



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: August 13, 2014
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of August 13, 2014**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today at the 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 Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Meehan
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.

The Chairman 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.

Chairman Shell noted that the meeting will include a “deep dive” on Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), and that the RFE/RL presentation will be the fifth and final “deep dive” on the BBG’s networks, a process that began with VOA in December 2013. He added that, depending on the scheduling of a “deep dive” on the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), a “deep dive” on VOA would occur in December 2013 or February 2014, which then would start the process all over again. He said that the “deep dive” session is typically conducted at the network’s headquarters. Because RFE/RL headquarters is located in Prague, Czech Republic and the Board is unable to travel there this year, today’s meeting is being held at the Cohen Building in Washington, D.C. He added that the Board is committed to visit RFE/RL headquarters in Prague sometime next year. He acknowledged that earlier today the Board held a town hall meeting via video conference with RFE/RL employees both in Prague and D.C., where the Board remembered Dr. Al-Shammari, Baghdad Bureau Chief of RFE/RL’s Radio Free Iraq and recognized the 60th anniversary of RFE/RL’s Ukrainian Service, Radio Svoboda.

Before moving to Board business, the Chairman reported on the threats against BBG journalists and repeated attempts to suppress their ability to report the news. He noted that this was a

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difficult time around the world for journalists, and as such, honoring the courage of BBG networks' reporters is a high priority for the Board.

Chairman Shell highlighted the following incidents: (1) In Iraq, Alhurra's correspondent, Maithem Al Shibani, suffered shrapnel injuries to his hand when he and an AP cameraman were embedded with an Iraqi military convoy when clashes broke out between the Iraq military and ISIS; (2) In Cuba, there have been a number of disturbing actions taken against citizen journalists who contribute to the Martís, including five reporters who frequently contribute to *Martí Noticias* were assaulted and contributing reporters to OCB's citizen journalism initiative *Reporta Cuba* also faced harassment and threats; (3) In Kazakhstan, RFE/RL's correspondent Orken Bissenov was detained for four days while reporting on a protest against Kazakhstan's entry into the Eurasian Economic Union; (4) In Crimea, the elderly mother of a stringer for RFE/RL Ukraine Service was harassed by Crimean police, who threatened that the FSB – Russia's security service – would retaliate against her son if he didn't stop writing "bad things," and another journalist of RFE/RL Ukrainian Service, Oleksiy Matsuka, received death threats for his reporting; (5) In Vietnam, VOA's reporter Reasey Poch was reporting on anti-Chinese riots and the officials forced him to falsify a confession of wrongdoing before he was allowed to leave the country; and (6) In South Sudan, a stringer for VOA's *South Sudan in Focus* program has been harassed by officials for his reporting on rebel activities and is now in hiding. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman condemned any violence, threats, and other attempts to silence or intimidate our journalists and called on governments worldwide to offer full protection to all working journalists and to cease interfering in reporting activities.

The Chairman noted an upcoming two-year anniversary of the disappearance of Alhurra's correspondent, Bashar Fahmi, who went missing in August 2012 while reporting in Aleppo, Syria, as well as the two-year anniversary of the disappearance of U.S. journalist, Austin Tice, who remains missing in Syria, along with approximately 25 other journalists. He called on anyone with information on the whereabouts of those missing journalists to come forward.

Chairman Shell paid tribute to VOA Greek Service, which aired its final broadcast on Monday, August 11, 2014. He noted that the VOA Greek Service was identified in the fiscal year 2014 budget for closure as part of the strategic cuts. He expressed the Board's appreciation for the Service's legacy, dating to World War II, of bringing unbiased news and information to people who had no other reliable news source. He noted that Governor Armstrong was able to meet with members of the Service after they recorded their final broadcast and to thank them for their critical work.

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, a quorum being present. He said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda, and that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Chairman Shell described the two items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: (1) Draft minutes of the June 20, 2014 Board meeting; and (2) Resolution to change the BBG meeting date in October 2014. He said that the October 2014 meeting date was changed in order

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to accommodate the panelists who are scheduled to discuss at the October meeting on how they tell stories in order to connect with international audiences. There being no further comments, Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Governor Crocker seconded. The Board voted unanimously to adopt the consent agenda.

The Chairman shifted the discussion to the 2014 Strategy Review that was completed in June and noted that the Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) had led a comprehensive review of how the BBG mission is carried out by the networks in each target country and region, taking into account input from language services, network management, IBB, and selected parties in the interagency, particularly U.S. Department of State. At the Chairman's invitation, Governor Armstrong and OSD Director Bruce Sherman gave an overview on the process, outcomes, and next steps. Governor Armstrong commented that the strategic review was a highly collaborative process and acknowledged the hard work of the networks, individual language services, OSD, and the Director of Global Strategy. Mr. Sherman gave a presentation highlighting the strategy review process which involved developing country and regional strategies within the BBG's overall strategic framework, identifying specific goals and targets set by the target market, and measuring performance based on research. The presentation included Ukraine and Venezuela as case studies for the development of country goals and targets. Governor Armstrong and Mr. Sherman closed by thanking everyone who participated in the review and their hard work, making it possible for a well-organized and collaborative process. Governor Meehan added that he also had participated in many of the sessions in person or by phone and congratulated the staff for the job well done.

Chairman Shell noted that in October 2013, the Board established a Special Committee on the Future of Shortwave Radio Broadcasting (the "Shortwave Committee") to undertake a comprehensive review of the efficacy of shortwave radio as a distribution platform for U.S. International Media, and that the Shortwave Committee has completed its work. He said that the Board often has to make difficult decisions about where to deploy agency resources, and that the Shortwave Committee's work of gathering information on the shortwave audience and the medium's effectiveness and broadcast costs, the Board is able to make well-informed decisions when contemplating the budget. At the Chairman's invitation, Governor Armstrong, who served as Chair of the Shortwave Committee, briefed on the Committee's findings and announced the availability of its final report on the BBG website for additional details. In the interest of time, Governor Armstrong spoke to the legacy of the platform and noted its continued importance in reaching audiences in regions where shortwave is the only reliable medium available. He highlighted the need for shortwave in critical regions, but also acknowledged the role of the Board to ensure that the BBG's resources are used responsibly and to be certain its networks are reaching audiences on the platforms they use. He noted that the Shortwave Committee's work was arguably the most in-depth, comprehensive, and inclusive analysis of shortwave that has been completed to date, evaluating shortwave as a platform to reach target audiences and developing a conceptual framework to support the continuation, or discontinuation, of shortwave broadcasts to specific markets. He stated that, while the intent from the outset was to focus on the audiences in individual markets, the Committee had sought input from across the agency, from Congress, U.S. Department of State and external stakeholders, to be better informed, and

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had the BBG's strategy team and networks look at specific markets and whether the target audiences rely on shortwave. There were two questions driving the Committee's work: Does the audience we are trying to reach rely on shortwave? And what, if any, are the opportunity costs of using shortwave to reach these audiences? Upon summarizing the Committee's findings, Governor Armstrong stated that the Committee recommends that the BBG take an aggressive and strategic approach to reduce or eliminate shortwave broadcasts where there is either minimal audience reach or the audience is not a target audience based on the BBG's support of U.S. foreign policy. He added that the Committee finds that shortwave continues to be a relevant and necessary platform in many places around the world such as North Korea, Burma, Tibet, China, Afghanistan, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, Cuba, and much of Africa, including but not limited to Sudan, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Guinea, the DRC, and Northern Nigeria. In closing, Governor Armstrong thanked the BBG leadership and staff, in particular Ashley Lancaster of the Board Operations staff, who worked hard on the report, as well as those outside the building who sent in their comments and those who sat down with the Committee to share their insights. Chairman Shell reiterated that the review was a difficult process but the final report has provided a roadmap for the Board, praised Governor Armstrong and the staff for their efforts, and dissolved the Special Committee on the Future of Shortwave Broadcasting upon its final report to the plenary Board per the BBG By-Laws. He said that the Advisory Committee will consider suggestions for specific issues of strategic interest that could be the focus of potential new Special Committees.

Before allowing time for public comments, Chairman Shell announced that the Board had recently approved the appointment of Rob Bole as the Director of Global Strategy and commended Director of Global Operations Andre Mendes on the budget briefing and Director of Communications Suzie Carroll for the support she provided to the Board as well as the communications efforts on the Hill. The Chairman praised and Governor Armstrong echoed the great work by the Interim Management Team.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Ann Noonan, Co-founder and Executive Director of Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, and Jim Malone, National Correspondent for VOA's Central Newsroom, to address the Board for three minutes.

The Board took a short recess and reconvened for an overview of RFE/RL led by Interim Managers for RFE/RL, John Giambalvo and Nenad Pejic.

At the conclusion of the RFE/RL overview, the Chairman noted that he will adjourn the meeting momentarily due to the imminent departure of some Governors. The Chairman announced that the next meeting of the plenary Board will be held on October 30, 2014, and then adjourned the meeting.

The Board then took a brief recess and reconvened for a discussion with Ben Rhodes, Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications and Speechwriting.

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

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1. Adoption of Minutes of June 20, 2014. The Board adopted the minutes of the June 20, 2014 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Changing the BBG Meeting Date in October 2014. The Board adopted the resolution to change the BBG meeting date in October 2014 as set forth in Attachment 3.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: IBB Director of Global Communications and BBG Executive Director Suzie Carroll; IBB Director of Global Operations Andre Mendes; General Counsel and Board Secretary Paul Kollmer-Dorsey; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; IBB Chief of Staff Marie Lennon; IBB Deputy Director Jeff Trimble; IBB Director of Strategy and Development Bruce Sherman; Board Operations and Policy Adviser Ashley Lancaster; Director of Public Affairs Letitia King; Public Affairs Specialist Anastasia Kolobrodova; IBB Director of the Office of Civil Rights Delia Johnson; Barbara Brady, Voice of America (VOA) Chief of Staff; Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting; John Giambalvo, Interim Manager for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Nenad Pejic, RFE/RL Interim Manager; Ben Herman, RFE/RL Acting General Counsel; Martins Zvaners, RFE/RL Deputy Director of Communications & External Relations; Christine Fetzko, RFE/RL Director of Corporate Strategy and Operations; Stephanie Schmidt, RFE/RL Budget Officer; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Brian Conniff, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks; Dan Sreebny, Senior Advisor for BBG, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs; Robert Torres, Coordinator for International Broadcasting, Office of Inspector General; Bryant Jones, Examiner, Office of Management and Budget (OMB); Jessica Menter, OMB Deputy Associate Director for Legislative Affairs, Senate; and Brett Bruen, Director of Global Engagement, National Security Council.

Approved:

Jeffrey Shell
Chairman

Witnessed:

Paul Kollmer-Dorsey
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for August 13, 2014 Meeting
2. Minutes of the June 20, 2014 Board Meeting
3. Resolution for Changing the BBG Meeting Date in October 2014

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ATTACHMENT 1

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

August 2014 Meeting Agenda

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

Wednesday, August 13

9:00 - 12:00 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting (BBG-IBB Conference Room)

Chairman's Remarks

A. Consent Agenda

- Minutes of June 20, 2014 Meeting
- Draft Resolution to Change BBG Meeting Date in October 2014

B. Discussion Item:

- Strategy Review (FY 2015 Regional Strategies/Performance Metrics)

C. Report by BBG Special Committee on the Future of Shortwave Broadcasting

D. Public Comments

10:00 Break

10:15 - 11:45 BBG Open Meeting Continued

E. RFE/RL Overview

F. Remarks from Ben Rhodes, Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications and Speechwriting – Ben Rhodes

G. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

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ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: June 20, 2014
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of June 20, 2014**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today at the headquarters of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) in Miami, Florida. 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 Ryan Crocker (via telephone)
Governor Michael Meehan (via telephone)
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.

The Chairman 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.

Chairman Shell noted that the meeting was being held at OCB headquarters and thanked OCB Director Carlos Garcia-Perez for OCB's hospitality and for hosting the meeting.

Chairman Shell noted that the meeting will include a "deep dive" on the Office of Cuba Broadcasting. He also added that today's meeting will include a panel discussion on the challenges and road to Latin American democracy, which Miriam Celaya will moderate.

Before moving to Board business, the Chairman reported on several serious threats against BBG journalists and repeated attempts to suppress their ability to report the news. Mainly, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) journalists were subjected to an unprecedented number of individual attacks and threats. At least 14 RFE/RL journalists were targeted in connection with their professional activity, with many incidents occurring in Ukraine and Crimea. RFE/RL journalists were beaten by Pro-Russian activists, delayed and interrogated at country borders, and pressured to become informants for Russian secret services. In Belarus, Azerbaijan, Macedonia, and Kazakhstan, RFE/RL journalists had their equipment broken and video footage erased, and

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were also detained, harassed, beaten, arrested, and jailed. In addition, RFE/RL's Afghan Service received a threat from a splinter Jihadist group warning that Radio Azadi journalists will face consequences if the group's activities are ignored.

The Chairman also spoke to several incidents across Asia where Voice of America (VOA) journalists were subjected to attempted intimidation as a result of their reporting: (1) In Phnom Penh, a uniformed military police officer confiscated an iPhone that a VOA reporter was using to take pictures of a labor day worker rally at Veng Sreng Street, which had been a scene of violent crackdown by authorities on past protests in early 2014; and (2) In China, three days ahead of the 25th Anniversary of the Tiananmen Crackdown, Chinese immigration officials summoned a VOA Mandarin correspondent to their offices and warned him and the VOA Beijing Bureau Chief that no interviews or filming could be conducted in public venues without permission from authorities and that no citizens of the People's Republic of China could be interviewed in VOA's Beijing offices.

Chairman Shell noted that Alhurra-Iraq's Eman Bilal was in Iraq's Karbala Province to report on a demonstration held by local teachers after one of the female teachers had been physically assaulted in the school by the followers of a Shia cleric, Al-Sarkhi. Followers of the same cleric threatened and assaulted Ms. Bilal and the camera crew as they tried to cover the demonstration. On behalf of the Board, Chairman Shell condemned these attempts to stifle independent press and called on local authorities to do more to support and protect all working journalists.

In closing, the Chairman stated that Alhurra's correspondent Bashar Fahmi remains missing in Syria following an August 2012 reporting trip in Aleppo and called for anyone with information about Mr. Bashar's whereabouts or well-being to come forward.

Chairman Shell noted that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct BBG business. The Chairman said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda, and that he received a request from Governor Meehan for Board consideration of a draft resolution on the RFE/RL Balkan Service, which was distributed separately to the Board.

The Chairman described the two items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: (1) Draft minutes of the April 11, 2014 Board meeting; and (2) Resolution honoring Susan McCue as a result of her resignation on the BBG Board in order to begin her appointment on the Board for Millennium Challenge Corporation. There followed comments from the Chairman, Governors, and leaderships of IBB and BBG networks thanking Susan McCue for her services and tireless efforts to support press freedom during her tenure with the Board from July 2010 to May 2014. There being no further comments, Governor Armstrong made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Governor Weinstein seconded. The Board voted unanimously to adopt the consent agenda.

Governors Crocker and Meehan joined the meeting by telephone at approximately 9:15 AM EST.

The Chairman shifted the discussion to the draft resolution supporting the RFE/RL Balkans Service and invited Governor Meehan to introduce it to the Board. Governor Meehan stated that,

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in light of changes to the circumstance under which the original proposed reductions were made in previous year by the Board, he thought it was important for the Board to publicly recognize the RFE/RL Balkan Service for its efforts and to re-affirm the Board's commitment to providing high quality news and information to the region. John Giambalvo, RFE/RL Interim Manager, thanked Governor Meehan for offering the resolution, noting its timeliness.

Chairman Shell said that while he will support the resolution, he particularly did not like this type of resolution because it is awkward not to recognize other services working just as hard under difficult circumstances. Under Secretary Stengel concurred and stated that the proposed resolution is unfortunate when there are many areas doing important work. Governor Crocker agreed with Governor Meehan, stating that adopting the resolution would ensure that it is publicly known that the Board has formally changed its position and supports the RFE/RL Balkan Service's efforts in the region. Governor Crocker suggested that the Board might want to consider adopting a separate resolution paying tribute to the work of all services' efforts, given that the individuals who work in closed media environments are doing so out of a deep sense of commitment and under great risk. The Chairman agreed with Governor Crocker's suggestion and advocated such a resolution at a future meeting. There being no further comments, Governor Meehan made a motion to adopt the proposed resolution on the RFE/FL Balkan Service. Chairman Shell seconded. The Board voted unanimously to adopt the resolution.

Chairman Shell stated that Governor Meehan had circulated another resolution to the Board that was not on the agenda and invited Governor Meehan to introduce it. Governor Meehan spoke to previous discussions of U.S. international media's (USIM) strategy in Iran, including the resolution that the Board adopted in April 2014. He said that he was hopeful that the staff would have made more than incremental progress in implementing the April resolution, and therefore, he did not offer a resolution within the timeframe for Board consideration. He added that he was prepared to put the draft resolution on record for this meeting (see Attachment 5) and asked that it be considered by the Board at its next meeting in August. Governor Crocker concurred with Governor Meehan and stressed the importance of USIM "getting it right" in Iran. Chairman Shell directed the VOA Director and the RFE/RL Interim Manager to move as aggressively and quickly as possible. The Chairman said that the Board shares the views of Governors Meehan and Crocker that more progress should be made to harmonize VOA and RFE/RL efforts in Iran.

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

The Board took a short recess and reconvened for an overview of OCB presented by OCB Director, Carlos Garcia-Perez and several OCB managers.

At the conclusion of the OCB overview, the Board took a brief recess and reconvened for a panel discussion on the challenges and road to Latin American democracy.

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Upon conclusion of the panel discussion, Chairman Shell thanked the panelists and OCB for hosting the Board and staff.

There being no other business, the Chairman adjourned the 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 11, 2014. The Board adopted the minutes of the April 11, 2014 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring Susan McCue. The Board adopted the resolution thanking and honoring Susan McCue as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution on RFE/RL's Balkan Service. The Board adopted the resolution on RFE/RL's Balkan Service as set forth Attachment 4.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) Director of Global Strategy, Robert Bole; IBB Director of Global Communications and BBG Executive Director Suzie Carroll; IBB Director of Global Operations Andre Mendes; General Counsel and Board Secretary Paul Kollmer-Dorsey; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; David Ensor, Director of the Voice of America; Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting; John Giambalvo, Interim Manager for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Dan Sreebny, Senior Advisor for BBG, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs; and Nate (Jonathan) Rawlings, Special Advisor to the Under Secretary (Media & Communications).

Approved:

Jeffrey Shell
Chairman

Witnessed:

Paul Kollmer-Dorsey
Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for June 20, 2014 Meeting
2. Minutes of the April 11, 2014 Board Meeting
3. Resolution for Honoring Susan McCue
4. Resolution on RFE/RL's Balkan Service
5. Draft Resolution on BBG-Sponsored Programming to Iran

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ATTACHMENT 3

RESOLUTION

**Proposed Change to Board Meeting Date
for the October 2014 Meeting**

RESOLVED, that the Broadcasting Board of Governors change the date of the October meeting of the plenary Board as follows:

Thursday, October 30, 2014