and video production, with its morning news show and live, hourly news breaks for VOA's Persian TV stream;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Radio Azadi and Radio Farda have since their creation been an essential source of news and information for Iranian audiences during periods of unrest, including the "Green Revolution" protests of 2009-2011 and the December 2017-January 2018 protests that broke out in dozens of cities in Iran; at the height of the recent protest wave, on January 1, 2018, audiences viewed more than 2 million pages of content viewed on a single day at radiofarda.com, and eyewitnesses in more than 23 cities provided Farda with user-generated video content;

WHEREAS, Radio Azadi and Radio Farda are distinguished for their cultural and music content, providing a platform for expression that is banned inside Iran or otherwise not available, and have produced numerous original documentaries on human rights and historical issues that are underreported or taboo in Iran;

WHEREAS, Family members in Iran of RFE/RL Persian-language journalists have been subject to interrogation and threats, and numerous phony websites and social media accounts have been used to discredit RFE/RL reporting and smear employees online; and

WHEREAS, the professional journalism produced by RFE/RL's Persian-language journalists remains crucial for the Iranian people, and reinforces that free information is a critical component to democracy.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Governors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the U.S. Agency for Global Media that we celebrate and commemorate the 20th anniversary of RFE/RL broadcasting in the Persian language.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of Radio Azadi and Radio Farda for their commitment to their audiences and their dedication to professional journalism.

USAGM MEETING DATES IN 2019

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT THE COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

March 6 (Wednesday)

June 5 (Wednesday)

September 11 (Wednesday)

November 14 (Thursday)



From: Board of Governors

Date: March 6, 2019

Subject: **Minutes of the USAGM Board Meeting of March 6, 2019**

The Board of Governors for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) met today in the Cohen Building (USAGM headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the USAGM website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Leon Aron
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh
Michelle Giuda, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs

Governors Ryan Crocker and Jeffrey Shell were not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the internet at the USAGM website. A digital recording of this meeting can be found at the agency's new website—www.usagm.gov.

The Chairman began by welcoming Michelle Guida, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs. On February 5, Secretary of State Pompeo delegated to Ms. Guida the authorities of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Ms. Guida said that it was her honor to participate as Secretary Pompeo's representative on the Board and she looks forward to working with everyone at USAGM.

The Chairman turned to the topic of threats to press. He expressed, on behalf of the Board, condolences to the Alhurra family on the death of Alhurra-Iraq assistant videographer Samer Ali Shakara. Samer was just 29 when he was killed in Baghdad on January 9 after an apparent carjacking that turned fatal.

Every day, journalists for the networks of USAGM risk harassment, physical harm, and imprisonment simply to do their jobs. In recent months journalists from Vietnam to Venezuela, Uzbekistan to Ukraine, have felt increasing pressure.

VIETNAM

Popular blogger and RFA contributor Truong Duy Nhat has been missing for more than three weeks since he fled his home in Da Nang, Vietnam, for neighboring Thailand to seek asylum. It is feared that Mr. Nhat was abducted and taken back to Vietnam for imprisonment and interrogation.

Also in Vietnam, RFA contributor Nguyen Van Hoa remains imprisoned, serving a 7-year sentence, after daring to report on protests following a toxic-waste spill in 2016. He has been repeatedly beaten in detention and forced to make a false confession, which Vietnamese authorities used to convict an environmental activist. Mr. Hoa recanted that confession at a court hearing last August, possibly subjecting himself to renewed torture.

SUDAN

Since the outbreak of demonstrations in Sudan and the extensive coverage that MBN has given the events, the Sudanese authorities have been obstructing the work of the Al Hurra reporter, Abdelbagi Alawad Aldaw Mohamed, in Khartoum. After a two week delay he was finally granted journalist accreditation. However, the Sudanese government has retracted those credentials without explanation.

RUSSIA

Russian officials have launched a retaliatory criminal investigation into Radio Svoboda contributor Svetlana Prokopyeva in a clear attempt to silence the journalist. She faces up to seven years in prison on charges of “justifying terrorism.” Human Rights Watch has condemned the investigation as a “misuse of anti-terrorism laws to stifle free speech.” Reporters Without Borders has called the investigation “baseless”

UKRAINE

RFE/RL Ukrainian Service freelancer [Stanislav Aseyev](#) continues to be held incommunicado by Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine’s so-called Donetsk People’s Republic. Aseyev disappeared in June 2017 and was last seen publicly in a “[highly questionable](#)” video confession that aired on Russian state TV channel Rossiya 24 on August 17, 2018.

VENEZUELA

A VOA Spanish reporter was followed to her hotel by Venezuelan paramilitary police after she’d spent time reporting from Caracas. The owner of the hotel as well as the guests stopped the police from entering the premises. The journalist is taking necessary precautions to remain safe.

IRAQI KURDISTAN

On February 5 the car of a VOA Kurdish Service stringer was set on fire outside of his home. Authorities discovered evidence of arson and are investigating. Another VOA Kurdish stringer has been charged with “promoting terror” in retaliation for reporter done in 2014 and 2015. The stringer’s court date has not yet been set.

PAKISTAN

[Pressure](#) on RFE/RL’s Pashto-language operations in Pakistan have intensified since the forced closure of its Islamabad bureau last year. For the past six months, Mashaal’s website has been blocked throughout the country. RFE/RL freelancers working in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province

have also faced significantly increased pressure in the past two months from Pakistani intelligence agencies.

UZBEKISTAN

RFE/RL correspondents continue to be harassed and [persecuted in Uzbekistan](#). A home owned by RFE/RL Uzbek Service journalist Shukrat Babajanov was seized in August by a court in Uzbekistan; Babajanov claims the seizure is an act of political retribution motivated by his work for RFE/RL and that it follows a pattern of other actions by the government against him and his family.

Turning to Board business, Chairman Weinstein stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on February 22, 2019. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Ms. Guida moved to table Board consideration of the agency's Smith-Mundt guidelines, pending further review by the State Department's legal team. Chairman Weinstein seconded the motion. Without objection, the Board unanimously voted to table the vote on the Smith-Mundt guidelines. Chairman Weinstein then moved for adoption of the remainder of the consent agenda. Governor Kempner seconded. Without objection, the remainder of the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited the public to address the Board for three minutes. No members of the public were present to speak at the meeting.

Next, Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing began by noting two personnel updates. First, he welcomed Steve Capus, former President of NBC News, who started on February 19 as a consultant. Steve serves as an expert to CEO Lansing and USAGM, providing advice and guidance on various aspects of broadcast and digital journalism to international audiences.

CEO Lansing then spoke about the December 7, 2018 appointment of Daisy Sindelar to the role of Vice President and Acting President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Daisy joined RFE/RL in 2001 and has extensive knowledge of RFE/RL's programming and operations as well as fluency in the Russian language.

CEO Lansing then turned to the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of USAGM. Before he invited each of the ICC to give a brief report, CEO Lansing highlighted some recent key events, including the February 7 soft launch of VOA 365, a 24/7 Persian-language global network, and a March 5 VOA 365 showcase event held on Capitol Hill.

The CEO also gave an update on the OCB Soros issue, including the agency's fulsome response, which includes a recently completed, comprehensive human resources investigation of the incident and an independent third-party review of OCB content.

VOA Director Amanda Bennett spoke about a new show called *Our Voices*, which launched in early December 2018. It is a half-hour English TV program focusing on African women throughout the continent and around the world. Director Bennet also highlighted VOA's comprehensive coverage of the Venezuela crisis.

Office of Cuba Broadcasting Director Tomas Regalado briefly talked about the Marti's special series called "Cuba 60 Years." He also spoke to OCB's current coverage on-site at the border of Colombia and Venezuela and the network's slate of new TV shows.

RFE/RL Acting President Daisy Sindelar gave an update on RFE/RL's efforts to provide uncensored local and regional news, responsible discussion, and open debate via radio, television, and digital media. Acting President Sindelar also introduced Radio Farda's new director, Medhi Parpanchi, and spoke about recent attacks on journalists working for the Ukrainian Service's Schemes Unit. She also showed a promo for the network's re-launched Bulgarian Service and highlighted a new bureau in Kiev, Ukraine.

RFA President Libby Liu explained RFA's Mandarin Service deep dive into some of the "gray rhinos" that are rearing their heads in China now – everything from bad debt in the bank system to the real estate bubble to issues with the state-owned enterprises, any of which could have a disastrous effect on China's domestic economic situation. President Liu emphasized that RFA programming does not push values or judgements but rather provides its audience with evidence to make their own decisions.

Finally, Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), delivered an update on progress made since the relaunch of Alhurra Television four months prior. Under Ambassador Fernandez's leadership, Alhurra has expanded its news coverage and narrowed the divide between traditional broadcast and modern digital platforms.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting will be held at USAGM headquarters in Washington, D.C., on June 5, 2019. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of November 14, 2018 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the November 14, 2018 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 20th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Balkan Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 20th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Balkan Service as set forth in Attachment 3.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Acting Chief Strategy Officer Shawn Powers; Expert Consultant Steve Capus; Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Special Assistant Chelsea Milko; Writer-Editor Laurie Moy; Special Assistant Yuna Jacobson; Public Affairs Detailee Freshta Azizi; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Programming Director; Bridget Serchak, VOA Public Relations Director; Natalie Liu, VOA Public Relations Detailee; Tomas P. Regalado, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Emilio Vazquez, OCB Deputy Director; Jorge Jauregui, OCB Central News Director; Daisy Sindelar, Acting President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Nenad Pejic, RFE/RL Editor-in-Chief; Christine Fetzko, RFE/RL Chief of Staff; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Mehdi Parpanchi, RFE/RL Director of Radio Farda; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); Deirdre Kline, MBN Communications Director; Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Chief of Staff for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs; and Joe Tordella, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the March 6, 2019 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of November 4, 2018 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 20th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Balkan Service

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

March 2019 Meeting Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT THE COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

Wednesday, March 6

11:00 - 12:00 Board of Governors' Open Meeting (USAGM Conference Room)

- A. Chairman's Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda
 - Draft Minutes of November 14, 2018 Board Meeting
 - Draft Resolution Honoring the 25th Anniversary of
 - Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Balkan Service
 - Draft USAGM Smith-Mundt Guidelines
- C. Public Comment
- D. CEO & Director's Report
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Board of Governors
Date: November 14, 2018
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of November 14, 2018**

The Board of Governors for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) met today at the headquarters of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks in Springfield, Virginia. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the USAGM website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh (by telephone)
Governor Jeffrey Shell
Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Chief of Staff for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs

Governors Leon Aron and Jeffrey Shell were not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the internet at the USAGM website. A digital recording of this meeting can be found at the agency's new website—www.usagm.gov.

The Chairman began by noting that it has been three years since the Board last convened at MBN headquarters and, since that time, there have been some incredible changes, including a revitalized look and feel for Alhurra Television, taking place under the leadership of MBN President Alberto Fernandez.

The Chairman turned to the topic of threats to press. He noted that at every meeting the Board focuses on the sacrifices of USAGM journalists, but that they were not the only ones risking their lives to report the news. He spoke for the Board and all of USAGM leadership when he said that the brutal murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi is abhorrent and inexcusable. This portends a dangerous worldwide trend. Khashoggi's killers must be brought to justice. Like Khashoggi, the Chairman added that USAGM journalists understand the importance of telling the truth and they take great risks to provide it. He then asked the Board to turn their attention to a short video about some of the recent threats that USAGM journalists faced since the last Board meeting.

Turkey

In October, Voice of America's (VOA) Uzbek stringer Mr. Abdumalik Bobaev was detained by Turkish police while he was trying to cover an event outside the Saudi Embassy in Istanbul. He was released the next day, but has been forbidden to leave Turkey.

Ukraine

In August, a Ukrainian court granted the country's [prosecutor-general access to 17 months' worth of mobile phone data](#) belonging to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) investigative journalist Natalie Sedletska. Ms. Sedletska's program, [Schemes: Corruption in Details](#) had been reporting on [several investigations](#) involving [senior Ukrainian officials](#), including the [prosecutor-general](#), Yuriy Lutsenko. The data he sought included texts, recordings and locations, which would have compromised the confidentiality of Ms. Sedletska's sources. On September 19, a European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) stepped in with an "interim measure" halting the move until further notice.

Also in Ukraine, Stanislav Aseyev, a Ukrainian blogger and RFE/RL contributor, continues to be held by Russia-backed separatists. USAGM and its Board are joined by increasing number of high-level support in calling for his release, including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Desir, and the U.S. delegation to OSCE's Human Dimension Implementation meeting.

Middle East

As the anticipated relaunch of Alhurra became regional news, virulently pro-Iranian media outlets organized a campaign to attack Alhurra and its relaunch. These outlets have used rumor, innuendo and outright false information to argue that Alhurra's mission would change. Despite the campaign, Alhurra's successful relaunch was well-received throughout the region.

Russia

Bashkortostan-based online newspaper "Ekonomika I Myi" ("Economics and Us") published an attack on RFE/RL's idel.reele regional website and one of its journalists. The article sought to undermine the journalistic credibility of correspondent Artur Asafiev, and cast idel.reele and RFE/RL's Russian Service as enemies of the Russian state. It noted the Justice Ministry's "foreign agent" finding and drew conspiracy theories linking the network to Boris Nemtsov and Alexei Navalny, World War II fascism, and radical Islam.

Vietnam

Radio Free Asia (RFA) contractor Nguyen Van Hoa, who is serving a seven-year sentence, continues to be held in deplorable conditions in a Vietnamese prison. In a letter dated September 19, he writes that he was forced to give false testimony against a political activist, he has been beaten, and he is continuously denied the freedom to exercise his faith while in prison. RFA and USAGM leadership are concerned about his condition and call for his immediate release.

Turning to Board business, Chairman Weinstein stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on October 31, 2018. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Ms. Jennifer Hall Godfrey moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Kempner seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Anne Noonan of the Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, to address the Board for three minutes.

Next, Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing began by noting how the USAGM advances U.S. national interest by providing audiences in closed societies, or where free media is not yet fully established, with consistently accurate, compelling, and professional journalism. He noted that USAGM networks pursue this mission through their own engaging content on television, radio, internet, social and mobile platforms.

CEO Lansing then turned to the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of USAGM.

VOA Director Amanda Bennett spoke about VOA 365, led by VOA in collaboration with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, targeting audiences inside Iran and the global Iranian diaspora in major cities around the world. The network will aim to reach Iran's young, diverse audiences in Iran and around the globe to deliver modern graphics, fresh content, and live simultaneous translation of major current affairs events.

RFE/RL Acting President and Editor-in-Chief Nenad Pejic talked about the impact broadcasters are having in RFE/RL target countries and how it is changing the power dynamic between average people, government officials, and the media. He also described the recent series of cyber-attacks on USAGM sites, mainly Current Time.

Office of Cuba Broadcasting Director Tomas Regalado has been implementing positive programming changes for the Martis. He briefly highlighted new programming at TV Marti that includes 15 new programs. He noted that, in 2019, it will be a big year for the Martis as they will be diligently covering 60 years of Castro in Cuba.

RFA President Libby Liu gave an update on how RFA continues to break news on China's Surveillance State, the incarceration of Muslim minorities, and the massive expansion of orphanages/boarding facilities for Muslim children. She reported that RFA also continues to inform the rest of the nation about what the Surveillance State and the Social Credit System mean to even majority Han Chinese citizens.

Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), described the network's recent transformation, including a completely new on-air look and feel for Alhurra Television and the addition of several hours of new and highly-regarded content. He noted that, for the first time ever, MBN is now broadcasting live programming out of its new bureau in Dubai, straight to audiences around the Middle East. He invited MBN's Senior Vice

President for News, Nart Bouran, to walk the Board through the details of how the network's transformation agenda was implemented.

CEO Lansing shifted gears to update the Board about USAGM's submission to the Office of Management and Budget of its annual Performance and Accountability Report (PAR), providing consolidated performance and financial information for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. This integrated presentation of the agency's program performance, financial accountability, and managerial effectiveness is intended to assist Congress, the President, and the public in assessing USAGM's performance relative to its mission and strategic goals and stewardship of the resources entrusted to it. The FY18 PAR details substantial improvements in the agency's global reach, finding that the programming by USAGM's five networks was consumed by a worldwide audience of 345 million people in 58 languages each week, an unprecedented year-on-year increase of 67 million people. CEO Lansing then asked Acting Chief Strategy Officer Shawn Powers for additional details of the latest research and global reach, specifically in the key strategic countries such as China, Iran, Russia, and Ethiopia.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting will be held at USAGM headquarters in Washington, D.C., on March 6, 2019. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of September 5, 2018 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the September 5, 2018 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring the 20th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Broadcasting in the Persian Language. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 20th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty broadcasting in the Persian language as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Proposing Board Meeting Dates in 2019. The Board adopted the resolution proposing Board meeting dates in 2019 as set forth in Attachment 4.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Acting Chief Strategy Officer Shawn Powers; Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Special Assistant Chelsea Milko; Writer-Editor Laurie Moy; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Negussie Mengesha, VOA Director of Africa Division; Tomas P. Regalado, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Nenad Pejic, Acting President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and Editor-in-Chief; Stephanie Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Director; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); Kelley Sullivan, MBN

Vice President for Administration and Finance; Deirdre Kline, MBN Communications Director; Nart Bouran, MBN Senior Vice President for News; and Joe Tordella, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the November 14, 2018 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of September 5, 2018 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 20th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Broadcasting in the Persian Language
4. Resolution Proposing Board Meeting Dates in 2019

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S BALKAN SERVICE**

March 6, 2019

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) launched the South Slavic Languages Service on January 31, 1994, with programming in the Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian languages for the peoples of the former Yugoslavia and will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of these programs in 2019;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's South Slavic Languages Service, later renamed the Balkan Service, has earned the trust and confidence of large audiences across the Western Balkans region with its multimedia reporting in support of interethnic tolerance, democracy, economic reform, human rights, the rule of law, Euro-Atlantic integration; and against extremism, propaganda and disinformation, and corruption;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL's Balkan Service was created at the height of the Bosnian War, "to serve as a daily reminder to the peoples of the former Yugoslavia that conflict was not preordained, that they once lived together in peace and could do so again, given the will."

WHEREAS, one of the Service's first programs in 1994, "Bridge," hosted by Omer Karabeg, recently celebrated its 1,000 episode and continues to encourage dialogue and understanding by bringing together people of diverse backgrounds;

WHEREAS, in 1996, the Service commenced production of the weekly 30-minute program "TV Liberty," which continues to appear on more than 30 local TV stations throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina;

WHEREAS, in 1998, the Service and its many affiliate partners throughout Bosnia created a jointly produced program, "Radio 27," as a manifestation of this commitment to pan-Bosnian cooperation, and "Radio 27" continues to air today;

WHEREAS, during the 1999 NATO bombing campaign in Serbia, RFE/RL worked with the Voice of America, British Broadcasting Corporation, Deutsche Welle, and Radio France Internationale to assemble joint, 24-hour international program streams for Serbia and for Kosovo;

WHEREAS, according to a poll published by a prominent Belgrade newspaper in July 1999, RFE/RL was the most listened-to international broadcaster during the NATO bombing campaign, and according to a survey conducted by U.S. Agency for Global Media during the October 2000 post-election crisis in Yugoslavia that led to the fall of Slobodan Milosevic, RFE/RL was the most listened-to broadcaster in Serbia – domestic or international – during the crisis;

WHEREAS, the Service expanded in March 1999 to provide content in the Albanian language to Kosovo, in June 2000 to provide content in the Montenegrin language, and in September 2001 to provide content in the Macedonian language;

WHEREAS, since the end of hostilities, the Balkan Service has remained deeply engaged with its audiences throughout the former Yugoslavia, and has reinforced its reputation throughout the region as a platform to break communications barriers, to enable moderate political figures and groups throughout the region to express and reconcile their differences, and to build cooperation among the peoples of the sovereign successor states;

WHEREAS, in Serbia, the Service was the only media to air news of the war-crimes charges filed against Bosnian Serb military leader Ratko Mladic, as well as the voices of the survivors of the Srebrenica massacre and siege of Sarajevo;

WHEREAS, the Service's website, slobodnaevropa.org, is one of the most reliable news websites in the region, providing its audiences with up-to-the-minute coverage of current events, using diverse multimedia content – in 2018, the site averaged over 500,000 visits and 870,000 page views per month – and has a devoted following on social platforms, with more than 210,000 followers on Facebook and 30,000 subscribers to its YouTube site;

WHEREAS, in 2018, the Service established digital units in Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia – Balkan countries where Russia actively exerts its influence – to provide an alternative to disinformation, and in Kosovo and Bosnia to address extremism in the region and to provide a platform for engagement and respectful discussion about why people become radicalized and driven to violence, and how the cycle can be stopped; and

WHEREAS, according to RFE/RL Vice President and the Balkan Service's first Director, Nenad Pejic, "The media situation in the Balkans today is in many ways worse than in the time the Balkan Service was established, which is why our presence in the Balkans is even more important today;"

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Governors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the U.S. Agency for Global Media that we celebrate and commemorate the 25th anniversary of RFE/RL's Balkan Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the Balkan Service for their commitment to their audiences and their dedication to professional journalism.



From: Board of Governors

Date: June 5, 2019

Subject: **Minutes of USAGM's Board of Governors Meeting of June 5, 2019**

The Board of Governors for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) met today in the Cohen Building (USAGM headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the USAGM website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein

Governor Ryan Crocker

Governor Michael Kempner (by telephone)

Governor Karen Kornbluh (by telephone)

Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Chief of Staff, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

Governors Leon Aron and Jeffrey Shell were not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the internet at the USAGM website. A digital recording of this meeting can be found at the agency's new website—www.usagm.gov.

The Chairman began with the topic of threats to press. He noted that oppressive regimes regularly seek to control information and to keep their citizens in the dark by blocking content, harassing or jailing journalists, and going after the journalists' families. He added that USAGM journalists are working twice as hard to shine a light on the truth. There followed a short video highlighting the following:

In March, the government of Burundi banned Voice of America (VOA) and expanded restrictions on its operations in the region. VOA reporters in Burundi are now forbidden to provide any coverage of any story on any platform.

On May 9, many social-media apps and news websites, including that of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Kazakh Service, were inaccessible in Kazakhstan for most of the day following several protests and "unsanctioned" rallies on Victory Day. More protests were expected leading up to the June 9 presidential elections. During those same protests in Kazakhstan, the cars of two RFE/RL cameramen were broken into or blocked, effectively keeping both from documenting the rallies.

Stringers for VOA's Urdu service in Pakistan have been followed around by the Pakistan Intelligence Bureau.

In Tajikistan, Tajik students and educators have reported being forced to "troll" government critics, on "orders from their university administrations and the Education and Science Ministry, which they claimed in turn received instructions from law enforcement agencies."

In Zimbabwe, VOA's Harare-based stringer Godwin Mangudya received a threat from a coal mining company contractor who was under investigation for bribery. After reporting on the investigation, Mangudya received a phone threat to his life.

RFE/RL Kyrgyz Service investigative reporter Ydrys Isakov was harassed physically and legally this past month in retaliation for his in-depth reporting on the corruption in Osh.

The families of several Radio Free Asia's (RFA) reporters in China are facing tremendous pressure in retaliation for their reporting. Six RFA Uyghur Service reporters have family members detained in a growing network of political re-education camps throughout the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. They are unreachable and in many cases, their conditions are unknown.

On June 2, RFE/RL Ukrainian Service freelancer Stanislav Aseyev began his third year of detention by Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine's so-called Donetsk People's Republic. Aseyev was last seen publicly in a "highly questionable" video confession that aired on Russian state TV.

In Vietnam, three separate USAGM journalists remain wrongly imprisoned. VOA contributor Le Anh Hung continues to be held after being detained in July 2018, after writing about a new cybersecurity legislation that would significantly expand the state's power to censor and control the internet. His family is also being harassed and there is no word on a release date. Meanwhile, Truong Duy Nhat, a weekly contributor for RFA Vietnamese Service's blog section, was being held in a Hanoi prison. He had gone missing on January 26, after writing a commentary on the growing opposition movement in Venezuela and the prospects of change in Vietnam. Additionally, Nguyen Van Hoa, a videographer and blogger for RFA's Vietnamese Service, was serving a seven-year sentence in Vietnam's An Diem Prison and being held in solitary confinement after being beaten and choked by prison guards earlier last month.

The Chairman added that USAGM is proud and grateful for the sacrifices its journalists make every day. He also thanked Senator Edward Markey (MA) and Representative Alan Lowenthal (CA) for their recent letter to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo highlighting the number of troubling cases of arrests and detentions of independent journalists in Vietnam.

Turning to Board business, Chairman Weinstein stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on May 22, 2019. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Governor Crocker then made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Jennifer Hall Godfrey seconded. Without objection, the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Anne Noonan of the Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting and Assem Tokayeva, a former editor for RFE/RL, to address the Board for three minutes.

Next, Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing began by updating the Board on the agency's response to the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) Soros issue. In May 2018, OCB aired a blatantly anti-Semitic video segment that was deeply offensive and wholly inconsistent with USAGM's professional standards and ethics. He directed a review of OCB, including a panel of independent experts to examine an extensive sample of OCB content to identify and address any patterns of unethical, unprofessional, biased, or sub-standard journalism. He noted that the report from that independent panel was published a couple of weeks ago and posted on the USAGM.gov website. He then thanked the independent experts for their thorough review and emphasized that Tomas Regalado, OCB Director, will remain a key driver of the reform efforts. He then invited Mr. Regalado and the other USAGM networks to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas.

Mr. Regalado said that he and the rest of OCB take the reform recommendations seriously and are actively implementing them. He then went on to brief the Board on OCB's "The Church that Grew-up with the Exile" reporting project. The investigative and historic series looks the last 60 years of the Roman Catholic diocese in Miami and how the church was instrumental in helping Cubans who came to Miami after 1959.

RFA President Libby Liu presented a summary of a video series commemorating the 30th anniversary of the brutal suppression of the Tiananmen Square student protest in Beijing – one of the most significant human rights and democracy movements. President Liu also highlighted a joint Mandarin and Uyghur Services project entitled, "Three Things You Should Know about Xinjiang." The series is particularly timely and valuable, providing context to the issue of growing Uyghur repression and detentions in Western China.

VOA Director Amanda Bennett joined the meeting by phone to tell the Board about a VOA Learning English team that traveled to the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, to conduct training for a group of 100 English teachers. This was part of VOA's larger goal to bring their Learning English products to information-starved refugee camps around the world.

Acting RFE/RL President Daisy Sindelar reported on a Current Time documentary on the Russian Internet.

Finally, Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, discussed Alhurra's new investigative unit and some of the stories they have uncovered.

CEO Lansing moved to press freedom highlights, which included a video from USAGM's Media for Democracy Forum held on May 7 at the U.S. Institute of Peace. He then closed with an announcement of this year's Nathanson Public Diplomacy Scholars, who will attend the Aspen Institute Socrates Seminars held from July 5 to July 8 in Aspen, CO.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting will be held at USAGM headquarters in Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2019. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of March 6, 2019 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the March 6, 2019 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Social Media Policy. The Board adopted the Social Media Policy as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Smith-Mundt Guidelines. The Board adopted the Smith-Mundt Guidelines as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution Honoring the 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Belarus Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring the 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Belarus Service as set forth in Attachment 5.
5. Resolution Honoring the 15th Anniversary of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Alhurra Television and Alhurra-Iraq Television. The Board adopted the resolution honoring the 15th Anniversary of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Alhurra Television and Alhurra-Iraq Television as set forth in Attachment 6.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: CEO and Director John Lansing; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Acting Chief Strategy Officer Shawn Powers; Associate Director for Program Support Gary Thatcher; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Acting Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Marta McLellan Ross; Office of Congressional Affairs Intern Andrea Heyward; Special Assistant Chelsea Milko; Writer-Editor Laurie Moy; Public Affairs Detailee Freshta Azizi; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA) (by telephone); Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Bridget Serchak, VOA Public Relations Director; Tomas P. Regalado, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Daisy Sindelar, Acting President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); and Deirdre Kline, MBN Communications Director.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the June 5, 2019 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of March 6, 2019 Board Meeting
3. Social Media Policy
4. Smith-Mundt Guidelines
5. Resolution Honoring the 65th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Belarus Service
6. Resolution Honoring the 15th Anniversary of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks'
Alhurra Television and Alhurra-Iraq Television.

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

June 2019 Meeting Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT THE COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

Wednesday, June 5

10:45 - 11:45 Board of Governors' Open Meeting (USAGM Conference Room)

- A. Chairman's Remarks
- B. Consent Agenda
 - Draft Minutes of March 6, 2019 Board Meeting
 - Draft Social Media Policy
 - Draft Smith-Mundt Guidelines
 - Draft Resolution Honoring 65th Anniversary of RFE/RL's Belarus Service
 - Draft Resolution Honoring 15th Anniversary of MBN's Alhurra Television and Alhurra-Iraq Television
- C. Public Comment
- D. CEO & Director's Report
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

From: Board of Governors

Date: March 6, 2019

Subject: **Minutes of the USAGM Board Meeting of March 6, 2019**

The Board of Governors for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) met today in the Cohen Building (USAGM headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the USAGM website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Kenneth Weinstein

Governor Leon Aron

Governor Michael Kempner

Governor Karen Kornbluh

Michelle Guida, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs

Governors Ryan Crocker and Jeffrey Shell were not in attendance.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

Chairman Weinstein called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the internet at the USAGM website. A digital recording of this meeting can be found at the agency's new website—www.usagm.gov.

The Chairman began by welcoming Michelle Guida, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs. On February 5, Secretary of State Pompeo delegated to Ms. Guida the authorities of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Ms. Guida said that it was her honor to participate as Secretary Pompeo's representative on the Board and she looks forward to working with everyone at USAGM.

The Chairman turned to the topic of threats to press. He expressed, on behalf of the Board, condolences to the Alhurra family on the death of Alhurra-Iraq assistant videographer Samer Ali Shakara. Samer was just 29 when he was killed in Baghdad on January 9 after an apparent carjacking that turned fatal. Every day, journalists for the networks of USAGM risk harassment, physical harm, and imprisonment simply to do their jobs. In recent months journalists from Vietnam to Venezuela, Uzbekistan to Ukraine, have felt increasing pressure.

VIETNAM

Popular blogger and RFA contributor Truong Duy Nhat has been missing for more than three weeks since he fled his home in Da Nang, Vietnam, for neighboring Thailand to seek asylum. It is feared

that Mr. Nhat was abducted and taken back to Vietnam for imprisonment and interrogation.

Also in Vietnam, RFA contributor Nguyen Van Hoa remains imprisoned, serving a 7-year sentence, after daring to report on protests following a toxic-waste spill in 2016. He has been repeatedly beaten in detention and forced to make a false confession, which Vietnamese authorities used to convict an environmental activist. Mr. Hoa recanted that confession at a court hearing last August, possibly subjecting himself to renewed torture.

SUDAN

Since the outbreak of demonstrations in Sudan and the extensive coverage that MBN has given the events, the Sudanese authorities have been obstructing the work of the Al Hurra reporter, Abdelbagi Alawad Aldaw Mohamed, in Khartoum. After a two week delay he was finally granted journalist accreditation. However, the Sudanese government has retracted those credentials without explanation.

RUSSIA

Russian officials have launched a retaliatory criminal investigation into Radio Svoboda contributor Svetlana Prokopyeva in a clear attempt to silence the journalist. She faces up to seven years in prison on charges of “justifying terrorism.” Human Rights Watch has condemned the investigation as a “misuse of anti-terrorism laws to stifle free speech.” Reporters Without Borders has called the investigation “baseless”

UKRAINE

RFE/RL Ukrainian Service freelancer [Stanislav Aseyev](#) continues to be held incommunicado by Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine’s so-called Donetsk People’s Republic. Aseyev disappeared in June 2017 and was last seen publicly in a “[highly questionable](#)” video confession that aired on Russian state TV channel Rossiya 24 on August 17, 2018.

VENEZUELA

A VOA Spanish reporter was followed to her hotel by Venezuelan paramilitary police after she’d spent time reporting from Caracas. The owner of the hotel as well as the guests stopped the police from entering the premises. The journalist is taking necessary precautions to remain safe.

IRAQI KURDISTAN

On February 5 the car of a VOA Kurdish Service stringer was set on fire outside of his home. Authorities discovered evidence of arson and are investigating. Another VOA Kurdish stringer has been charged with “promoting terror” in retaliation for reporter done in 2014 and 2015. The stringer’s court date has not yet been set.

PAKISTAN

[Pressure](#) on RFE/RL’s Pashto-language operations in Pakistan have intensified since the forced closure of its Islamabad bureau last year. For the past six months, Mashaal’s website has been blocked throughout the country. RFE/RL freelancers working in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province have also faced significantly increased pressure in the past two months from Pakistani intelligence agencies.

UZBEKISTAN

RFE/RL correspondents continue to be harassed and [persecuted in Uzbekistan](#). A home owned by RFE/RL Uzbek Service journalist Shukrat Babajanov was seized in August by a court in Uzbekistan; Babajanov claims the seizure is an act of political retribution motivated by his work for RFE/RL and that it follows a pattern of other actions by the government against him and his family.

Turning to Board business, Chairman Weinstein stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda on February 22, 2019. He added that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Ms. Guida moved to table Board consideration of the agency's Smith-Mundt guidelines, pending further review by the State Department's legal team. Chairman Weinstein seconded the motion. Without objection, the Board unanimously voted to table the vote on the Smith-Mundt guidelines. Chairman Weinstein then moved for adoption of the remainder of the consent agenda. Governor Kempner seconded. Without objection, the remainder of the consent agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited the public to address the Board for three minutes. No members of the public were present to speak at the meeting.

Next, Chairman Weinstein asked CEO Lansing to report on agency operations since the last Board meeting.

CEO Lansing began by noting two personnel updates. First, he welcomed Steve Capus, former President of NBC News, who started on February 19 as a consultant. Steve serves as an expert to CEO Lansing and USAGM, providing advice and guidance on various aspects of broadcast and digital journalism to international audiences.

CEO Lansing then spoke about the December 7, 2018 appointment of Daisy Sindelar to the role of Vice President and Acting President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Daisy joined RFE/RL in 2001 and has extensive knowledge of RFE/RL's programming and operations as well as fluency in the Russian language.

CEO Lansing then turned to the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC) to highlight their progress in several key strategic areas of USAGM. Before he invited each of the ICC to give a brief report, CEO Lansing highlighted some recent key events, including the February 7 soft launch of VOA 365, a 24/7 Persian-language global network, and a March 5 VOA 365 showcase event held on Capitol Hill.

The CEO also gave an update on the OCB Soros issue, including the agency's fulsome response, which includes a recently completed, comprehensive human resources investigation of the incident and an independent third-party review of OCB content.

VOA Director Amanda Bennett spoke about a new show called *Our Voices*, which launched in early December 2018. It is a half-hour English TV program focusing on African women throughout the continent and around the world. Director Bennett also highlighted VOA's comprehensive coverage of the Venezuela crisis.

Office of Cuba Broadcasting Director Tomas Regalado briefly talked about the Marti's special series called "Cuba 60 Years." He also spoke to OCB's current coverage on-site at the border of Colombia and Venezuela and the network's slate of new TV shows.

RFE/RL Acting President Daisy Sindelar gave an update on RFE/RL's efforts to provide uncensored local and regional news, responsible discussion, and open debate via radio, television, and digital media. Acting President Sindelar also introduced Radio Farda's new director, Medhi Parpanchi, and spoke about recent attacks on journalists working for the Ukrainian Service's Schemes Unit. She also showed a promo for the network's re-launched Bulgarian Service and highlighted a new bureau in Kiev, Ukraine.

RFA President Libby Liu explained RFA's Mandarin Service deep dive into some of the "gray rhinos" that are rearing their heads in China now – everything from bad debt in the bank system to the real estate bubble to issues with the state-owned enterprises, any of which could have a disastrous effect on China's domestic economic situation. President Liu emphasized that RFA programming does not push values or judgements but rather provides its audience with evidence to make their own decisions.

Finally, Ambassador Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), delivered an update on progress made since the relaunch of Alhurra Television four months prior. Under Ambassador Fernandez's leadership, Alhurra has expanded its news coverage and narrowed the divide between traditional broadcast and modern digital platforms.

In closing, Chairman Weinstein stated that the next Board meeting will be held at USAGM headquarters in Washington, D.C., on June 5, 2019. He said that the Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of November 14, 2018 Board Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the November 14, 2018 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring 20th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Balkan Service. The Board adopted the resolution honoring 20th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Balkan Service as set forth in Attachment 3.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: CEO and Director John Lansing; Chief of Staff Matthew Walsh; General Counsel and Board Secretary David Kligerman; Managing Director Oanh Tran; Director of Global Communications and Office of Public Affairs Nasserie Carew; Acting Chief Strategy Officer Shawn Powers; Expert Consultant Steve Capus;

Special Communications Advisor Matt Schuck; Director of Technology, Services, and Innovation Terry Balazs; Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs Ellona Fritschie; Special Assistant Chelsea Milko; Writer-Editor Laurie Moy; Special Assistant Yuna Jacobson; Public Affairs Detailee Freshta Azizi; Chief Financial Officer Grant Turner; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Sandy Sugawara, VOA Deputy Director; Kelu Chao, VOA Programming Director; Bridget Serchak, VOA Public Relations Director; Natalie Liu, VOA Public Relations Detailee; Tomas P. Regalado, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Emilio Vazquez, OCB Deputy Director; Jorge Jauregui, OCB Central News Director; Daisy Sindelar, Acting President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Nenad Pejic, RFE/RL Editor-in-Chief; Christine Fetzko, RFE/RL Chief of Staff; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Mehdi Parpanchi, RFE/RL Director of Radio Farda; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Alberto Fernandez, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); Deirdre Kline, MBN Communications Director; Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Chief of Staff for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs; and Joe Tordella, Special Assistant, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Kenneth Weinstein
Chairman

Witnessed:

David Kligerman
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the March 6, 2019 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of November 4, 2018 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring 20th Anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Balkan Service

International Broadcasting Bureau
Broadcasting Administrative Manual

NOTICE

Material within this Broadcasting Administrative Manual may no longer be current. To ensure having the most current policy or procedure, please contact the Agency office responsible for the subject matter, e.g., information about performance appraisal, staffing, or compensation should be directed to the Office of Human Resources. For assistance in determining which office to contact, please contact Chris Luer of the Office of Administration at (202) 203-4595 or cluer@bbg.gov.

BAM Update: The policy with the most recent date takes precedence over policies in other sections of the existing and new BAM that have older dates.

PART V-XXX PERSONNEL (XXX), 500 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS, CONDUCT, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section XXXX

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

XX01 Purpose

XX02 Scope

XX03 Social Media Definition

XX04 Basic Social Media Policy

XX05 Additional Considerations for Journalists

XX06 Government-Wide Standards of Conduct

XX06.1 Ethical Standards

XX06.2 Misuse of Position

XX06.3 Use of Non-Public Information

XX06.4 Political Activity

XX06.5 Discrimination and Harassment

XX07 Official Use of Social Media

XX08 Posting Journalistic Content to Personal Social Media Accounts

XX08.01 Directly Posting Journalistic Material

XX08.02 Indirectly Posting Journalistic Material

Section XXXX

Social Media Policy

XX01 Purpose

This policy establishes a framework for access to and use of social media. This policy shall be modified and/or amended in the future to accommodate additional social media issues.

XX02 Scope

This policy applies to all Agency personnel and all users of Agency systems, including Civil Service employees, personal service contractors, employees abroad including locally employed staff, and contractors performing duties under their contract with the United States Agency for Global Media.

XX03 Social Media Definition

Social media consist of a variety of digital technologies that foster interaction among individuals who use the tools. Social media enable individuals to post their own content to Web sites accessible to others; comment on, rate and/or tag content that others have posted; download distributed media files; dynamically develop software applications; interact in simulated learning, gaming and trading environments; engage in online conversations; and observe the interactions of others.

XX04 Basic Social Media Policy

As a general matter, the Agency encourages the responsible use of social media consistent with current laws, policies and guidance that govern information and information technology.

The Agency notes that while social media have vastly accelerated the speed of communication and greatly broadened audience size, they neither restrict nor expand the existing limitations on speech by Agency personnel. Agency personnel do not surrender their First Amendment rights as a result of their employment; however, the Government may restrict the speech of its personnel when they are not speaking as private citizens on matters of public concern or when the Government's interest in the efficient provision of public services outweighs the interest of its personnel in their speech.

XX05 Additional Social Media Considerations for Journalists

The Agency is required by law:

- a. to conduct international broadcasting in accordance with the highest professional standards of broadcast journalism, 22 U.S.C. § 6202(a) (5), which includes
- b. news which is consistently reliable and authoritative, accurate, objective, and comprehensive, 22 U.S.C. § 6202(b) (1), and
- c. a balanced and comprehensive projection of United States thought and institutions, reflecting the diversity of United States culture and society, 22 U.S.C. § 6202(b) (2).

To effectuate this, Agency journalists, defined as those involved in the gathering, production, editing, translation, presentation, or dissemination of content, must be fair, impartial, and objective in all public spaces, including social media. Accordingly, journalists must avoid action that undermine their objectivity as journalists and/or the credibility of the Agency and its constituent entities as news organizations.

Therefore, in addition to the social media policy set forth in this Broadcasting Administrative Manual, journalists must comply with any and all applicable journalistic standards governing use of and conduct on social media, as set forth by their respective entity's best practices guides or internal professional guidance. Failure to do so may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the Federal Service or contractual termination, as applicable.

XX06 Government-Wide Standards of Conduct

All Agency personnel are required to adhere to government-wide standards of conduct that apply to online communications at all times, whether by means of Agency or personal social media accounts. In general, the restrictions on communications by Agency personnel are adapted from statute and the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.). While not exhaustive, the following restrictions apply to all personnel, and violations may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the Federal Service or contractual termination, as applicable:

XX06.1 Ethical Standards - Agency personnel shall not engage in criminal, infamous, dishonest, immoral, or notoriously disgraceful conduct, or other conduct prejudicial to the Government. (5 C.F.R. § 735.203)

XX06.2 Misuse of Position - Agency personnel shall not use their public office for private gain, for the endorsement of any product, service, or enterprise, or for the private gain of friends, relatives, or other acquaintances. Agency personnel shall not use or permit the use of their Government position or title or any authority associated with their public office in a manner that is intended to coerce or induce another person to provide any benefit, financial or otherwise, to themselves or to friends, relatives, or persons with whom they are affiliated in a nongovernmental capacity. Subject to limitations set forth in 5 C.F.R. § 2635.702(b) and(c), Agency personnel shall not use their Government position or title, or Federal or Agency seals or logos, in a manner that could reasonably be construed to imply that the Government endorses or sanctions their personal activities or those of another. (5 C.F.R. § 2635.702)

XX06.3 Use of Non-Public Information - Agency personnel shall not allow the improper use of non-public information to further their own private interest or that of another, whether by engaging in financial transactions using such information, through advice or recommendation, or by knowing unauthorized disclosure. Non-public information is information that an individual gains by reason of Federal employment and that he or she knows or reasonably should know has not been made available to the general public. (5 C.F.R. § 2635.703)

XX06.4 Political Activity - Certain restrictions on political activity by certain Agency personnel apply regardless of whether they are on duty or on their personal time. Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 7321-7326). For example, no employee may solicit, accept, or receive political contributions, at any time or in any forum. Id. § 7323(a)(2). Additional information is available in Office of Special Counsel's [Hatch Act Guidance on Social Media](#) and [Hatch Act Social Media Quick Guide](#).

XX06.5 Discrimination and Harassment - All Agency personnel are responsible for treating fellow employees with basic respect and dignity, and must not harass or discriminate against fellow employees based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, disability (physical or mental), genetic information, status as a parent, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, or any other non-merit factor. (5 U.S.C. §§ 2301- 2302)

XX07 Official Use of Social Media

Agency personnel may access and contribute content (both original entries and responses to entries) on and through social media in their official capacity. Agency personnel are responsible for the content they publish in their official capacity, which must:

- a. abide by the Terms of Service - defined as a contract between social media users and third-party site providers - of the site on which the content is posted;
- b. comply with intellectual property laws;
- c. adhere to host country laws, as applicable and directed by management;
- d. conform to the standards and principles for United States international broadcasting set forth in Sections 303 of the United States International Broadcasting Act, 22 U.S.C. § 6202.
- e. comply with the the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948, as amended(the "Smith-Mundt Act"), 22 U.S.C. § 1461 et seq.

Agency personnel using social media in their official capacity must also comply with:

- a. the Agency policy on safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (PII), codified in in Section 200 of Part XI of the Broadcasting Administrative Manual;
- b. the Agency policy on information security awareness training and role-based training requirements and responsibilities, codified in in Section 300 of Part XI of the Broadcasting Administrative Manual; and
- c. the [2008 Privacy Breach Notification Policy](#).

Agency personnel using social media in their official capacity shall also:

- a. refrain from using or permit Agency computer systems, electronic devices, and social media accounts to be used for other than authorized purposes; and
- b. use time allocated to official use of social media in an honest effort to perform official duties.

Violations of the foregoing may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the Federal Service or contractual termination, as applicable.

XX08 Personal Use of Social Media

XX08.01 Posting Journalistic Material - Agency personnel are permitted to link to and embed Agency journalistic material from official, public-facing outlets. However, Agency personnel are prohibited from directly posting Agency journalistic or wire service material to their personal social media accounts, of any length or in any format and including archived and unaired content ("B-roll"). Doing so may violate intellectual property laws, and harms the Agency's ability to grow and maintain audiences through official distribution channels. Violations may constitute grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

USAGM SMITH-MUNDT GUIDELINES

Table of Contents

GUIDING PRINCIPLE	2
Summary of Smith-Mundt Restrictions	2
KEY POINTS RE U.S. DISTRIBUTION OF USAGM CONTENT	2
USAGM [ENTITY] Guidelines	3
Content Distribution Platforms.....	3
FAQS.....	4
Town Halls, Forums, and Other Such Events; Partnerships; and activities to support the recruitment and retention of high-quality journalists;.....	4
Talking about [ENTITY] Content & Programming.....	4
Op-Eds by network heads	5
Usage Requests	5
APPENDIX A	6
Sample workflow or process	6
APPENDIX B	7
Legal and Statutory References (emphases added).....	7



GUIDING PRINCIPLE

SMITH-MUNDT RESTRICTIONS RELATING TO DOMESTIC DISSEMINATION ARE TO BE APPLIED TO ALL ENTITIES / NETWORKS OF THE USAGM, INCLUDING GRANTEES.

USAGM NETWORKS MAY ONLY SEEK TO REACH FOREIGN AUDIENCES ABROAD; AND MAY NOT SEEK TO INFLUENCE US PUBLIC OPINION OR PERSONS WITH THEIR CONTENT.

Summary of Smith-Mundt Restrictions:

The United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (the “Smith-Mundt Act” or “Smith-Mundt”), 22 USC 1461 et seq., only authorizes Agency-funded broadcasts and activities to target “foreign audiences abroad.” 22 USC §1461 Note (emphasis added).

Congress has made clear “[n]o funds authorized to be appropriated to ... the Broadcasting Board of Governors [USAGM] shall be used to influence public opinion in the United States.” 22 USC §1461–1a(a). The Agency may not take or fund actions which would appear to seek “to develop audiences within the United States”, including by means of “syndicat[ing] such material through domestic media outlets.” H.R. CONF. REP. 112-705 (2012). Statutory references appear in Appendix B.

It does not prevent us from using the Internet and social media to distribute our products to non-U.S. audiences, overseas just because people in the U.S. might also see the material. (For example, we can disseminate program material to foreign audiences abroad via websites even though persons within the U.S. can also access such websites.) The law does not prevent incidental exposure of U.S. audiences to program material, as long as those audiences are not being targeted. As described herein, USAGM broadcasters have an affirmative obligation to take all steps to ensure that US audiences are not being targeted; for example, broadcasters must opt out of boosting content to audiences located in the U.S. As described in this guidance, if a platform does not allow for the agency to exclude pushing content to U.S. audiences, then the technology must be reviewed on a case by case basis by USAGM. Until such a review, such technology should not be used.

The statute does not prevent the provision of “program material” to people in the U.S. *upon request*, so long as such provision is consistent with the purposes of Smith-Mundt. It does not prevent us from entering into certain partnerships or providing opportunities for exposure for network journalists to enhance retention and recruitment.

But USAGM entities / networks may not attempt to target audiences in the United States. Ultimately, **if** it looks like the intent is to subvert the rules – i.e., **if the goal is to influence public opinion in the United States or otherwise develop audiences within the United States** - then the activity is prohibited.

KEY POINTS RE U.S. DISTRIBUTION OF USAGM CONTENT

- THE SMITH-MUNDT RESTRICTIONS APPLY TO DISTRIBUTION OF USAGM [ENTITY] CONTENT & PROGRAMMING WITHIN THE UNITED STATES.
- THEY DO NOT IN ANY WAY RESTRICT USAGM [ENTITY] COVERAGE OF NEWS STORIES. [ENTITY] IS FULLY AUTHORIZED AND EXPECTED TO COVER STORIES IN THE U.S. FOR DISTRIBUTION TO FOREIGN AUDIENCES OVERSEAS.
- USAGM [ENTITY] / NETWORK STAFF SHOULD NOT INITIATE A DIRECT OFFER OF CONTENT¹ TO ANY NEWS OUTLET, REGARDLESS OF GEOLOCATION, THAT BROADCASTS TO, TARGETS, OR REACHES AUDIENCES IN THE U.S., WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN PERMISSION PURSUANT TO A PROCESS ESTABLISHED UNDER THESE INTERNAL GUIDELINES.
- USAGM ENTITIES CANNOT SPEND ANY ADVERTISING OR OTHER FUNDS TO SPECIFICALLY TARGET OR DEVELOP AUDIENCES IN THE U.S.
- WHEN VIOLATIONS OF SMITH-MUNDT PROHIBITIONS (I.E., TARGETING OF U.S. AUDIENCES) ARE IDENTIFIED, WHETHER BY AN AUDIT OR IN THE NORMAL COURSE OF BUSINESS, THEY MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO THE USAGM CTO.
- USAGM WILL PERIODICALLY AUDIT OR REQUEST TO SEE AUDITS CONDUCTED AT EACH NETWORK.
- NEW TECHNOLOGIES WHICH COULD PUSH CONTENT TO USERS SHOULD FIRST BE EVALUATED FOR SMITH-MUNDT COMPLIANCE (SEE CONTENT DISTRIBUTION PLATFORMS, BELOW).

USAGM [ENTITY] Guidelines

1. Each [ENTITY] shall develop and maintain an auditable workflow to process questions or requests regarding Smith-Mundt.
2. Each [ENTITY] shall assign a designated single point of contact and an escalation point of contact to connect with other entities and the USAGM regarding Smith-Mundt issues.
3. Each [ENTITY] shall develop, implement and maintain appropriate policies to address violations, up to and including termination of staff or contractors.²

¹ The law does permit USAGM to enter into contractual content sharing agreements with private entities, including American media agencies.

² Any policies with employment-related consequences would be developed in consultation with the entity's HR office

4. Each [ENTITY] shall develop, implement and maintain mandatory training and materials to ensure current and new consultants or staff who are authorized to make decisions regarding Smith-Mundt requests or ad placement are aware of Smith-Mundt, its scope and application, and these guidelines. Training shall reoccur at regular intervals with a signed and auditable acknowledgment of completion.

Content Distribution Platforms

In any new undertaking with any new or existing platform, it may be incumbent upon [ENTITY] to request that the platform restrict the content from U.S. users.³ A standing USAGM working group will evaluate the proposed agreement prior to its execution according to multiple factors designed to ensure compliance with the law.

FAQS

[Town Halls, Forums, and Other Such Events; Partnerships; and activities to support the recruitment and retention of high-quality journalists;](#)

USAGM entities may host or play a role in Town Halls or related events in the United States if the purpose of the event is to engage overseas audiences; to inform U.S. stakeholders about [ENTITY] programs; or to educate U.S. taxpayers about [ENTITY] operations. For example, if a town hall is being filmed and/or broadcast live to an overseas audience, that would be okay if intended to connect overseas audiences with persons in the U.S. to show overseas audience how people in the U.S. do a particular thing; or something newsworthy to an overseas audience.

In line with efforts to adhere to the highest standards of broadcast journalism, there may be times, subject to any required approvals, that [ENTITY] journalists appear as subject-matter experts in other news outlets. This may be allowed if the purpose is to benefit [ENTITY] by facilitating development of new sources of information, enhancing [ENTITY]'s credibility, and/or contributing to the recruitment or retention of high-caliber journalists.⁴ The purpose may not be influence domestic audiences in violation of Smith-Mundt. In other cases, the purpose may be to disseminate [ENTITY] content overseas as part of an arrangement with another news organization.

and legal counsel.

³ For example, Facebook ad “boosting” allows for a user to opt out of targeting audiences in the U.S., so Facebook ad “boosting” is only allowed if the [ENTITY] first ensures that the U.S. is not among the geographic locations targeted by the boost.

⁴ Any engagement with such news outlets must adhere to and be consistent with [ENTITY]’s best practices guides and policies for journalists.

Please clear such events, partnerships, and activities in advance with [ENTITY] leadership, who should consult with their Office of General Counsel. They should also consult with the USAGM Office of General Counsel if any questions arise re the application of Smith-Mundt or these guidelines to this or any other circumstance.

USAGM leadership may be able to engage in certain partnership arrangements if the purpose is to enhance the quality or distribution of USAGM content to foreign audiences overseas. Such partnerships must be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis by USAGM.

Talking about [ENTITY] Content & Programming; Op-Eds by [ENTITY] heads

As indicated herein, the funds that the USAGM provides are only authorized to create and distribute news and information to “foreign audiences abroad” However, the law also makes clear that nothing prevents USAGM from “providing information about its operations, policies, programs, or program material, or making such available, to the media, public, or Congress, in accordance with other applicable law.”

If someone from a domestic U.S. news organization asks you about [ENTITY]’s work, you can freely talk about the content [ENTITY] produces. Nothing in Smith-Mundt prevents that. Furthermore, Smith-Mundt does not prevent an [ENTITY] President or other officer from submitting an op-eds to a domestic news publications on behalf of his/her respective network, on an issue of interest to the public **relating to [ENTITY’S] operations**. For, example if an issues about ENTITY operations became a story in domestic media, Smith-Mundt does not prevent an [ENTITY] Officer from publishing an op-ed providing the [ENTITY’s] view of the [ENTITY’S] operational issue. Such publication is still subject to any other relevant USAGM or [ENTITY] policy on such matters. This is distinguishable from the conduct prevented by Smith-Mundt.

[ENTITY] AppS

An [ENTITY] App is determined to be like an [ENTITY] Website, whereby (1) users must visit it to get content, and (2) it is designed to target users overseas.

[ENTITY] may post mobile applications for download in a n y app stores, so long as the purpose is for overseas audiences to use the app. If using the U.S. App store for this purpose, the [ENTITY] should (1) disable push functionality (e.g., pop-up news alerts) or render it opt-in; and (2) notify or inform users, in the Terms of Service, of how the application is being provided in the U.S. App store in a manner consistent with the Smith-Mundt restrictions.

Usage Requests

Smith-Mundt authorizes the provision of content, developed with funds appropriated to USAGM, to individuals and organizations in the United States if they request it, so long as the provision would not be inconsistent with the purposes of the Smith-Mundt restrictions

relating to domestic dissemination.⁵ From time to time, USAGM [ENTITY] staff may receive requests for **one-time** use of content or for **ongoing use** of programming. These usage requests could come from anyone, including U.S.-based media organizations, diaspora media outlets, overseas media outlets, or from educational institutions.

Each USAGM entity that has not yet developed a Smith-Mundt-compliant process for usage requests, shall do so. A sample workflow is attached in Appendix A.

⁵ Regulations pertaining to domestic requests for program material created by the Agency's Federal Entities/Networks are set forth in 22 CFR Part 502.

APPENDIX A

Sample workflow or process

(Note: Each Grantee’s process may differ slightly, so long as they do not result in an impermissible affiliate relationship or other arrangement with an entity seeking to reach audiences within the U.S.)

[ENTITY] Staff Should Not Respond Directly To REQUESTS

- Instead, they should develop a workflow that will identify and separate out the following:
 - Requests for **one-time use** of [ENTITY] original content
 - Requests for **ongoing use of [ENTITY] programming** from entities that qualify as overseas affiliates
 - Requests for **ongoing use of [ENTITY] programming** from entities that do not qualify as overseas affiliates, e.g. entities seeking to reach audiences in the U.S.
- Requests for **one-time use** of [ENTITY] original content should be routed to a dedicated office for that purpose.
- Requests for **ongoing use of [ENTITY] programming** from entities that qualify as overseas affiliates should be routed to USAGM Office of Business Development
- Requests for **ongoing use of [ENTITY] programming** from entities that do not qualify as overseas affiliates (so called “non-affiliate” requests) should receive the following reply:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding a subscription to / affiliate agreement for [ENTITY] content. Under the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (the “Smith-Mundt Act”), 22 U.S.C. § 1461 et seq., [ENTITY] may make its content, which is intended for dissemination to foreign audiences abroad, available to qualified requestors. This law, however, prohibits [ENTITY] from syndicating its content through domestic media outlets with the intent to develop audiences within the United States or expending funds to influence public opinion within the United States. Because you seek to disseminate [ENTITY] content on an ongoing basis to a U.S. audience, we cannot fulfill your request.

Alternatively, you may:

- 1) submit a request for a **one-time** use of content by visiting [ENTITY WEBSITE REQUEST FORM]; or

2) download and broadcast content on an ongoing basis from [ENTITY WEBSITE], subject to your acceptance of and compliance with the website's terms of use. In particular, please note that certain [ENTITY] content may use text, video, audio, photos or graphics that are the intellectual property of third parties, including ABC News, Agence France Presse (AFP), the Associated Press (AP), and Reuters, that is licensed for use in [ENTITY] programming only. This third-party material is not in the public domain and may not be copied, redistributed, sold, or published without the express permission of the copyright owner.⁶

- **Unaired or unpublished original USAGM [ENTITY] material should not be shared.** Please forward those requests to [ENTITY] senior management, the [responsible Editors] and the [ENTITY] Office of General Counsel.

⁶ USAGM and each grantee need to work out separately whether this language would apply to them in light of the fact that they assert a copyright in their content, and can thus restrict download and use.

APPENDIX B

Legal and Statutory References (emphases added)

Legislative Language

22 USC §1461. General authorization

(a) Dissemination of information abroad

The Secretary and the Broadcasting Board of Governors are authorized to use funds appropriated or otherwise made available for public diplomacy information programs to provide for the preparation, dissemination, and use of information intended for foreign audiences abroad about the United States, its people, and its policies, through press, publications, radio, motion pictures, the Internet, and other information media, including social media, and through information centers, instructors, and other direct or indirect means of communication.

(b) Dissemination of information within the United States

(1)) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary and the Broadcasting Board of Governors **may, upon request** and reimbursement of the reasonable costs incurred in fulfilling such a request, make available, in the United States, motion pictures, films, video, audio, and other materials disseminated abroad pursuant to this chapter, the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6201 et seq.), the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act (22 U.S.C. 1465 et seq.), or the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act (22 U.S.C. 1465aa et seq.). Any reimbursement pursuant to this paragraph shall be credited to the applicable appropriation account of the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors, as appropriate. The Secretary and the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall issue necessary regulations—

- (A) to establish procedures to maintain such material;
- (B) for reimbursement of the reasonable costs incurred in fulfilling requests for such material; and
- (C) to ensure that the persons seeking release of such material have secured and paid for necessary United States rights and licenses.

(2) With respect to material disseminated abroad before the effective date of section 1078 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013—

- (A) the Secretary and the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall make available to the Archivist of the United States, for domestic distribution, motion pictures, films, videotapes, and other material 12 years after the initial dissemination of the material abroad; and
- (B) the Archivist shall be the official custodian of the material and shall issue necessary regulations to ensure that persons seeking its release in the United States have secured and paid for necessary United States rights and licenses and that all costs associated with the provision of the material by the Archivist shall be paid by the persons seeking its release, in accordance with paragraph (4).

(3) The Archivist may undertake the functions described in paragraph (1) on behalf of and at the request of the Secretary or the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

(4)) The Archivist may charge fees to recover the costs described in paragraphs (1) and (2), in accordance with section 2116© of title 44. Such fees shall be paid into, administered, and expended as part of the National Archives Trust Fund.

(c) No requirement to provide material in different format

Nothing in this section may be construed to require the Secretary or the Broadcasting Board of Governors to make material disseminated abroad available in any format other than in the format disseminated abroad.

(Jan. 27, 1948, ch. 36, title V, §501, 62 Stat. 9; Pub. L. 92–352, title II, §204, July 13, 1972, 86 Stat. 494; Pub. L. 96–60, title II, §208, Aug. 15, 1979, 93 Stat. 401; Pub. L. 101–246, title II, §202, Feb. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 49; Pub. L. 112–239, div. A, title X, §1078(a), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 1957.)

* * *

RULE OF CONSTRUCTION

Pub. L. 112–239, div. A, title X, §1078(b), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 1958, provided that:

“Nothing in this section [amending this section and sections 1437, 1461–1a, and 1462 of this title and enacting provisions set out as a note under section 1437 of this title], or in the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.), **may be construed** to affect the allocation of funds appropriated or otherwise made specifically available for public diplomacy or **to authorize appropriations for Broadcasting Board of Governors programming other than for foreign audiences abroad.”**

22 USC §1461–1a. Clarification on domestic distribution of program material

(a) In general

No funds authorized to be appropriated to the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall be used to influence public opinion in the United States. This section shall apply only to programs carried out pursuant to the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.), the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6201 et seq.), the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act (22 U.S.C. 1465 et seq.), and the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act (22 U.S.C. 1465aa et seq.). **This section shall not prohibit or delay the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors from providing information about its operations, policies, programs, or program material, or making such available, to the media, public, or Congress, in accordance with other applicable law.**

(b) Rule of construction

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors from engaging in any medium or form of communication, either directly or indirectly, because a United States domestic audience is or may be thereby exposed to program material, or based on a presumption of such exposure. Such material may be made available within the United States and disseminated, when appropriate, pursuant to sections 502 and 1005 of the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1462 and 1437)ⁱ, except that nothing in this section may be construed to authorize the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors to disseminate within the United States any program material prepared for dissemination abroad on or before the effective date of section 1078 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013.

(c) Application

The provisions of this section shall apply only to the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors and to no other department or agency of the Federal Government.

(Pub. L. 99–93, title II, §208, Aug. 16, 1985, 99 Stat. 431; Pub. L. 103–236, title II, §232, Apr. 30, 1994, 108 Stat. 424; Pub. L. 112–239, div. A, title X, §1078(c), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 1958.)

Relevant Legislative History

H.R. CONF. REP. 112-705 (2012)

Dissemination abroad of information about the United States (sec. 1078)

The House bill contained a provision (sec. 1097) that would amend section 501 of the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (also known as the Smith-Mundt Act; 22 U.S.C. 1461) [....]

The conferees maintain that the Secretary of State and BBG are authorized to utilize funds for public diplomacy programs to provide for the preparation, dissemination, and use of information intended for foreign audiences. **Further, the conferees maintain that no funds authorized for the Department of State or BBG shall be used to influence public opinion in the United States.** The conferees recognize that the ban on domestic dissemination of BBG or Department of State public diplomacy products contained in the Smith-Mundt Act did not envision the development of new technologies, including the Internet or satellite broadcasting, which do not honor national boundaries. The conferees note the modification on the prohibition on domestic dissemination does not apply to other agencies of the U.S. Government, as the initial ban was also not applicable to them. In addition, this amendment in no way broadens or otherwise changes the current missions of the Department of State and BBG.

In addition, the conferees believe the provision would allow BBG to respond to domestic requests for BBG material, but not to seek to syndicate such material through domestic media

outlets with the intent to develop audiences within the United States. Further, the conferees expect that reimbursements and fees should not exceed the actual costs incurred to make materials available pursuant to the statute. The conferees also believe that the fees charged pursuant to this provision should be assessed according to a standardized, publicly-available fee schedule; and that the Secretary of State, BBG, and the National Archivist should maintain and provide to Congress a regular accounting of the funds collected pursuant to the reimbursement authority of section 501(b)(1) and the fee-collection authority of section 501(b)(4).

22 USC §1437. Utilization of private agencies

In carrying out the provisions of this chapter it shall be the duty of the Secretary and the Broadcasting Board of Governors **to utilize, to the maximum extent practicable, the services and facilities of private agencies, including existing American press, publishing, radio, motion picture, and other agencies, through contractual arrangements or otherwise.** It is the intent of Congress that the Secretary and the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall encourage participation in carrying out the purposes of this chapter by the maximum number of different private agencies in each field consistent with the present or potential market for their services in each country.

(Jan. 27, 1948, ch. 36, title X, §1005, 62 Stat. 14; Pub. L. 112–239, div. A, title X, §1078(d)(2), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 1959.)

22 USC §1462. Policies governing information activities

In authorizing international information activities under this chapter, it is the sense of the Congress (1) that the Secretary and the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall reduce such Government information activities whenever corresponding private information dissemination is found to be adequate; (2) that nothing in this chapter shall be construed to give the Department or the Broadcasting Board of Governors a monopoly in the production or sponsorship on the air of short-wave broadcasting programs, or a monopoly in any other medium of information.

(Jan. 27, 1948, ch. 36, title V, §502, 62 Stat. 10; Pub. L. 112–239, div. A, title X, §1078(d)(1), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 1958.)

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY’S BELARUS SERVICE – RADIO SVABODA
June 5, 2019**

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Belarusian-language broadcasts – known as Radio Liberty (Radio Svaboda) – began on May 20, 1954;

WHEREAS, since its first broadcast at the height of the Cold War, Radio Svaboda has earned the trust and gratitude of its audience by promoting the fundamental human rights to freedom and democracy, helping build national identity, and sending a strong signal of international solidarity and hope to the people of Belarus;

WHEREAS, Radio Svaboda plays a special role for its audience, as one of the rare broadcasters, domestic or international, to produce its content in the Belarusian language – a potent symbol of the right of Belarusians to express themselves in their native language, in their homeland;

WHEREAS, Radio Svaboda covers topics and events that local media can't or won't cover, and that the government would prefer to ignore -- the aspirations of Belarusian pro-democracy activists, the plight of political prisoners, the struggles of those pushing back against Russification, the hopes of those who seek a European future for Belarus;

WHEREAS, Radio Svaboda lives up to its slogan, “Your Voice is the Voice of Freedom,” by constantly finding innovative ways of connecting and engaging with its audiences by encouraging citizen journalism, interactivity, and responsible communication on a variety of digital platforms;

WHEREAS, Radio Svaboda works closely with online news aggregator sites in Belarus that serve as multipliers and secondary distributors of its content, enabling its unique coverage to penetrate far beyond the service’s direct audience to ignite public debate on mission-related issues; and

WHEREAS, in order to reach those who cannot listen to or see its broadcast programs because of government-imposed restrictions, the Service created the “Liberty Library” – a set of some 70 books and DVDs published since 2002 and available for downloading from the service’s website as part of a “Samizdat for the Internet Age,” which includes titles by Nobel Literature Prize winner and Radio Svaboda contributor Svetlana Alexievich.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Governors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the U.S. Agency for Global Media that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL’s Belarus Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the Belarus Service for their commitment to their audiences and their dedication to professional journalism.

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING NETWORKS' ALHURRA AND ALHURRA-IRAQ**

June 5, 2019

WHEREAS, Alhurra Television was launched on February 14, 2004, is part of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), Inc. and will be celebrating its 15th anniversary in 2019;

WHEREAS, Alhurra operates a separate Iraq channel (Alhurra-Iraq) that is one of the top television stations in that country, providing local newscasts and current affairs programs for an Iraqi audience, which is also celebrating its 15th anniversary in 2019;

WHEREAS, in 2018, Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq underwent the most comprehensive transformation since their inception and included substantially increasing the amount of news produced by the two networks, broadening the content with more diverse and hard hitting topics, compelling storytelling, as well as greatly improving the aesthetics of the networks;

WHEREAS, Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq are media outlets that supports and encourages independent voices, reformers and liberal thinkers to share their thoughts and ideas freely, without censorship and government interference;

WHEREAS, Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq's talented and professional journalists courageously report from dangerous areas to provide viewers accurate and unbiased news from the region;

WHEREAS, Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq have earned the trust and confidence of its audience of 16.5 million people every week who tune into the two networks for unbiased news and expert analysis regarding the region, the U.S. and the world;

WHEREAS, Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq serve as a direct line of information regarding the U.S. and U.S. values towards the region, showing all sides of an issue;

WHEREAS, Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq broadcast 24/7 on two separate channels to the Middle East and North Africa and have an all-news website Alhurra.com;

WHEREAS, Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq's mission is to support democratic values by expanding the spectrum of ideas, opinions, and perspectives available in the region's media; and

WHEREAS, Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq are respected sources of news in the region, frequently being cited in articles throughout the Middle East.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Governors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the U.S. Agency for Global Media that we celebrate and commemorate the 15th anniversary of MBN's Alhurra Television and Alhurra-Iraq Television.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board and CEO applaud and thank current and former members of the Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq team for their commitment to their audiences and their dedication to professional journalism.