



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 radiosu, 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.

