



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

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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

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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.

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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 Neepser; 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

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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

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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

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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

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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.

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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.

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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

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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

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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

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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.