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## **RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY'S BELARUS SERVICE – RADIO SVABODA**

**June 5, 2019**

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Belarusian-language broadcasts – known as Radio Liberty (Radio Svaboda) – began on May 20, 1954;

WHEREAS, since its first broadcast at the height of the Cold War, Radio Svaboda has earned the trust and gratitude of its audience by promoting the fundamental human rights to freedom and democracy, helping build national identity, and sending a strong signal of international solidarity and hope to the people of Belarus;

WHEREAS, Radio Svaboda plays a special role for its audience, as one of the rare broadcasters, domestic or international, to produce its content in the Belarusian language – a potent symbol of the right of Belarusians to express themselves in their native language, in their homeland;

WHEREAS, Radio Svaboda covers topics and events that local media can't or won't cover, and that the government would prefer to ignore -- the aspirations of Belarusian pro-democracy activists, the plight of political prisoners, the struggles of those pushing back against Russification, the hopes of those who seek a European future for Belarus;

WHEREAS, Radio Svaboda lives up to its slogan, "Your Voice is the Voice of Freedom," by constantly finding innovative ways of connecting and engaging with its audiences by encouraging citizen journalism, interactivity, and responsible communication on a variety of digital platforms;

WHEREAS, Radio Svaboda works closely with online news aggregator sites in Belarus that serve as multipliers and secondary distributors of its content, enabling its unique coverage to penetrate far beyond the service's direct audience to ignite public debate on mission-related issues; and

WHEREAS, in order to reach those who cannot listen to or see its broadcast programs because of government-imposed restrictions, the Service created the "Liberty Library" – a set of some 70 books and DVDs published since 2002 and available for downloading from the service's website as part of a "Samizdat for the Internet Age," which includes titles by Nobel Literature Prize winner and Radio Svaboda contributor Svetlana Alexievich.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Governors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the U.S. Agency for Global Media that we celebrate and commemorate the 65th anniversary of RFE/RL's Belarus Service.

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