



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: April 29, 2015
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of April 29, 2015**

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 Jeffrey Shell
Governor Matthew Armstrong
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh
Governor Kenneth Weinstein
Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel

Governor Leon Aron 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.

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. He stated that Governor Aron cannot be at the Board meeting as he was visiting BBG operations in Kyiv, Chisinau, and Prague.

Chairman Shell noted that the Board is continuing its search for a Chief Executive Office (CEO) following Andy Lack's resignation in March. He added that André Mendes was appointed as interim CEO and Director of BBG, and that the Board will hear later from Mr. Mendes when he gives his report to the Board. The Chairman also noted that David Ensor had announced his resignation as Director of the Voice of America (VOA) effective at the end of May. He thanked Mr. Ensor for his service as VOA's 28th Director and stated that the Board is consulting on a search for Mr. Ensor's replacement. At the Chairman's invitation, Mr. Ensor expressed his gratitude for the Board's support and his appreciation having worked at VOA.

Before starting official Board business, Chairman Shell brought attention to the threats that the BBG journalists have faced since the previous Board meeting. He noted that May 3 is World Press Freedom Day, an opportunity to celebrate and defend press freedom around the world, but the global media environment is far from free. He highlighted the following incidents: (1) At the

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summit in Panama between United States and Cuba, TV Martí reporter Karen Caballero and Cameraman Rudy Hernandez were forced out of the press conference with Cuban foreign minister Bruno Rodriguez by the head of Cuban press security; (2) In Azerbaijan, Khadija Ismayilova, an investigative journalist and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's contributor, remains in jail while RFE/RL's Baku bureau remains closed following a Azerbaijani Police and Prosecutor raid in December; (3) In Tikrit, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) ambushed an Alhurra-Iraq crew and their cameraman was shot; (4) In China, the family of a reporter of Radio Free Asia continues to be harassed; and (5) Bashar Fahmi, a reporter for Alhurra, has not been seen or heard from since he disappeared during a reporting trip in Aleppo, Syria more than two years ago. The Chairman noted that these unfortunate incidents remind BBG that the press worldwide is not free and its work is needed more than ever. He added that the work of BBG is needed to counter anti-American propaganda used by ISIL, debunk falsehoods in Russia, and provide the truth to people whose governments seek to obscure it.

Moving to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, and that the Board may conduct business based on majority vote, a quorum being present. He noted that the Board had received via email materials for the consent agenda, allowing sufficient time for all Governors to review prior to this meeting, and that he did not receive comments from any Governors.

Chairman Shell described the only item for board consideration as part of the consent agenda: the minutes of February 18, 2015 meeting. Under Secretary Stengel moved for adoption of the consent agenda. Governor Kempner seconded. The consent agenda was approved unanimously by the Board.

The Chairman invited Interim CEO and Director André Mendes to give his report. Mr. Mendes began by thanking the Board for appointing him as Interim CEO and commending Mr. Ensor for his great contributions to VOA. Mr. Mendes reported that a majority of the FY 2015 budget had been approved by Congress, and that he expects the rest of the budget, including appropriation for Internet anti-censorship activities, to be approved shortly.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Joseph Noonan, a representative of the Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, to address the Board for three minutes.

The Board then took a short recess and reconvened for a review of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) presented by Carlos García-Pérez, OCB Director.

After the OCB review, Chairman Shell announced that the next Board meeting will be held at RFE/RL headquarters in Prague, Czech Republic on July 1, 2015. The meeting will include a review of RFE/RL. The Governors were encouraged to give input regarding other topics that they may like to see addressed at the next meeting.

The Chairman announced that the Board will move to the VOA Briefing Room for an informal conversation with former BBG Chairman Walter Isaacson. The Chairman moved to adjourn the

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meeting. The Board concurred and the meeting was adjourned. This concluded the formal meeting of the BBG.

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 February 18, 2015. The Board adopted the minutes of the February 18, 2015 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG Interim CEO and Director Andre Mendes; Executive Director Suzie Carroll; Director of Global Strategy Robert Bole; General Counsel and Board Secretary Paul Kollmer-Dorsey; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; Director of Public Affairs Letitia King; Michael Lamon, Management & Policy Analyst (Presidential Management Fellow); David Ensor, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Kelu Chao, VOA Associate Director for Language Programming and Acting Chief of Staff; Scott Stearns, VOA Correspondent at State Department; Setareh Sieg, VOA General Manager of Persian News Network; Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); Natalia Crujeiras, OCB Chief Content Officer; Fabian Crespo, OCB Supervisory Imaging Producer; John Giambalvo, Interim Manager for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Bernadette Burns, Radio Free Asia (RFA) General Counsel; Richard Smith, RFA Budget Director; 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; and Nate Rawlings, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Approved:

Jeffrey Shell
Chairman

Witnessed:

Paul Kollmer-Dorsey
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for April 29, 2015 Meeting
2. Minutes of the February 18, 2015 Board Meeting

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ATTACHMENT 1

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

April 2015 Meeting Agenda

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

Wednesday, April 29

9:00 - 10:45 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting

Chairman's Remarks

- A. Consent Agenda
 - Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting
- B. Interim CEO & Director's Report
- C. Public Comment

9:30 Break

9:45 - 10:45 BBG Open Meeting Continued (BBG-IBB Conference Room)

- D. Office of Cuba Broadcasting Review
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

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ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: February 18, 2015
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of February 18, 2015**

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 Jeffrey Shell
Governor Matthew Armstrong
Governor Leon Aron
Governor Ryan Crocker (via telephone)
Governor Michael Kempner
Governor Karen Kornbluh
Governor Kenneth Weinstein

Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel 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.

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 acknowledged and welcomed Karen Kornbluh to her first official meeting as a member of the Board of Governors. He then invited Governor Kornbluh to give brief remarks. He noted that, as a result of Governor Kornbluh's appointment, Michael Meehan is no longer on the Board.

Chairman Shell announced that Andy Lack's appointment had been finalized, and that Mr. Lack was sworn-in office on January 20, 2015 as Chief Executive Officer and Director of BBG. He said that the Board will hear later from Mr. Lack as he gives his first report to the Board. The Chairman also said that, in the future, he will only give a brief introduction and then turn the meeting over to Mr. Lack who will run the meeting.

The Chairman stated that there will be no panel discussion at the end of this meeting in order for the Board and Mr. Lack to visit Voice of America's (VOA) newsroom, but that a panel

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discussion is planned for the next BBG meeting in April.

Chairman Shell reported on the threats that BBG journalists have faced, especially in Azerbaijan, since the last Board meeting. He noted that the BBG networks operate in media environments where authoritarian countries, struggling to control both information and their citizens, seek to censor objective voices and crack down on civil society, including independent press. He highlighted the following incidents: (1) On December 26, Azerbaijani police raided and closed Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) bureau in Baku, and that the bureau remains closed today while several staff members had left Azerbaijan; (2) Khadija Ismayilova, an investigative journalist and RFE/RL contributor, remains in jail and that new charges brought against Ms. Ismayilova on February 13 could result, if convicted, in a maximum imprisonment of 12 years, and on behalf of the Board, the Chairman called on Azeri authorities to permit the bureau to reopen, release Ms. Ismayilova, and halt the harassment of RFE/RL journalists and their families; (3) RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service continues to suffer intimidation and harassment in Ukraine; (4) several Radio/TV Martí reporters' equipment had been confiscated by authorities; (5) the family of a Uyghur Service reporter of Radio Free Asia continues to be harassed and imprisoned in China; and (6) Bashar Fahmi, a correspondent of Alhurra, has not been seen or heard from since his disappearance over two years ago during a reporting trip in Aleppo, Syria, and on behalf of the Board, the Chairman called on anybody who has information on Mr. Fahmi's whereabouts to step forward.

Moving to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, and that the Board may conduct business based on majority vote, a quorum being present. He noted that the Board members had received by email materials for the consent agenda, and that he had not received comments from any Governors.

Chairman Shell described the three items for Board consideration as part of the consent agenda: (1) Minutes of December 18, 2014 meeting; (2) Resolution honoring Governor Michael Meehan; and (3) Resolution on revised BBG meeting dates in 2015. There being no comments, Governor Weinstein made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Governor Aron seconded. The Board passed the consent agenda unanimously. The Chairman noted that, after consulting with Mr. Lack on the meeting locations, the Board will meet in Prague, Czech Republic in 2015 and in Miami, Florida in 2016, alternating between Miami and Prague each year.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman announced that Ann Noonan, Co-founder and Executive Director of Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting and Karl Altau, Joint Baltic American National Committee, had registered to address the Board; however, both were unable to attend the meeting due to inclement weather.

The Board took a short recess and reconvened for a review of the Voice of America (VOA) led by VOA Director David Ensor.

Following the VOA review, Chairman Shell announced that the next Board meeting will be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on April 29, 2015. The meeting will include a review

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of the Office of Cuba broadcasting.

At the Chairman's invitation, CEO and Director Andy Lack gave his report. Among other things, Mr. Lack stated that he believes it is extremely important to get out in the field to see the BBG's mission in action in order to truly understand the degree of the mission's significance. Mr. Lack said that he hopes to announce at the next meeting, the timetable and a plan for new translation services and solutions so that international news is more quickly translated into English and then placed on the VOA website. He stated that he intends to address broadcast clearance issues and will be in negotiations to address them. He suggested that since San Francisco is the epicenter of innovation and technology in the U.S., if not the world, and it would make the BBG much stronger if it were geographically positioned there, as opposed to Los Angeles.

Chairman Shell then expressed his full confidence in the Board and Mr. Lack's leadership, and that he expects great things to come.

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 December 18, 2014. The Board adopted the minutes of the October 30, 2014 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring Michael Meehan. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Michael Meehan as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution on Revised BBG Meeting Dates in 2015. The Board adopted the resolution on revised BBG meeting dates in 2015 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 Andy Lack; Executive Director Suzie Carroll; Acting Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Andre Mendes; IBB Director of Global Strategy Robert Bole; General Counsel and Board Secretary Paul Kollmer-Dorsey; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; Director of Public Affairs Letitia King; Dan Dzara, Assistant General Counsel (Technology and Operations Support); David Ensor, Director of the Voice of America; Kelu Chao, VOA Associate Director for Language Programming and Acting Chief of Staff; Scott Stearns, VOA Correspondent at State Department; Mark Prahl, VOA Associate Director for Operations; Kevin Lynch, VOA Senior Editor for the Office of Language Programming; Sheila Gandji, VOA Director of Global English; Matthew Baise, VOA Director of Digital Strategy; Alberto Pimienta, VOA Spanish Service; Vincent Makori, VOA English to Africa Service; Setareh Sieg, VOA General Manager of Persian News Network; Tatiana Vorozhko, VOA Ukrainian Service; Dakhil Elias, VOA Kurdish Service; Kristy Hays, IBB Supervisory Management and Program Analyst; Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting; John Giambalvo, Interim Manager for RFE/RL; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Brian Conniff, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks; Dan Sreebny,

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Senior Advisor for BBG, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs;
and Mary DeBree, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Approved:

Jeffrey Shell
Chairman

Witnessed:

Paul Kollmer-Dorsey
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for February 18, 2015 Meeting
2. Minutes of the December 18, 2014 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring Michael Meehan
4. Resolution on Revised BBG Meeting Dates in 2015