



RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY AND THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF RFE/RL'S MOVE TO PRAGUE

July 1, 2015

WHEREAS, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) was created in 1950 by the National Committee for a Free Europe with the mission to promote democratic values and institutions by broadcasting unbiased and factual information and ideas to audiences behind the communist “Iron Curtain”, and transmitted its first program to the former Czechoslovakia on July 4, 1950;

WHEREAS, many Central European and Russian leaders, including Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic, and Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation, have testified to the important role RFE/RL broadcasts played in ending the Cold War;

WHEREAS, the former President of Estonia, Lennart Meri, nominated RFE/RL for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991;

WHEREAS, Nobel laureate and former President of Poland, Lech Walesa, testified to the role played by RFE/RL in Poland’s struggle for freedom when he stated that its influence “cannot even be described. Would there be earth without the sun?”;

WHEREAS, in 1995, after having played a significant role in the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union, RFE/RL moved its content production operations from Munich, West Germany to Prague, Czech Republic in order to be closer to its audiences, as they struggled to throw off decades of totalitarian misrule and establish their place in a Europe whole and free;

WHEREAS, today, RFE/RL continues to provide news and open discussion of domestic and international issues in 28 languages to 21 countries where free and independent media are not permitted, or are not yet fully established;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL services in Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province have brought their audiences information otherwise denied to them by repressive local regimes or the chaos of military conflict, and expanded the spectrum of ideas, opinions and perspectives available in the region;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL has been on the front lines in Ukraine, providing singular coverage of the Euromaidan protests, the annexation of Crimea, and the insurgency in eastern Ukraine;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL is leading the way in responding to Russia’s “information war,” creating new programs on multiple media platforms that provide credible, fact-based sources of news and insight to Russian-speakers within Russia itself and in the countries that lie along Russia’s periphery;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL is shining a spotlight throughout its broadcast region on the rise of militant Islamic extremism, the challenge to democratic governance posed by entrenched elites, and the corrosive impact of corruption on fragile societies still finding a path out from the wreckage of totalitarian rule;

WHEREAS, RFE/RL employees and freelance journalists are subject to intimidation and oppression by the authorities of regimes and by extremists in many countries to which RFE/RL broadcasts; and

WHEREAS, RFE/RL has a proven record history of promoting freedom and liberty in repressive and autocratic regimes through the creation of news content based upon the principle that the first requirement of democracy is a well-informed citizenry.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Broadcasting Board of Governors --

1. Celebrates and commemorates the 65th anniversary of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the 20th anniversary of RFE/RL's move to the city of Prague in the Czech Republic;
2. Thanks the government and people of the Czech Republic for their gracious hosting of RFE/RL's broadcast headquarters and their unwavering support for RFE/RL and its mission; and
3. Applauds and thanks current and former journalists, support staff members and freelance contributors of RFE/RL for their dedication to providing credible, trustworthy, fair, and professional journalism to people denied the right of access to free and open media.