



## RESOLUTION

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### **RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65<sup>TH</sup> 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;

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.