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### The New Media Revolution And U.S. Global Engagement (Webcast And Transcript)

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#### EVENT RECORD

Tuesday, February 15, 2011

9am - 12pm

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9:00 Welcome: BBG Governor Susan McCue

#### 9:10- 10:10 DISCUSSION

##### Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting in The New Media Era

The role New Media is playing in Tunisia, Egypt, and elsewhere is up for debate. What's certain, however, is that Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other social media tools have changed the way people communicate. Today's global media environment is a revolution in progress. How is the U.S. taking advantage of the potential unleashed by the digital revolution and what else must it do? Join a discussion with experts and practitioners led by Walter Isaacson, BBG Chairman and former president of CNN.

Moderator: BBG Chairman Walter Isaacson

#### Participants:

--Golnaz Esfandiari, Editor, RFE Persian Letters blog

--Rebecca MacKinnon, Bernard L. Schwartz Fellow, New America Foundation

--Rebecca McMenamin. New Media Director, International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB)

--Mohamed Al-Yahyai, Host, "Eye on Democracy", Alhurra Television

#### Presentation of VOA-Citizen Global Project

10:10 Introduction: BBG Governor Michael Meehan

#### 10:15 - 10:35 BRIEFING

##### Censorship, Signal Blocking, and Cyberjamming -- Can the US Keep Up?

Behind the scenes, there is an information war being waged between closed and free societies. Autocrats are jamming the airwaves and blocking the Internet to prevent their people from accessing outside information. A senior U.S. official charged with overcoming these obstacles explains what the U.S. is doing about it.

--Ken Berman, Director, International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) Anti-Censorship Program

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Public Affairs  
330 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC, 20237  
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[publicaffairs@bbg.gov](mailto:publicaffairs@bbg.gov)

**10:45      Introduction: Libby Liu, President, Radio Free Asia**

**Comments by Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE-1)**

**10:55 - 11:55      DISCUSSION**

**North Korea, Iran and Cuba: Bringing Accurate Information to Closed Societies**

What do citizens inside Iran, North Korea, and Cuba know about their governments and the outside world? This group of experts and international broadcasters (including Kambiz Hosseini, Jon Stewart's recent guest on "The Daily Show") discuss what the U.S. is doing today to get accurate news and information inside these "information bubbles."

**Moderator: Jeffrey Gedmin, President, RFE**

Participants:

- Christopher Walker**, Director of Studies, Freedom House
- Carlos A. García-Pérez**, Director, Office of Cuba Broadcasting
- Kambiz Hosseini**, Host, "Parazit", VOA Persian News Network
- Andrei Lankov**, Professor, Kookmin University, Seoul, South Korea

**11:55      Conclusion: BBG Governor Dennis Mulhaupt**

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# **BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**THE NEW MEDIA REVOLUTION AND U.S. GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT:**

**PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING  
IN THE NEW MEDIA ERA**

**WELCOME:  
SUSAN MCCUE,  
BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**MODERATOR:  
WALTER ISAACSON,  
BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**SPEAKERS:  
REBECCA MACKINNON,  
NEW AMERICA FOUNDATION**

**REBECCA MCMENAMIN,  
INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU**

**GOLNAZ ESFANDIARI,  
RADIO FREE EUROPE**

**MOHAMED AL-YAHYAI,  
ALHURRA TELEVISION**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2011  
9:00 A.M.  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

*Transcript by  
Federal News Service  
Washington, D.C.*

SUSAN MCCUE: Well, good morning, everyone, and welcome to an important conversation about the new media revolution and U.S. global engagement through international broadcasting. And a special hello to those of you who are joining us online. We're thrilled to have you here.

I'm Susan McCue. I know a lot of you here from my many years in the Senate and it's good to be back in the Dirksen Building and a special thanks, too, to my former and still sometimes current boss, Majority Leader Harry Reid, who secured us this room.

But this morning, I'm wearing a new hat as a proud member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for U.S. international broadcasting. And you'll hear from several of my colleagues on the board today on different panels and I also want to be sure to acknowledge Enders Wimbush – Governor Wimbush right here in the front row – who is also with us. So, thank you, good to see you, Enders.

So with the unrest and the remarkable change taking place in the Middle East driven in part by social networking and connection technologies, this morning's program could not be more timely as we discuss our engagement, U.S. engagement globally.

The six news organizations that make up U.S. international broadcasting: Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, Radio Free Asia, Alhurra Television, Radio Sawa and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting. Together, they have an audience of 165 million people a week speaking 59 languages.

Their mission – our mission is to provide independent and accurate news and information to countries where for a range of reasons, there are limits on their press freedom. And all of our efforts aspire to an even higher mission reflecting America's leadership and greatness and that mission is to promote freedom and democracy around the world.

So radio and television are parts of our names, but like most news organizations, we're evolving across multimedia platforms. Our journalists are here today to talk about how we're staying in front of that media revolution.

And another goal of the new board – our board of the – overseeing international broadcasting is to expand a top-down model to a network model in which our broadcasters add value as curators, creators and connectors in a social web of information. In short, we want to merge great journalism with user engagement and peer-to-peer information sharing so modern-day opportunities can help us advance that mission that I talked about.

And today, we'll learn more about the high-tech, cat-and-mouse game between autocrats jamming the airwaves and blocking the Internet and counter-efforts to circumvent that. This is a really important and timely topic.

And finally, we'll look at three closed societies – North Korea, Iran and Cuba – to understand how we can do a better job to create information flow there.

And so just a couple of quick housekeeping items before I turn it over to our chairman. I want to remind everyone to put their cell phones on silent. And for those of you who are tweeting – I just started tweeting not too long ago – and you want to share your 140 character views on today's proceedings, the twitter hash tag for our event today is #usib. It's #usib for all the Twitterverse out there.

So, now it's my pleasure to introduce the chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. He is a man of many distinguished titles, probably too numerous to tick off, but they include prize-winning author and former CEO of CNN, TIME editor and current Aspen Institute president and CEO, Walter Isaacson.

WALTER ISAACSON: Thanks a lot, appreciate it, Susan. (Applause.) Susan, you've done an awesome job. I mean, everybody should applaud Susan because she has really helped lead our new media efforts, which is truly important.

A few shout-outs, first to Howard Berman, a distinguished congressman, somebody who's been the vanguard of not only foreign policy but also international broadcasting. You want to say anything or just –

REPRESENTATIVE HOWARD BERMAN (D-CA): Just two things. (Laughter.)

MR. ISAACSON: Sure.

REP. BERMAN: One is a real concern of what everything BBG is doing and all your different components. There are proposed budget costs, not for next year, not for some time out in the future, but for your operations this current fiscal year that are hugely dramatic; not cuts below what the president wanted for this fiscal year, but cuts below what you had in the last fiscal year – and they're going to come if some have their way in the middle of the fiscal year when all your planning has assumed a higher level of funding.

So when you – when you propound the notion which has been propounded that we are going to exempt those items which are vital to our national security from drastic cuts and then don't include public diplomacy generally and some of the critical work of the radios and the kinds of things you're going to be talking about today, which are right at the heart of things that involve both our values and our national interests, I fear for – it's something to, I think, fight and resist. So I just wanted to throw that out.

And secondly, I am curious about how you come to grips with this issue of how we both avoid providing the technologies to governments that seek to suppress communications within the country and also empower those who are pushing for democracy to have the technologies available.

It's a tricky kind of a line, to have the technologies that allow them both to override the efforts to suppress and to freely communicate. This is at the heart – this is what we were trying to capture in one part of our Iran sanctions legislation, but it applies in all the areas that have just been mentioned.

But I have great respect for Walter and the board and the radios and there's a lot of us in Congress who think this is very, very important work.

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you very much, Congressman; I sure appreciate it. And yes, we're wrestling deeply with the budget issues, including the latest rounds. And in terms of Internet circumvention, I think Ken Berman is here and will be – who really is the world's greatest expert on that, worked at the BBG and our work, now, on the circumvention technologies, making sure we enable the good guys and don't enable the bad guys is at the very core of what we're doing.

And I think that because there's a lot of discussion about it, we're a very good operational agency in that a lot of the – State Department and others have, you know, tried to look at this subject but day-in and day-out, we are doing the circumvention technologies, the proxy servers and monitoring it, especially with Ken's help, who will be speaking at the next panel.

So thank you for raising those issues. And that's really what we're on about today. You know, we're, particularly today, going to look at the U.S. – how the U.S. is engaging international audiences in the digital era. Secretary Clinton will be speaking at midday on this subject.

We spent a lot of time talking about it, even most recently over in Munich and I do think that Susan McCue scheduled this before Tunisia, before Egypt. But between what we've now seen in the past few weeks and the joint discussions we're having with the State Department on this thing, it is more timely than ever.

After our Q&A, we're going to actually have the fun part, which is a real demo – demonstration of CitizenGlobal, that's using new media. It's something that Susan, I think, first climbed onto and the rest of us on the board found very exciting. And it just shows how we're moving more into that area.

A few more shout-outs. Jeff Gedmin is the head of Radio Free Europe, for which, thanks. And I think Dan Austin I saw a moment ago – at Voice of America; Richard Lobo, who is the head of U.S. – the International Broadcasting Bureau.

You've met three governors. I see a few former – Dave Jackson of Voice of America, Alan Heil of Voice of America. Lots of refugees from TIME Magazine, Jay Branegan, Susan Schindehette. Gosh, it feels like a reunion of the TIME's live news service. Not since Hugh Sidey was up here has there been such distinction.

As we move into this area of the Internet and new media, we don't forget radio and television, but we are trying to be where the people are. We are platform agnostic, but being platform agnostic means we have to look at the new media world.

We've done this especially recently on China, where the entire board, looking at it very carefully, knows how important it is to circumvent a lot of the firewalls and things that are happening in China to get our message into China. We care very much about our work in China. China and Iran are two extremely high priorities for us – there has been some small understanding because as we reprogram and focus our work in China, we are doing it so because it is the largest Internet community in the world.

And if you don't mind, before we start, I'd love Enders to come here – Enders Wimbush – to explain our restructuring of what we're doing in China because there has been a few words in the blogosphere about how we're somehow abandoning China and it's almost the opposite.

ENDERS WIMBUSH: Yes, thank you, Walter. When I woke up yesterday and all the new budgets became public, my e-mail box almost exploded with comments like, we've stopped broadcasting to China; VOA is no longer going to deal with China. It went on and on and on and all day. And all I can say is that's not true.

What we did was a very sensible and budget-driven but also strategic-driven recalibration of the way we're going to reach the Chinese audience. A couple of very important data points that you have to have. The first thing we did was to end shortwave broadcasting from the Voice of America to China.

The reality is that the audience measurement in shortwave in China for the last three or four years has been at what they call the trace level. That means it can almost be not measured. It's so small. And yet we're putting an enormous expenditure into that. So we stopped shortwave broadcasting from the Voice of America.

Don't – now, don't anybody say all right, you know, we're out of shortwave in China – not true. We recalibrated our shortwave broadcast, giving the best frequencies and the best time slots to what is arguably our most powerful shortwave broadcaster to China, which is Radio Free Asia. So Radio Free Asia will go forward with our shortwave broadcasting to China in better frequencies and better time slots.

The second thing we did with respect to the Voice of America, as Walter said, is we went where the audience is. China is the largest Internet-using society in the world today. There is – if – to give you a contrast, if we could hit every single shortwave user in China, that is, all the people who actually have shortwave radios, we would probably hit less than 1 percent of the population.

Internet, by contrast, is exploding in China. It's not uniform everywhere and there's some issues to be dealt with there. But we have reinforced our Internet strategy for the Voice of America and we're not just talking about blogs here. We're talking audio, video. We're talking the whole range of broadcast services.

So the summary of this is we did not stop broadcasting to China. We recalibrated – I think a very effective recalibration – to get us where the audience is, to hit the right audience with the right broadcast at the right time on the right frequencies and on the right platforms.

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you. And that was a true consensus of the broad, had true consensus of the staff and so I just want to put to that to rest. So let's get right to the panel because – hey, Rebecca – speaking of alumni that I've worked with in the best.

Rebecca McMenamin is the new media director for the U.S. International Broadcasting and she's responsible for guiding and supporting digital technology across all of our networks. I knew her back at CNN. You were also at the Berkman Center at Harvard, the Berkman Center on the Internet and Society (ph).

We also have two accomplished U.S. International Broadcasting journalists – huh? Rebecca, no – I – I don't know why –

(Cross talk.)

REBECCA MCMENAMIN: I'm sorry. You rolled it into one person. (Laughter.)

MR. ISAACSON: No, I – I don't know why – yeah. Hello.

MS. : (Off mic.)

MR. ISAACSON: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm sorry, yeah. No, I mean, sorry, you're right, I got it – Rebecca was at – Rebecca McMenamin, who is our new media director down there – I'm sorry, why did I know this – is responsible for all the things.

And Rebecca MacKinnon is a great new media expert at the Berkman Center and who has been with me. She's now at the New America Foundation. I'm sorry – and had been with me, of course, at CNN. Showing my age here – I'm getting Rebeccas mixed up.

And then we also have two USIB journalists who are practitioners of these new technologies: Golnaz Esfandiari's , who is a senior correspondent for Radio Free Europe, "Persian Letters" blog I have seen because Jeff has shown them to me and we've been there a lot. The amazing letters we get for our "Persian Letters" blog which shows the deep impact we have on that society. She also, you know, scours the blogosphere on Iran. I think Farsi is the fifth largest language in the blogosphere, is that right?

GOLNAZ ESFANDIARI: Some say third, I'm not sure. I think first is Chinese, English and Farsi, but –

MR. ISAACSON: Wow, okay. I don't know – that – I'll revise my thing. And Mohamed – our friend Mohamed Al-Yahyai?

MOHAMED AL-YAHYAI: I know how difficult it is.

MR. ISAACSON: (Chuckles.) Al-Yahyai? I like it. It sounds good. Weekly TV program, "Eye on Democracy," which examines freedom of speech, human rights violations, religious freedom in the Middle East.

You just came back from Tunisia, so we're going to get to that in a moment. Several episodes you're going to show highlighting the role of social media and the revolution.

Instead of turning to just pure Rebeccas, let me start with Ms. MacKinnon, if I may and you can set the scene for us because you've been studying the global media environment.

REBECCA MACKINNON: Right, well, just to –

MR. ISAACSON: And I am – I do apologize.

(Cross talk.)

MS. MACKINNON: No, that's all right. It happens – (inaudible, cross talk).

MR. ISAACSON: These name cards.

MS. MACKINNON: Yeah, yeah. Well, our names are so similar – our surnames as well, so it just adds to all kinds of confusion.

But just to set the scene about how things have changed for the media environment for journalism in the Internet age, I first began to realize how drastically things were changing in January 2003, when I was CNN's Tokyo bureau chief at the time and I saw a blog for the first time. What blog was it that I saw?

It was called – it was titled, "Where is Raed?" written by an anonymous Iraqi man in Baghdad giving his perspective as the United States was gearing up to invade Iraq, giving his perspective on events in his country and in the region and speaking very frankly and anonymously. Nobody knew who he was at the time.

About how he was very upset the United States was going to invade, but he also hated Saddam and you know, it was just a bad situation all around and so on. But the point being that he was a voice that I was not getting in mainstream news media anywhere. Why? Because it was really hard for journalists who were in Iraq at the time who were very controlled to speak frankly to Iraqis because it was so risky for Iraqis to speak to journalists and so on.

So it was very difficult, if not impossible, to get kind of frank views from ordinary Iraqis via the professional news media. And what I realized at this moment is that you know, up until that time, if an ordinary American, let's say, in Ohio or, you know, or a French person or whatever wanted to understand what an Iraqi person thought or a Kenyan person thought, they had to depend on a journalist to understand this unless they personally had friends.

But now, with the Internet, anybody can create media and that there was this new way for people to understand their world that did not depend as heavily on journalists alone. And it – I realized and I ended up leaving CNN a year later and went to the Berkman Center and began really studying blogs and trying to figure out how we could amplify and kind of curate these citizen voices coming out from around the world.

But I realized that it was really important for these citizen voices to be brought into the mix and this could only be a positive thing for people's understanding of the world while at the same time, I, you know, have always believed in journalism and professional journalism. But I felt that this was a very important and a very good thing. A lot of my colleagues at the time didn't agree.

MR. ISAACSON: What role do you think it played in Egypt?

MS. MACKINNON: The Internet? Well, I mean, you know, just as – I mean, certainly the Internet and social networking was an extremely important tool. And I don't think the Internet caused what happened, just as the printing press didn't cause the Protestant Reformation and pamphlets didn't cause the American Revolution. It was people who used the tools, the technology of the day, to bring about revolution.

But certainly, it's – it's kind of hard to imagine that what we've seen happen could have happened in that way without social networking. I mean, that definitely played an extremely important and powerful role in getting people initially onto the streets.

MR. ISAACSON: Do you think social networks are going to be the platform that people use to exchange information as opposed to, say, more web-centric things like blogs and webcasts?

MS. MACKINNON: Well, it's a mix. I mean social networks are currently the thing. You know, every few years, it all evolves. We're moving from a web-centric world. You know, there are Internet experts who say the web is dead and we're all going to sort of these, you know, kind of iPad-like devices where the web is going to be less important. And you know, who knows? You know, we're getting into a more device-centric world and mobile and so on.

But what I think the important thing is that whatever the platform is, whether it's on the web, whether it's on devices using apps or whatever, is that we're seeing communities of conversation evolve around news and information. And that just – you know, the people's access to a variety of objective facts is extremely important.

But equally important – I think we've seen this in Egypt, we're seeing this in China – equally important is the ability for people to hold uncensored, unmanipulated conversations around this information to figure out what they think about it and what it means for them and their community.

And also, that people are reporting to one another about what's happening in their country. They don't necessarily need the VOA to tell them what happened in the next city when, you know, there's a blogger in the next city telling them that. So it's just becoming – it's becoming as much about the conversation and the ability for people to share information as it is about access to, you know, sort of, you know, one-way kind of delivery of information. I think that's really important.

MR. ISAACSON: Rebecca number two, tell us what you're doing at USIB to use these platforms.

REBECCA MCMENAMIN: Okay, I can give you a few examples of the types of things that the BBG networks are doing. You know, when you talk about the conversation, it's very important for someone to sort of play the role of the adult in the room and to be a trusted source. You can help people navigate what is a lot of clutter that is out there.

There is a tremendous amount of news and information. We can help people navigate the clutter, find good information to make informed decisions. Some of the things that we are doing, as an example, you know, the media mix very different per given market.

In a case like Russia where we pretty much have been blocked out from placement on popular television and radio stations, we use every new media tool we can get our hands on. We're doing all sorts of things, and the result has been millions of page views and interactions with our content every week. We use websites, mobile sites, mobile apps, social media, blog tools, you name it.

In a case like Afghanistan or Somalia, those are traditional radio markets, strong radio audiences. New media there is SMS. It's text messaging. So what we've done is partner with local carriers to deliver text messages to – in Afghanistan, this has just started recently and there are over 100,000 subscribers to RFE/RL's Afghan text messages. And in Somalia, we have a quarter of a million subscribers to VOA's Somali service text messages.

On the mobile front, another thing that we've done is, you know, we're really trying to get news into people's hands. And so we have developed, in almost all BBG languages, mobile websites. And the key here is that the sites are optimized for whatever device, whatever kind of platform you have, it will create a formatted page that works on your device so that it's easy to get the information.

And MBN's Arabic site just launched about a month ago and in their first month, they had about 20,000 visits. I would say we expect that to grow a lot because –

MR. ISAACSON: Is that what we've been looking at on the screen?

MS. MCMENAMIN: Pardon me? Let me see what's up there. That is the Arabic site, I believe – no, no, I can't see it. I'm sorry. That's RFE/RL. Oh, there we go. That's the problem. We've got a variety. Oh, those are the different mobile sites, yes. Picture that as different mobile platforms. Those are different views of the mobile sites in different languages.

And these tools work different ways in different markets. So if you take MNBN, you've got a very – a lot of handsets in the marketplace in the Arabic-speaking world. Then you take a more closed environment like Uzbekistan, much more difficult to get into. RFE/RL's Uzbek service launched their mobile site in November and they're already getting 20,000 visits a month. I mean there's a desire for information.

So the same tool can work well in different types of markets. Same goes for the social media space. A lot of services have been very successful at using existing social media tools, thank you very much to Facebook for being so successful globally that we don't have to learn how to use many different platforms. We can use it in many places.

VOA's Indonesian service saw a rapid growth in the uptake of Facebook. Indonesia has actually become the second largest global market for Facebook users. And so the Indonesian service has a 300,000-plus fan base and growing. In a very different environment, again, Radio Deewa broadcasting Afghanistan and Pakistan and the border region. They get dozens of questions on their Facebook site every day for their call-in radio show.

So it's a different kind of interaction, but what it's doing is those fans on the Radio Deewa site? Ninety percent of them are students. They're young people. And it also reaches another silent voice, which is women. Women will not call in to a call-in show and discuss a sensitive topic. They'll go to Facebook and post a question.

And I'll mention just one or two other examples, I guess, to start with. One thing you may be hearing a lot about, the popular trend nowadays is crowdsourcing. And what this really means is just that people – web 2.0 technologies have made it possible for people in very different locations to connect and collaborate online.

So we've got some language services who've taken advantage of this. I think what you're seeing up here is VOA's Russian service did a crowdsourcing map as part of their coverage of the Belarusian elections. So they enabled people in all different parts of the country to contribute content in real time. This map went viral, was re-tweeted and shared on Facebook and it resulted in some of the highest volume traffic ever to the Russian website.

REFRL's Azerbaijani service took a slightly different tact. Azerbaijan is one of the most corrupt countries in the world. So they've created a corruption meter. They are creating a space for people to go online, report cases of corruption and they've gone a step further by also offering free legal advice on how you deal with it.

The final example I guess – yeah – it's a great idea.

MR. ISAACSON: Go ahead.

MS. MCMENAMIN: I'd just give a couple more examples just on blogs because again, different kinds of blogging activities. For Radio Free Asia's Mandarin service, they have developed a core network of bloggers inside China over the past year and they're getting RFA

content placed inside the firewall through collaboration with these bloggers. They even have some tricky things, I believe, where words that might get blocked by sensors, they'll use characters or symbols instead.

A different case, scenario, Kazakhstan. The Kazakh government has routinely clamped down on bloggers trying to advocate in a free space. So RFE/RL's Kazakh service has created what they call "Blogistan," in effect giving refuge to these cyber dissidents. They've created a space online where they can go talk. They've created a community and there's now an engaged community actually reporting on issues in Kazakhstan on a regular basis.

MR. ISAACSON: Jeff Gedmin and I were in Vilnius, I think, two weeks ago, meeting with Belarus – Belarusian dissidents who were using social networks to help organize themselves. They were not using the Facebook platform. In fact, they were using a Russian-based platform. And I was wondering where is it that Facebook itself and its platform is more prevalent? And what happens when there are, for example, Russian-based platforms? How do we counter that?

MS. MCMENAMIN: Well, in the case of Russia, you're probably talking about VKontakte.

MR. ISAACSON: Correct.

MS. MCMENAMIN: And I believe both VOA and RFE/RL actually use VKontakte in addition to Facebook. And so we use – if there is a very popular local social media tool, we use that as well. But I will say in the case of Belarus, I know that the VOA's service actually had a local blogger find them on Facebook and then started contributing content, doing a personal tour of the main square as police and riot police were gathering before a crackdown.

So I think people use both. Facebook has really taken off globally. I think two years ago, we would have thought we were going to have to use all local social networking sites. And that's turned out not to be the case. VKontakte is very popular in the Russian-speaking community. So we do use that.

MR. ISAACSON: You know one of the things that seems to be right is that instead of trying to develop our own platforms, we're opportunistic. If Facebook comes along, Twitter comes along, we're never going to be quite as advanced as the private sector is in creating new services. So is that sort of our strategy?

MS. MCMENAMIN: Well, in terms of looking ahead, we've had to rethink our use of technology. Rather than standing up rooms of servers and hardware and software, which is a very expensive investment, we've gone to cloud-based solutions. And these are – it makes us much more agile. Your time to market is much faster for developing a new product and it's much easier to turn it off and cut your losses if it doesn't work.

MR. ISAACSON: Great. Thank you. Mohamed, let me turn to you, if I may. And since you've just been in Tunisia and we've just been talking about Facebook, let me ask you what role did the social networks have in Tunisia, first of all.

MR. AL-YAHYAI: First of all, I would like to say that I always like to sit here as a moderator – (laughter) – asking question to – not receiving question, but let me start with this. As an Arab journalist who left his country 11 years ago because couldn't practice, you know, freedom of journalism, I have never, ever felt prouder than this moment, when I was Tunisia and I found out that we really did something great for people.

We contributed – okay, little contribution to the Tunisian revolution, but earned democracy after five years and one day because we launched it yesterday five years ago, broke the silence about human rights violations in many Arab countries for the first time. And we use the new media or new technology.

Let me give you – before going to Tunisia, let me give you a few examples about this. At the end of 2006, I get a call from Saudi Arabia asking to raise a case of a prisoner who is in prison for 16 years for nothing, for just accused by insulting Islam. His name is Hadi al-Mutif. And I said, but what we could do for someone in the prison and there's nothing – no statement from any, you know, NGOs, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty, whatever. We are media, we can't go right away.

And then the suggestion is to smuggle a cell phone to his prison, if it's possible. And actually, it was possible. The cell phone – a Nokia cell phone with a nice camera went to his prison. He recorded a message. The message came to Washington and came out on air for the first time in January 2007. That was a big thing for that guy.

After a few years, he was, again, re-jailed and accused by saying something bad about his country in Alhurra. And instead of sentence to death, he is now five years. Now, he spent two years waiting for three years to get free. This is one example.

The other example is about Muhammad Abou in Tunisia, actually. He's a lawyer, a human rights activist; went to prison for his activities and none of the Arab media mentioned that. We did first. Another example very quick here is about Oman al-Azwadi (ph); was first to criticize the government for the Internet in Oman and went to prison also. So we raised that issue and we got him free.

The last example, very quick – very quick. In Yemen, Abdul-Karim al-Khwaiwani is a journalist on human rights, was kidnapped two times in Yemen by the Yemeni authority, sent to prison for five years. We worked hard and we get him free, actually, in less than one year.

Now, let me go to Tunisia. The first thing you will witness in the main street in Tunis, Habib Bourguiba Street, you're going to see in the wall, merci Facebook. Facebook actually –

MR. ISAACSON: There is on screen, for those –

MR. AL-YAHYAI: (Chuckles.) Thank you very much.

(Cross talk.)

MR. AL-YAHYAI: Where'd you get that?

MR. ISAACSON: Took it.

MR. AL-YAHYAI: That's the merci, Facebook, actually, in Tunisia. I met 10 of Tunisian bloggers and Internet activists in Tunis. And I did ask them this question. Will this revolution be easily possible without the social media, without the Facebook? Basically they use the Facebook. And the answer is no – and the answer is (on record ?). I'm working on a documentary about this now.

So let me give you what exactly happened in Tunisia. You all know Mohamed Bouazizi who burned himself on December 17<sup>th</sup> in Sidi Bouzid. I went there. Ali Bouazizi actually is the hero – is not Mohamed Bouazizi. Mohamed Bouazizi did something, you know. He couldn't just continue living under that pressure, humiliation, so he burned himself.

Ali Bouazizi is his friend. Once he heard the news about that, he didn't go to the location where Mohamed Bouazizi burned himself. He went to his home, we opened his computer and he put that news in Facebook asking all the Bouazizi to riot, which is huge in Sidi Bouzid to protest. Let's go out. Let's go out.

Ten people went out in front of the local government in Sidi Bouzid protesting. Ali Bouazizi went after them with his cell phone. He recorded that protest – small protest, posted it on Facebook right away. The next day, 10 protestors became hundred. He did the same. The third day, thousands. And then it went out to the whole – to the entire country until January 14<sup>th</sup>, and we know what's happened on January 14<sup>th</sup>.

So there's another story here; it's about Facebook. Actually, without Ali Bouazizi who I interviewed and I met there in Sidi Bouzid, this revolution won't be possible. Why? Nine months ago, in March 2010, Abdulsalam Trensch (ph), another Tunisian guy burned himself for exact the humiliation – the same reason, but the Facebook wasn't there. And the history wasn't there and the revolution has not arrived. But it has after Ali Bouazizi and Mohamed Bouazizi.

The Tunisian activists – the Tunisian bloggers and Internet activists – they manage – very well managed to use the Facebook. They divided themselves into groups. It's not just about, you know, posting you know, randomly. No. They divided themselves into groups geographically.

One group has to go Sfax. One group has to go to Sidi Bouzid. One group has to go Monastir. One group has to stay in Tunis. One group has to stay inside homes and receive videos through the cell phones, receive information and post, work. So three factors there. One is to inform public about what's going on in Tunis. The other one is to inform of the world – up

in the world about what's going on in that country. The third one – the third factor is to mobilize.

MR. ISAACSON: Well, let me –

MR. AL-YAHYAI: To encourage people to go out, out, out. I mean that's –

MR. ISAACSON: Let me turn back to Rebecca real quick. What did we do to help facilitate this or does this happen just totally naturally? I mean how do we, at International Broadcasting, make this easier to happen?

MS. MCMENAMIN: (Off mic.)

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah, yeah. You might hit your “talk” button, if you would. Yeah.

MS. MCMENAMIN: We can help to seed the conversations. We can also provide the information that spurs the discussion and give people a place to openly debate issues. I mean we – as the journalist, you can provide lots of good information, but then you've opened up this space to let people engage and you can moderate that discussion.

And as, you know, anytime you open up discussion, whether it's on Facebook or any blogging site, you may get a whole array of scary comments. But the journalist can step in, provide the moderation, inject the facts, throw out the trash and help foster a vibrant, civic proactive discussion.

MR. ISAACSON: Your “Eye on Democracy” program is awesomely good. I'm one of the few people who gets to see it because of the anachronistic regulations that keep us from seeing it. But Alhurra had did an amazing job in Egypt and if people could have seen it in this country, it would be – everybody talked about how Al Jazeera stepped up to the plate. You all truly stepped up to the plate.

So I'm going to give you a moment, even though it's not scripted here, to tout Alhurra and what a – I mean I know Secretary Clinton gave an interview to Alhurra yesterday, your “Eye on Democracy” program, the programs originating even out of Cairo, the live feed that your network had. Tell us a little bit about it and I hope people someday will be able to see it in this country.

MR. AL-YAHYAI: Yeah, first of all, Alhurra news is the second live TV channel from Cairo during that crisis after Al Jazeera being out and BBC being out. So we were there in the street with Alhurra correspondents.

MR. ISAACSON: The only live feed from Cairo square.

MR. AL-YAHYAI: Yes, of course. From Tahrir Square, live from Tahrir Square and actually, Alhurra and Al Arabiya were live from Tahrir Square. So we were like source of news and Alhurra was the first network announced that Mubarak is leaving before any official

announcement in Egypt and it was caught by the major networks here in U.S. including CNN and other networks.

So yeah, we did a lot of work, actually, in Egypt. We did, also, in Tunisia before and after Ben Ali. What I noticed – I mean I was in Cairo when Ben Ali fell down. I was attending about conference about that – Internet and freedom of expression, by the way, there. And I think that we are there. I mean we are, in the eyes of people, myself, when I walk in the street there, they recognize you. I mean, they recognize your face. They also appreciate, they mention what we are doing as an American, Arabic-speaking TV station.

Indeed, Alhurra became in the image of people in the Middle East not as an American – it's as a TV station. We moved from that category when we started. Before, they look at us as, oh, this is American TV station, oh. You know? Now we moved to be like just a TV station, like any other TV station around the world. We are speaking Arabic. We are among them. We are a part of that environment.

But our advantage here – well, let me – let me express my personal feeling. Our advantage – I mean, in 25 years working as a journalist, I haven't ever felt that I'm free to stand in front of the camera, express my thought. But in Alhurra, I do – I do this. There is no line. The only line that we have is the objective.

MR. ISAACSON: And how do you tie in social media when you're doing an "Eye on Democracy?"

MR. AL-YAHYAI: All right. From the very beginning, we targeted the young pro-democracy activists, bloggers, Internet activists. We have a weekly – not every week indeed, but between time to time, segment about blogosphere in the Middle East.

By the way, we – I mean, Alhurra, "Eye on Democracy," was the first to interview two of the leaders of 25<sup>th</sup> January now, the revolutionary people – Ahmed Maher and Esra Abdel Fattah. Ahmed Maher and Esra Abdel Fattah created the April 6<sup>th</sup> group who tried first to do the public strike in 2008. We had them both in "Eye on Democracy." And I remember this – they mentioned this: We're going to continue, we'll not stop till we finish our mission. And their mission is to create a democracy in Egypt.

I mean, in history Arabs have never ever witnessed revolution. There's no revolution in the Arabic history. And in one month, two revolutions. And again, I mean, thanks to the social media, to the Facebook, to Twitter, the Arab government always think – I mean, there's another problem there in the Arab – between the thin elite and authorities, and the majority on the street. There is no discourse, no common language between them. Those in power still think that the Internet is online games; they're for teenagers. They don't understand how, you know, how –

MR. ISAACSON: Now they do. (Laughter.)

MR. AL-YAHYAI: Yeah. (Chuckles.) Now they do. This is why I don't think that another revolution will be done soon in the region. I don't think so myself.

MR. ISAACSON: Golnaz, tell us first of all about the “Persian Letters” blog, and also how this is going to affect Iran.

MS. ESFANDIARI: “Persian Letters” is a blog where we try to bring bloggers from Iran, we translate their blogs and we pick some interesting blogs from inside the country to – it offers a window into the Iranian society. It shows that the nuclear issue is not the only thing on the mind of Iranians.

If you read, for example, bloggers from Iran, they speak about the right to free Internet. That’s more important to them than nuclear – having a nuclear program. They speak about different issue. There are lots of blog about poetry. It’s not all about politics. It offers a different view of the Iranian society.

MR. ISAACSON: There’s an astonishing amount of blogging in Iran. I mean, even the supreme leader and others seem to have their blogs, right?

MS. ESFANDIARI: Ahmadinejad has his blog, but he hasn’t been blogging. I think he’s been very busy since last year. We know why. (Laughter.)

MR. ISAACSON: Good. Good. Either that, or we’re blocking him? No, I shouldn’t go there. (Chuckles.) Okay.

MS. ESFANDIARI: No, we’re not. And his blog actually came under attack by hackers, opposition activists.

Khamenei has a very good website. He has a very good team. He’s also on Twitter. It actually shows that unlike the governments in the Arab region that seem to be not very Internet-savvy, the Iranian government is very Internet-savvy. They’re very good with these tools.

Since yesterday, for example, they have managed to block – Iranians inside the country told us that they can’t get to Facebook and other websites even with the proxies they had been using before – so they’re extremely good.

Khamenei has a Twitter account. He tweets in English, Persian, Arabic – sometimes Spanish – his speeches, pictures of him, videos. So they’re really good. And at the end of the day, these are only tools, tools that the government uses, and also activists.

Yesterday there was a huge protest in Tehran and other cities. And tens of thousands of Iranians took to the streets after opposition leaders Mir-Hossein Mousavi and Karroubi called for a protest last week. One of the first thing that they did – activists – was to set up a Facebook page named – titled “February 14,” which was the date yesterday. And that page attracted 50,000 people more.

MR. ISAACSON: And are we helping them to enable that too or spread the word on, then?

MS. ESFANDIARI: Yes. I mean, we have on – our Radio Farda website has a space, a section where people can upload their videos and pictures. So we – yesterday, we had lots of user-generated videos from those protests from inside the country on Farda. And we would share those on Facebook and also on Twitter.

MR. ISAACSON: You know, in the Malcolm Gladwell the-revolution-shall-not-be – will-not-be-Tweeted-type backlash against some of what we're talking about, the Iranian lack of a revolution last year or the year before is often cited. What happened then? And why didn't social media get it moving faster?

MS. ESFANDIARI: Because these are only tools. People do revolution. The Internet helps; Facebook helps. But people don't come out to the streets because of Facebook. People don't come out to the streets because of Twitter, because of blogs. Blogs are very popular among Iranians.

Because – as I said, the Iranian regime is very repressive. They cracked down very well. They were very well-organized. And also, one of the reasons is that I think it's easier to bring down dictatorships that are supported by the West than those who are not. Iran is extremely isolated. Iran doesn't feel accountable to Russia or China. They're not going to ask Iran, why are you killing your own citizens? You know, it was different.

Yesterday, those opposition leaders came under house arrest. They were not allowed to leave their houses. But we saw in Egypt, for example, Baradei came to Tahrir Square. He was there. It didn't happen in Iran.

MR. ISAACSON: Everything spill over from Egypt and Tunisia into Iran? Are they following it?

MS. ESFANDIARI: Well, I think Iranians like to think they actually were the ones who inspired the Arabs. I mean, they were the first to take to the streets and protest against their regimes. But we see that these – the Arab revolts have given new hope to the Iranian movement. That was one of the reasons why people came to the streets yesterday. And it has sort of given the movement new energy.

And many of the slogans where people were chanting yesterday were connected to the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia. For example, they were saying: Khamenei, shame on you. Look at what happened to Mubarak; or “Ben Ali, Mubarak, Sayed Ali next.” Sayed Ali is Khamenei. So yes –

MR. ISAACSON: And how does Radio Farda enter into that mix?

MS. ESFANDIARI: Well, we are giving those people who don't have a platform another platform. They can express themselves freely on Radio Farda. They call us; they trust us; they send us information. They send us the videos they've captured of the scenes of violence in the streets of Tehran. And they speak to us, basically.

I interviewed one activist yesterday who was at the protest, and he told us that he was ready to die for freedom. He said, there are many people out there but they need more – a clearer direction.

And what's very interesting, yesterday after the protests were over, one of – immediately, activists launched another Facebook page called “February 15,” showing that they're ready to move on. But they're waiting for directions. That's the problem.

MR. ISAACSON: Let me – yeah, let me real quickly mention Carlos Garcia, who – you just joined us, right, or did I miss you the first time around? But the head of our Cuban broadcasting, new to the job. And I assume in Cuba in particular we're into mobile more than we are to the web, but you know, we're – I know that you've been pushing that quite a bit.

And Diane, if you don't mind, real quickly, I don't have time cues and I don't know – give me – give me – should we go to Q&A, or –

MS. : Ten, 15 more minutes.

MR. ISAACSON: Well, why don't I open it up then? Because if we only have 15 more minutes – I'm sure this is a more savvy crowd than you usually get on Capitol Hill, although that's like being the – (laughter) – like being the highest mountain in Louisiana. That might not be saying much.

Yes, ma'am? Yeah. Just introduce yourself or, yeah.

Q: Erica Marat, Voice of America, Russian Service.

MR. ISAACSON: Ah. Good to see you again. Yeah, I remember a nice celebration we had for the –

Q: Oh, yes we did.

MR. ISAACSON: – party, yeah.

Q: Yes, a month ago.

There was a lot of praise mentioned here and before to Facebook and other social networking websites. And New York Times today ran a really interesting piece saying that despite all this praise, Mark Zuckerberg didn't really say anything in return. Do you think that those stakeholders or those social-networking websites should play a role, a more active role, or should they stay neutral? Thanks.

MS. MACKINNON: Well, I'm glad you raised that. I actually spoke to that report. I wasn't quoted, but they quoted me in another story, so they couldn't quote me twice. It's a – it's a really big issue. I mean, one of the big problems with Facebook right now – and I've been

involved with helping to facilitate some discussions between activists and Facebook executives – is that Facebook has a rule that you’re not supposed to be anonymous, that you have to use your real name and your real birthday. And if someone reports you for using a fake name, then their administrators will shut down your account and shut down the pages that your account is associated with.

So there have been some real problems with this, with activists having their pages go dark or their accounts get disabled at critical times because they can’t afford to use their real names. It’s too dangerous in the countries where they are. And Facebook has made very clear that they’re not going to change this policy; they’re going to continue to enforce the terms of – the real-I.D. terms of service.

And so this does raise some real questions about the appropriateness of this platform and the extent to which activists need to be more aware of the risks they take using Facebook, in that if you – if you abide by Facebook’s rules, you’re exposed. If you don’t – if you flaunt their rules and don’t use your real name, you’re taking a risk that your account will be disabled at any time.

And so I think this is just one of many examples of why it’s risky to be over-dependent on one platform, one commercial platform run by a company that is trying to manage its relations with a lot of governments.

And just if I could make one further point, I’m a founding member of something called the Global Network Initiative, which is a multi-stakeholder initiative to get Internet and telecommunications companies to uphold core principles on free expression and privacy. Right now, Google, Yahoo and Microsoft have joined. Facebook has – you know, we’ve talked to them quite a lot. They are not showing great eagerness to join.

And this is unfortunate that, I think, just as we’ve seen companies over time have come to recognize they have a responsibility to protect the environment and not hire 12-year-olds, that information companies have a responsibility to uphold the core rights, and protect and respect the core rights of their users.

And when companies show reluctance to do that because they feel there’s some tradeoff with profit, I think there needs to – they need to be convinced that not only is being in line, being on the right side of history the moral thing to do, but also in the long run it’s the best – it’s the best for their business in the long run. It’s the best for their brand.

And I think civil society, I think users of all these platforms need to get more engaged and aggressive, just as the environmental movement’s been aggressive, labor movement, in pushing companies to be more responsible to all of our rights.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah, I think that’s a very good point, which is that in a lot of companies and even in the U.S. government at times, there’s conflicting interest between wanting anonymity versus wanting accountability.

And speaking for the Broadcasting Board of Governors and International Broadcasting, in our Internet firewall-circumvention technologies, we only have one mission, which is to enable the free flow of information. And so we are less conflicted than Google or even the State Department might be, which is why we are trying to do those technologies in proxy servers that will allow people safety and security as they express themselves.

Yes, sir?

Q: Good morning. My name is Vicente Avalos. I am from the Wilson Center. And I come from Peru. And I know coming from a developing country how hard it can be for people to get access to Internet. And even if you get access to Internet, not everything is above politics. So I was wondering whether or not if we are overrating the role of the – of the social networks. And I was wondering if this is just a phenomenon that is taking place in the middle class; and inside the middle class, only the young people? This is my first question.

And the second question is, we are speaking about also the U.S. global engagement. And I was wondering whether or not you feel that the U.S. or the international cooperation of the U.S. can contribute to the democratization or the quality of democracy in other places by providing projects of access to technology or infrastructure? Thank you.

MR. ISAACSON: Why don't I ask – yeah – Rebecca.

MS. MCMENAMIN: I would answer the first question there about whether Internet – the role of Internet is being overplayed. I think that what's happening, the technological innovations globally – more and more people are getting access to the Internet, and they are also getting access to higher-speed Internet. But many people are no longer going to the desktop for it; they're getting access in their handsets. And so the role of mobile devices in the spread of information is really becoming critical to "our" mission.

I know that there are different levels of mobile penetration. You know, some people have very simple phones; some people have high-end devices. What they all are doing is connecting people in ways that they were never connected before. So the ease with which you can share information, if one person gets access to that desktop website, and then they share it and they send an e-mail to their sister and their brother and their cousin, and then they text a message to their friends and families, the word gets out in a much different way.

I mean, if people are not listening to shortwave radio, which used to be sort of the mass form of communication, that mass form of communication really doesn't exist in many markets anymore. This is a way – there is a viral effect to online – and the use of online information.

MR. ISAACSON: Where do we use SMS the most? Africa?

MS. MCMENAMIN: SMS, the most is in a little bit of Africa, yes. And Afghanistan was the example. I will say that SMS – the best way for us to be able to afford to use SMS is by partnering with local companies. It is ridiculously expensive since we don't monetize to just push out SMS worldwide. It would be great if we could because I think we would get a lot –

we've done some experimental work with other companies, and had great success in Africa and several countries. But unless we can get a partnership, it's very expensive.

MR. ISAACSON: Mm-hmm. Did you want to take on the second one?

MR. AL-YAHYAI: Yeah. About the SMS, I would say that Egypt is the most in the Middle East using the SMS, and United Arab Emirates especially through the BlackBerry. And we all know what's happened to BlackBerry in United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

MS. ESFANDIARI: Can I – we use – in Radio Farda, we have this SMS service where people can send us – we ask a question, and they send us SMSs from Iran. This service was disrupted by the government seriously since yesterday.

Another thing –

MR. ISAACSON: And SMS can be disrupted simply by the local telco, which is a problem because it's not Internet protocol.

MS. ESFANDIARI: Yes. They usually do that – I mean, try to disrupt it. But since yesterday, it was horrible. We couldn't receive lots of SMS people were sending. But another point is that the government also uses these SMSs to crack down on activists. We've spoken to people who have been arrested. And one of the first things, they had printed out their SMSs, show them – why did you send this SMS? They prosecuted them based on those SMSs.

MR. ISAACSON: Well, it shows the importance of engaging in different types of technologies for different types of things.

Yes, was there – yes, ma'am.

Q: Based on Voice of America Russian Service, we know that crowdsourcing was very successful in identifying means and expediting assistance to people of Haiti after catastrophic events there.

At the same time, as Rebecca mentioned, the Russian service used crowdsourcing during our coverage of presidential elections in Belarus.

So how important it is to take into account the concerns that coverage of political events with crowdsourcing could basically identify locations and identities of opposition leaders, of voices of dissent in the regions where authoritarian regimes?

MR. ISAACSON: How do we protect the anonymity?

MS. MCMENAMIN: Yeah. I mean, I think this is a case where anyone, whether they call into a radio or television call-in show or they choose to engage online in one way or another, they're opting in. And people – in certain markets, it's not going to be appropriate. I mean, you know, everything doesn't work in every location. But in some societies, there is also a sense that

by being open, actually gives them more protection. Because then if they do get arrested and hauled in, they've already spoken, there tends to be a camp that starts to surround them and expressing support for them. You can't take the same tool into every market.

MR. ISAACSON: But you know, when we talked to the Belarus dissidents, that notion, not just of the wisdom of crowds, but the empowerment of crowds – that if you have enough people on the social network saying the same thing with you, you are more protected, not less protected. This is something I think we have to harness. Yes.

MR. : Question – we have a question back here.

MR. ISAACSON: Oh, sorry. (Chuckles.)

Q: Good morning. My name is Brian Payton, I'm actually with IBB's digital management division. Quick question: There have been several sources that say that China is actually increasing their shortwave capabilities. And so I guess my question is, is that – is there something that China knows that we don't, and if yes, are we doing anything to counter that? Thank you.

MR. ISAACSON: Did Enders leave, or is he right there? Okay, I was going to have him help answer that.

Yeah, is Ken here?

MR. : Well, he's going to – he's going to come next.

MR. ISAACSON: Right, oh, that's – yeah, he's coming in the next panel, but – right? You are? Yeah. You want to grab that now, though?

MR. : Here.

MR. BERMAN: The question about shortwave is interesting because the government of China is a major user of shortwave technology, because they span five or six different time zones. The problem with the IBB is that there's a tremendous amount of shortwave jamming. What the Chinese are doing is similar to what the Soviet Union was doing up to 1989, which is doing massive overload of the airwaves.

All the IBB frequencies are registered by the United Nations International Telecommunications Union. What the Chinese are doing for our shortwave is basically overriding our legally allowed broadcasts, and in effect, basically stopping all transmissions.

At the same time, shortwave itself, except for the countryside, is declining in great numbers. So the Chinese are using it throughout their country, just like the Russians are now, because of the huge expanse of distances that are involved. But in terms of an active, viable means for communication with, you might say, the 400 million users that are on the east coast of China adopting new technology, it's kind of proving to be a nonstarter.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah. Yes, ma'am.

Q: My name is Gwen Dillard and I represent the Africa division of Voice of America. I just wanted to say something to the young man from Peru who raised a question of whether the use of social media and Internet is a middle-class phenomenon and something that's going to be available primarily to people who can afford the technology.

I think what we're seeing in Africa is that, as Golnaz put it, it's the need that drives the technology. The fastest expansion of mobile telephony of the world is in Africa, and it's the continent that can least afford it. But in countries where you have closed-media societies such as Zimbabwe or Somalia or in Congo, where there is a particular crisis underway, you see the use of these media absolutely explode.

So even people with limited resources, limited assets, choose to use those assets in ways that most enrich their lives and serve their interest.

MS. MCMENAMIN: Walter, could I mention - ?

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah.

MS. MCMENAMIN: We had some ethnographic research done in Africa, and in Kenya, in Nairobi – now, this is an urban center, but one of the individuals followed was a bartender. And this bartender had two mobile devices. One was for talking to his family, communicating with his family and friends. The other was the one that he used for surfing the web, and his favorite sites were The New York Times and Facebook. I mean, it's – this is a bartender. So it's – you know, I would say that's sort of an average individual.

MR. ISAACSON: Among the people at the forefront of Internet freedom is Rich Fontaine, and I saw him waving his hand in the back, who helped really start the Internet Freedom Caucus in the Senate of the United States. And you had a question? You can – you're from Louisiana, you can shout it out. (Laughter.)

Q: (Inaudible) – crutch, I guess. I'd just ask any of the members of the panel if you might respond to or react to Senator Lugar's proposal, which I guess is out today, that not just BBG and state – or, BBG and the state should not both be providing circumvention-technologies funding, but rather, they should move to BBG – presumably, among other reasons, for, Walter, the reason you described before, which is BBG sort of has one interest and state, for obvious reasons, will have conflicting interests in providing these technologies.

MR. ISAACSON: I'll answer on behalf of the BBG, but I think Rebecca wanted to say something first.

MS. MCMENAMIN: Sure. I mean, the political fight around funding, particularly for circumvention technology, in my humble, personal opinion has reached highly counterproductive

heights. But I think one of the problems is how you define Internet freedom and how you define, sort of, what this funding should be for.

If this funding is only meant to go for circumvention, then that's one issue. You know, who can fund circumvention tools best? That's one conversation.

If the money is supposed to support people who are trying to access information on the Internet and who are trying to conduct – access spaces in which to have an uncensored conversation, then actually, circumvention doesn't solve a lot of your problems, that we're increasingly having problems with cyber-attacks against dissident websites, hacking of people's social-media account, the installation of spyware on people's computers, the filtering of SMS technology.

When the Internet shuts down, do people have access to satellite connections? Can they build mesh networks? Are there alternative ways to achieve connectivity? There are all these very complicated problems around Internet freedom that circumvention tools are one slice – address one slice of it, but only one slice.

Five years ago, that was the main problem – blocking was the main problem. Today and tomorrow – today you have many more problems. Next year and the year after, it's going to get even more complicated. And so, how do you have a funding strategy and a strategy for technology that supports the problems of today and tomorrow rather than problems of three years ago? And – (inaudible, cross talk).

MR. ISAACSON: Speaking on behalf of the BBG, I disagree slightly. I think Internet circumvention technology is always going to be extremely important. And it ties into everything else that's been mentioned, and it has to be part of a larger strategy.

I think that we have worked with the State Department, as you know. We continue to have discussions with the State Department so that we can share resources on this. That said, the BBG is an operational entity. It really knows how to tie in both circumvention, anonymity, spam blocking, denial-of-service attacks all into one thing. This is what Ken Berman is an expert in.

Whether it is using various proxy servers that – you know, the money that we've had given to us, we can get directly out and operationalize quickly with proxy servers that provide circumvention, provide anonymity, deal with denial-of-service attacks and are able to respond because these are, whether they be – I don't want to name all the names of the ones that do it, but you obviously know the names – these are ones that are right in the forefront each day of what type of problems people are having.

And I do – with all due respect to other agencies of government, we are not conflicted. I think Mark Landler's piece in The New York Times talked about it a bit today, but we don't have to balance a whole lot of conflicting interest. We have one mission at the international broadcasting, and that's to enable the free flow of information and ideas.

And we believe that's in the service of democracy – and the money that would be involved in what is circumvention technology and all of its related aspects I think would be operationalized on a day-to-day basis more quickly, and that international broadcasting, and the Broadcasting Board of Governors, is the proper place for that. And it is core to our mission.

One more question, yeah.

Q: Hi, I'm Robin Lerner from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. So just, you're leading into – it's a little bit beyond what you all do, but the question of access and development of the Internet globally. And as we were talking a lot about the mobile – use of mobile handsets, it's very difficult to be anonymous, obviously, on your mobile handset. And there is still a role for the Internet.

And I recognize – I would just like to hear people talk about, is it – should we be focusing on development and access globally? Is that a place that the U.S. government should focus on? Should that be private sector? And then, how would that in turn enable you all to do more – because we talk so much about the circumvention in closed societies, where you have these second-tier countries. But then you also have people who still – I heard this question about Peru – still aren't yet – they're not online.

MR. ISAACSON: Well let me first of all say something that Enders, Dennis, Susan – we've said before. We're platform-agnostic at the BBG. Shortwave, where it works, is great. Radio, FM, AM, television, everything else.

So we are constantly, with Bruce Sherman and with our Strategic Review Committee, looking at not only every country, but every part of every country, rural and urban, to say, they're using – and then, how do we protect people who are using it? How do we use our circumvention money to also use it to mask and provide proxy servers where people can be safe and anonymous?

So I think that we will be monitoring, really on every quarter, where is the best platform – what is the best platform for each city, each rural area and each country that we serve. I don't know – do you want to – why don't I let you also do some final closing statement there.

MS. ESFANDIARI: Each country has different conditions. We have to look at each case differently, I think.

MR. AL-YAHYAI: Well, in terms of accessibility, I would drive attention to three Arab countries right now where people are facing difficulties to access Internet – Yemen, Bahrain and Libya. And we have to keep an eye on this, and we have to support them. I don't know how.

MR. ISAACSON: What is the situation in Yemen?

MR. AL-YAHYAI: It's critical. It's critical from two days ago. It's still critical. I hear that 100-something people arrested outside Sana'a, and the media is absent somehow now from

Yemen. But the Internet access is difficult in Yemen. From my friend, from last – yesterday, I got a call from them. They are facing difficulties to access Internet.

And Libya the same, and Bahrain, of course you heard what's going on. Yesterday, from yesterday, one guy killed yesterday by the police in Bahrain. The Internet is not shut down, but there is difficulties now. I mean, they slow the Internet from the provider, government. So yeah.

MR. ISAACSON: Anything or...? – Go ahead.

MS. MCMENAMIN: No, I just think that this point of different approach for a different market, and in some parts of the world – you talk about Iran, China, places where there are much more closed environments; these are also strategically important for the U.S. government – we take an all-you-can-eat approach. We try every angle to surround them from each side, to try to get information in.

In other places, if it's really shortwave is the way to go, maybe you do just that. But you would be amazed when you travel and you talk to people who are coming from these locations, how they manage to get access to information. When there is a real need and a desire to get information, people are searching for the tools, the proxies, the ways to get around the censors and gather it, then they can share it.

MR. ISAACSON: Mm-hmm. I do remember being in China, in Kashgar, and watching kids – this is like 10 years ago – using proxy servers in Hong Kong. But as you said, I can remember when I was just a reporter at Time in 1989, watching the influence of everything from satellite TV to the faxes – to fax. So each six months brings a new technology, and I really respect the way that we are trying to not glom onto one, but always be flexible.

Let me introduce Michael Meehan, who joined us. And – sorry? Yeah, no, no, I know. I just wanted to not introduce him, but give him a shout-out. And Paul Marszalek is – you're here to do Citizen Global, which was pretty early on when we decided that enabling social media was something we had to do. I think we had a nice presentation of it. Susan McCue and others helped drive this ball, but Paul helped execute it. Paul, thank you for killing it.

PAUL MARSZALEK: Thank you. Thanks. Just a quick walkthrough of a pilot project that we have coming up that'll be launching later in the spring, so what you'll see and what we'll walk through very briefly is just the first iteration of something called – it's a suite, really, of tools.

The company is called Citizen Global. They're based in Venice, California, and at its heart, this – it's really sort of a – for lack of a better phrase, it's sort of an iMovie in the cloud. It's an ability to have a cloud-based editing system where people can upload their video, their photos, text, audio. And then it's all in one place, so they can share it with each other.

Our editors can go in there and take a look at this content and grab what they see fit and create content off of it as well. So it's a way for us to gather content in a new way, to tell stories in a new way, to report out in a new way and also to new audiences.

The first project is going to focus on this ongoing story in the Congo, this – basically a rape epidemic. A recent quote that came out in The New York Times, an individual on the ground said that it's no longer a rape crisis in the Congo, it's becoming a culture of rape in the Congo.

So we're going to try to report this in a new way. It's an old story, but it's an ongoing story, so we're going to look at it in different ways. This is the initial, again, mock-up of the site. It is operational, but it is not live. If anybody would like to look at it, we can give you back – you know, passwords to poke around on it a little bit later.

But again, the idea is to bring together VOA original reporting, uploaded content from professionals and experts on the ground and NGOs, et cetera, and then contributions, frankly, from anyone else who is interested in the topic and allow them to participate.

It'll start with our English to Africa service, and then the English worldwide service, and it'll migrate the content back out through our other language services as the project goes along. We expect it to be a very long-term project. Africa Division is figuring 18 months to two years, a very, very long horizon on this.

We just sat down the other day with Ambassador Verveer , who helped us set the – you know, sort of set the table for the project. There is audio. We had a little problem in the beginning in setting up and we were getting some feedback, so we thought we would not subject you to that feedback. But that's our featured story with Ambassador Verveer.

If we scroll down on the page, we have these additional sort of buckets of content moving left to right, really learning more about the story and background issues. The middle bucket is actually stories of the women themselves talking about their experiences. We hope to get much more of that. We hope to get men to speak about their experiences, because this violence is not just against women, it's against men and children as well.

And then, because it's such a heavy topic, we can't simply concentrate on that the whole time. The third bucket, we'll start to get into these stories of rehabilitation. The service wants to get into talks about how they're trying to reunite these broken families, things of that nature. So there's many new angles on the story that we can take.

To give you just a sense of one of the pieces inside – I think this is queued up – again, here's a – essentially, a woman talking about her experiences. We end up blurring faces, we end up blurring protecting identities. Obviously, there's a lot of issues that we have to go through from that standpoint.

So we've got a number of produced pieces already in the can and working. And you'll also see down here at the bottom, it's all set up and teed up for sharing on social-media platforms. And so we will be able to spread this material virally, hopefully quite easily.

Up here on the upper right, this is back to the homepage. These are – we're calling these call-outs. This is the ability for people to simply turn on their webcams and talk about the subject. We'll do call-outs where we'll posit questions to them or actually calls to action and allow them to very, very easily participate.

And when they chose to do so, they would flip over and get a site like this that's – a page like this that starts walking them through the process of submitting their content. I think I have a slide here that will allow me to show you what the actual – oh, yeah, one back. This is a – this is what the actual studio will look. Again, sort of, again, an iMovie in the cloud. They can load their material up on there, edit it, and so it's a tool that a lot of people may or may not have access to. But again, we can share and edit accordingly.

Let me show you one more thing. Obviously, it's all hooked up, as well, to Facebook – I can't get that slide up. My apologies. But it obviously ties into all the social-media platforms, such as Facebook and – there we go – and so there's a mockup of what that portion will start looking like.

So sort of just to recap, our intention is to facilitate. It's to engage the audience, allow them to participate, but not lose sight of the fact that we have these incredible assets. That's actually one point that I need to bring up.

Not only will this content be available online and through new media, but we're obviously – we'd be fools not to back this content out to the considerable traditional assets that we have in radio, television and new media around the world. So we'll sort of take the greatest hits of what happens on this Citizen Global project and back it out across services in multiple languages. So that'll just extend our reach into, frankly, tens of millions.

Professional journalism, combining it with the experts on the ground, combine that with citizen journalism. It's crowd-sourced content, and as we've heard today, that's really where – that's where it's heading. You'd be in denial to not think that participation and collaboration is the way to go.

Frankly, we hope that this pilot is going to take us in directions that we didn't foresee. That would be a great benefit to doing something as innovative as this. There's probably a break coming up sometime today. Gwen Diller, who spoke earlier, is available. Steve Ferry, if he'd raise his hand. You can grab him.

MR. ISAACSON: Steve, how doing?

MR. MARSZALEK: Nagazi is here from the African Service. So feel free to grab any of those folks and we can fill you in. And we will continue to fill you in as we get closer to launch later this spring.

MR. ISAACSON: Paul, this is an exact template of what I think the future of international broadcasting is, so thank you very much. That includes crowd-sourcing, mixed

with great journalism, mixed with social networking, so that people are empowered both by accurate information and the free flow of information.

And as we do it, we'll do it on all platforms, bring our radio, television, Internet and mobile platforms together, and do it in ways that tries to break any firewall and protect anybody who wants to speak. So if you can make this work, we're going to do it in 63 languages and –

MR. MARSZALEK: Well, there's so many people that have come up with ideas. I mean, I look at what Parazit could do with something like this. It would be off to the races, it would be a blast.

One last –

MR. ISAACSON: My hero. Hey, you're the new celebrity here, and you're on the next panel, so we'll get you going.

MR. MARSZALEK: Steven Starr is the guy behind Citizen Global, so if you want to buttonhook him, he's there as well. So again, thank you.

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you very much, and I think Michael, are you taking this over, are – yeah. Well, let me introduce Michael Meehan. But Michael has actually the truly exciting panel, because you have our new celebrities here, our people doing parodies.

When I first came, somebody said, you should make more use of satire and parody. So this is what you're going to see, among other things, in Michael Meehan's great panel. Thank you all very much. (Inaudible, applause.)

(END)

# **BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**THE NEW MEDIA REVOLUTION AND U.S. GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT:**

**NORTH KOREA, IRAN AND CUBA:  
BRINGING ACCURATE INFORMATION TO CLOSED SOCIETIES**

## **PART 2**

**WELCOME:  
MICHAEL MEEHAN,  
BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**MODERATOR:  
JEFFREY GEDMIN,  
RADIO FREE EUROPE**

**SPEAKERS:  
CHRISTOPHER WALKER,  
FREEDOM HOUSE**

**CARLOS A. GARCIA-PEREZ,  
RADIO AND TV MARTÍ**

**KAMBIZ HOSSEINI,  
VOICE OF AMERICA PERSIAN NEWS NETWORK**

**ANDREI LANKOV,  
KOOKMIN UNIVERSITY**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2011  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

*Transcript by  
Federal News Service  
Washington, D.C.*

(Cross talk.)

MICHAEL MEEHAN: Hi, everybody. Thank you for coming out. I just want to move to our next part of the program.

I'm Michael Meehan. I recently joined the board after two-and-a-half years of waiting for the Senate to decide to put us all together. And I spent the previous 22 years working in the Senate, so I wasn't surprised by the length of time.

But what I have been surprised about is the job that all of the journalists, the people who work through all of the networks across the BBG do – the kind of journalism, the kind of cutting-edge work they do in very difficult places. It's been very – I've been very awed and impressed by the talent that we have that works in the U.S. international broadcasting space. That was true even before the activities of the last three weeks that we've seen. So it's been amazing to be a part of this in helping move a long legacy of 70 years of broadcast journalism into the next millennium and with communications platforms that actually allow these great people to do the work that they do.

Today, I have the privilege of introducing Ken Berman, who is the director of the IBB's anti-censorship program. One of the many things that has impressed me, as we've learned about the operations of this new board, is the hand-to-hand combat that goes on with governments that don't allow information to pass freely.

Unlike many other things, where government can come and plunk down some money and fix a problem, this is a problem that's fought out in a minute-to-minute, almost second-to-second kind of a fight. And it's been impressive to watch the teams that Ken and his teams have work on this to get information into places. The other side works pretty hard at it and we just work a little bit harder, a little faster, a little more nimbly.

So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Ken so he can explain some of the great things he and his team have been doing.

KEN BERMAN: Thank you. Are you going to sit next to me so I'm not up here all by myself?

MR. MEEHAN: Yeah, sure.

MR. BERMAN: Okay, good. (Laughter.) Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here.

First of all, why is the Broadcasting Board of Governors involved in Internet anti-censorship? Believe it or not, it goes back to the time when the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Voice of America were actively – and I mention this in response to another

question from the back – actively trying to break through the Soviet jamming, the short-wave jamming.

There's been a long history, whether it's in Cuba or whether it's in Russia and the former Soviet Union, of trying to combat people's ability to get free information flow. So when you look at it, the current activities that we're involved in are really nothing more than a continuation of trying to open up, whether it's the airwaves or the Internet.

This whole program – and I've only got about 20 minutes; I'll make it quick – but the whole program started about 10 years ago when the Congress appropriated what was then called anti-jamming money. And that was really to set up – most of the funds went for additional antennas and transmitters for the traditional short-wave broadcast.

But they put a sliver of funds in there to deal with the Internet. And from that 2002 appropriation, we've managed to grow this program in its importance. What we started doing was responding to a request from the Voice of America Chinese service that said, hey, we can't get our e-mails through. And they were simply e-mails – opt-in e-mails to the Chinese people who were looking for news blasts and information.

So they turned to the Office of Engineering, which is now called Technology Services and Innovation, and say, look, in engineering, you deal with jamming; you deal with satellite distribution, everything else – can you help us with respect to e-mails?

So what we did was we brought in some of the best minds of the time – and the minds have changed but the concepts haven't – and we were able to introduce an e-mail program whereby we could send millions of e-mails into China by altering the "from" site, by the subject line, by keyword substitutions. And over time, we were able to move these e-mails into China for Voice of America.

Shortly thereafter, we expanded to Radio Free Asia. Because I'm part of the – what's called the International Broadcasting Bureau, we handle distribution for radio and TV: Martí, Voice of America, Radio Free Asia, Radio Free Europe and Liberty, as well as the Middle East Broadcast Network. So we deal with all the services for all their program distribution.

After expanding this e-mail program, we realized that people want more than just e-mail. They want the ability to go to a website. So what we did from there is we put on proxy links.

Now, we've heard a lot of talk about proxies. What are they? Basically, like a corporate proxy – it's something that stands in for something else. So RadioFreeAsia.org is blocked but KenBerman.com isn't. So what we'll do is for today or tomorrow, we'll put my name out there – KenBerman.com – and when you get this email with that link on it, you can then click on KenBerman.com and it'll take you securely to VOA or RFA or any other site that is a landing site. So KenBerman.com, after 48 hours, has been blocked, so then we send MichaelMeehan.com out.

So we're continually changing the names of these proxies. And one of the things that's worth emphasizing is we assume our program is continually compromised. The whole program – and I'll go into more details in a minute – is the assumption that there's some non-trivial percentage of government intelligence forces overseas who are receiving these e-mails and who are entering the information into their network's bureaucracy to try to counteract that.

One of the things we try to do is play on the bureaucratic inefficiencies of some governments. For instance, if the Chinese decide that we're going to block KenBerman.com, how long is it going to take them to block it? Is that blocking only in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenyang, Chengdu or is it throughout the country?

We're able to gauge the efficiency and the quickness of some of these governments and their ability to actually block the proxy sites. The same thing is true in Iran. We're able to see a difference between Isfahan and Tehran and things like that.

The point of the program is really to be as open-minded as possible. We have no specific policy except to open up freedom of information. I say that and it sounds like a cliché. But every tool we push out not only lands you on the sponsoring page – Voice of America, Radio Farda, Radio Free Asia – but it allows a jump bar in there so that you, the user, the recipient, can go to wherever you want.

If you want to look up the secret life of Hu Jintao, you can do that; if you want to go to read about corruption trials in China, you can do that. We will land you on our agency's pages but from there, you the user are free to explore and inquire and go to Facebook and Yahoo – excuse me, YouTube – Twitter and do whatever else you want.

So what we're doing is sort of trying to enable the ability of someone – and we're sponsoring it, we're paying for it so we'll land you on a Radio Farda or a Voice of America Persian News Network page. But from there, you have the ability to go and search the Internet, inquire what you want to and really take over from there.

So the tools are multipurpose. They're not just to advertise. First lesson is the VOA, IBB, RFA products but it's to enable folks throughout the world to take advantage of these tools and explore it, inquire anything they want.

In the course of this program, we've tried to turn to unusual tools. I've told this story before to some people but one of the first tools we looked at was Circumventor. This is a young man in Seattle who created a program that said, how can I help students get around the parental restrictions their parents are placing on their computer? (Laughter.) I have a couple kids, I'm not sure I want to do that. But nevertheless, China government to China citizens – parents to children? Can we not exploit that technology and use it for our own purposes?

We thought it was a good idea. We tried it for a while. It turned out, in that particular case, it was difficult for folks to load. All of our tools, the attempt is – I'll say it not pejoratively – but for the lowest common denominator: How can people use these tools without being tech-savvy? Circumventor required some tech-savviness.

On the other hand, their greatest – the biggest online game in China at the time was called Lineage. So we would basically create avatars who would roam through the countryside and announce the proxies of the day, until those avatars were beaten down by Chinese thugs in the space. You've got to try a few things.

One of the things that really kicked off our program is when the June elections in 2009 in Iran took off. And from there we kind of upped our game. One of the things we adopted – and now we've moved this, of course, to China and every other site that we can – is client software. How can we allow people not just to use proxy sites, which require a little more overhead when you're moving the information back and forth, but basically to allow people to download a little piece of code of their computer and be able to configure their own browser so it immediately connects with the outside world?

Two of the tools we used for that are called Freegate and UltraSurf. And those have been proved very popular in China and they've really taken off in Iran. So we're sponsoring those tools.

We're also the lucky – if that's the word to use – recipients of an OFAC license: Overseas Foreign Asset Control. That had to be approved by Commerce, State, Treasury. The Congress had a right to it, the intelligence community, to say, okay, we're deploying encryption software into Iran specifically – may we do that? And so we do have this license that allows us to move forward on that front.

So between UltraReach and Freegate, those are very popular tools. But as we talk about – as was talked about in the previous panel, we don't want to limit ourselves to a certain tool set. One of the most popular tools that we use is called Psiphon – P-S-I-P-H-O-N.

And that was created by a consortium of the University of Toronto, the Harvard Berkman Center, Cambridge University England and originally Oxford. The group started in what's called OpenNet Initiative. And what the ONI does is it maps Internet freedom throughout the world. They're able to show you the levels of degrees of freedom for browsing for the typical citizen.

They come up with a program called Psiphon which in its first phase was a little problematic because it required a friend in a free country to be able to stand up his computer to serve as a node. That gets all complicated and messy. So the great thing about Psiphon 2 is that we advertise what's called disposable nodes or right-to-know nodes. They're put out over the air. Radio Farda would announce them over the air; the Persian News Network would have them crawling on the lower thirds.

And what you can do is you connect to these sites and once you do that, you are able then to create your own private proxy. So if I'm in Iran and I create my own Psiphon private proxy and I share it with three friends, it's pretty unlikely to be blocked. And if it is blocked, I've got to question those three friends and find out where they're going to.

And so Psiphon is one of our tools, as is Tor. Tor is something that was originally founded by the Naval Research Lab but it's completely moved off on its own into a nonprofit organization. Tor right now has about 10,000 nodes. And it's peer-to-peer and it requires me sending a message through your computer – through your computer for years and it continued to add level of encryption. It's called onion routing. So it puts layers of the onion on and it peels them off. So we use Tor right now. Tor is very popular in certain other governments and certain other countries.

We've also developed some things in-house. One of the things we've done is one of our young engineers – her name is Sho Ho and she developed a tool called FOE. So Sho Ho created FOE. Yes, I can't stop from saying that. (Laughter.)

FOE is basically feeds over e-mail. And what it does is it uses encrypted G-mail. And China still, of course, allows G-mail. And G-mail has an encrypted version that allows in – through that, you can put RSS feeds and allow you the user, using your encrypted G-mail, to get feeds from RFA, VOA or wherever you select.

We've also exploited Skype. Now, Skype has conference rooms. Wouldn't it be nice if you could dial in to a Skype conference room that was broadcasting Radio Free Asia Mandarin? Doing that – unless the Chinese choose to shut down Skype, which they're probably not going to do – we're able to take advantage of that. Recently, Skype has changed its business model and it prevents these things from growing. But we're attempting to come up with alternatives to that.

Most recently, I was speaking with one of our broadcasters. And there's a lot of talk about text messaging and it's got its financial issues and all that. A call was made publicly to help us with – to the world, give us solutions for text messaging that involves circumvention. Well, many companies responded with their basic text message modeling. But nothing came out of it, basically.

It's so easy to block text messages because it goes through three or four local telcos. Telcos generally have an affiliation with the government. You can also do keyword blocking on your 140 or your 70 characters when it's dual-bit Chinese. So it's very easy to block it.

One of the things that we're going to reach out to the community is to say – because there's never going to be a commercial solution for this, we're going to try to award grants by creative young thinkers to say, come up with a way to harvest, let's say, 100 telephone numbers, perhaps through VoIP concentrators, to come up with some information, to be able to send these text messages out from a variety of sources so there's no one identifiable number.

Just as we do multiple IP addresses for browsing web pages and we try not to have them blocked by using a new approach, so the idea is to pull in young, ideologically motivated developers who can come up with some of these solutions. There's generally not a commercial solution for a lot of the things we do. It seems why, a lot of the times, we and the State Department have to fund some of this – because there's not a financial incentive in dealing with repressed countries.

We have used a tool recently in which we attempted to buy out the ad space for a VPN – virtual private network – that didn't work either. So we have to be – as I've said, the U.S. government – some of the prime motivators and movers behind these technologies.

Two more final comments. We did receive 1.5 million from the Department of State. I'm sure most people in this room know of it. I think it's really due to the alertness of the entire IBB staff. It was awarded in record time: 75 percent of this 1.5 is already out the door, "out the door" meaning it's obligated.

One part is for something called UltraVPN. How can we take a virtual private network, which is basically a more fluid way to communicate from your computer – it's not just web-browsing: You can video and audio streaming; you can do Voice over Internet Protocol or VoIP – how can we take that, allow that to be distributed and at the same time, because there's hundreds of VPN products out there, allow it to move around seamlessly through the Internet so it theoretically won't be blocked?

We've also used part of that money to upgrade our bandwidth to Iran. It's very interesting. We've talked about China; we've talked about Iran. China has taken a model, it seems to me – I'm not a social scientist – of saying, we need Internet technology for the furtherance of our country, whether it's through online reservations, inventory control, young users using it for online dating or audio-video streaming. It's easier to get that audience to take advantage of some of these tools.

Iran, on the other hand, a country with 80 million people, has got this huge cohort of young people who are very desirous of technologies. But yet, the government there is not embracing IT – information technology – to the extent that China is. So it's overcoming the ability of the Iranians, to a certain extent, to ration technology. And how can we get through that?

Thus we use tools that are sensitive to the bandwidth speeds. China has got broadband going up and down the coast. The Iranians have limited their connection speeds to 128 kilobits per second, which, remember, is two times dial-up. So thus we have to be more conscious of how you load pages into the browser so they don't freeze with java-scripting video.

So while all of that is going on with our current program, we're also looking to the future. And the future touched on mobile. The problem with mobile, as was alluded to, was a great thing about it is you can have triangulation of your location because the cell towers need to know where you are. The downside is the cell towers know where you are.

So the idea is to come up with a mobile solution that we, the BBG, can get behind and are comfortable with securely to allow folks to take advantage of the platforms that are going to be prominent in a year or two, most likely the Android operating system. And how can we deal and put safe solutions in so that people can still get the information without being spied on.

So that's a quick summary, Michael.

MR. ISAACSON: I answered Rich Fontaine's question but you would have answered it better and you sort of did. Do you mind if we just let him address Rich Fontaine's question, which is the one about directing the Internet ...?

MR. BERMAN: Absolutely. And first of all, I need to go on record – not that I'm on record here – just to say, we have a – to use a State term – multilateral relationship with State. We, the BBG, have relay stations overseas in Botswana and Thailand and Sri Lanka – number of spots. We use the Department of State to help with the local security offices, with pay, with administration. The information resource management group gives us help when we're looking at cyberattacks on our agency. We have a long history of working with the Department of State.

This particular issue that is under discussion today is one issue in a complex bilateral relationship. One thing worth mentioning is that there are three agencies that have been involved in some of this: AID, the Department of State and the Broadcast Board of Governors, all who have completely – I don't know about completely, but different missions.

AID uses funds in international development not just for passing out corn and rice but for helping citizen journalists develop their own indigenous way of learning the technologies. They train broadcasters; they train content developers.

The State Department is involved in diplomacy. And it also has a bureau called Democracy, Human Rights and Labor whose goal is to spread the concepts democracy, human rights and labor. And that includes lobbying the international telecommunications union and the various committees to make sure that there's not a hostile takeover by governments of some of the Internet rule-making bodies.

And the BBG has a broadcasting mission. And part of that is to make sure that the recipients of the broadcast can get it.

So there has been money. I personally have served on the – what's called the TEP, the technical evaluation panel for the Department of State, when they've reviewed various technologies. I've offered my opinion of what works and what doesn't and I expect to be part of the continuing round of that.

So I think, to echo Chairman Isaacson's comments, we are an operational unit. We are day-to-day on the ground trying – and I won't get too dramatic about this – but trying to help people who need the tools now. State Department has a different mission and I think they're looking at things at more at a, sometimes, at a policy level and a human rights level. All important things to do.

Where it finally ends up? I think some of the reports recently said that for operational issues, for tool development, for circumvention efforts, we seem to be the best poised for this. If it's in other areas dealing with diplomacy and working with the international bodies, State is probably best deployed for that. So that's how I would answer that, Walter. Yeah.

MR. MEEHAN: Well, as you can see, Ken's right on the front lines and in the middle of it all. And thank you for your excellent presentation. Try to keep us on schedule here so I think I'm going to take this moment to introduce Libby Liu, who is the president of Radio Free Asia and runs an amazing company at one of our networks of the BBG. And she is going to introduce our next panel. Thank you.

LIBBY LIU: Thanks, Michael. Great talk, Ken.

MR. BERMAN: Thank you.

MS. LIU: This morning, we've heard a lot about the revolutionary role of new media in the Middle East and around the world and what U.S. international broadcasting has been doing to rise and seize the opportunity to get information to people that need it. We've also heard from Ken and from others about methods that we use to try to overcome the efforts of authoritarian regimes to keep the information from their people.

This next panel will look at three countries specifically – Cuba, Iran and North Korea – in depth, where the leaders are doing everything under their control to stop the free flow of information. But they are three very different environments. And that's why it's important for us to have a panel that can speak to all of that.

Despite the efforts to stop our information from getting in, we are getting in and we are making an impact. And this is even true in North Korea, the world's worst media environment. Recent research among refugees from North Korea show that they listen to VOA and RFA despite the threat of punishment and imprisonment up to 10 years. I know also recently we've been getting through, through mobile phones. There's a big black-market traffic in mobile phones over the borders of China. So they can ride on Chinese celltels and talk to us. This is a big part of how we get information from inside North Korea and how we corroborate that information so that it's valid to put on the news.

These extremes are unique. The panel here will discuss the challenges and the landscapes in the three countries that we are focusing on. And so I would like to turn you over to Jeff Gedmin.

Jeff Gedmin is the president of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. As many of you know, Jeff is leaving us, soon to become the president of the Legatum Institute in London. For four years, I have worked with Jeff and I have come to discover that he is an outstanding leader. And he's been advancing our mission all around the globe. He's innovative, he's an eloquent advocate and he's a perfect bunkermate. (Laughter.) Thank you, Jeff. We miss you already.

(Cross talk.)

JEFF GEDMIN: Well, good morning, everybody. And Libby, thank you for a very gracious introduction. I'll do my best not to embarrass you now. (Laughter.) You are so kind and good to be here with Walter and Enders, and Ken – excellent job – and Michael and the rest of the colleagues.

This is a wrap-up panel. And we decided as a group – at least, I’m told we decided as a group – rather than give presentations, we’re going to do a Q&A and weave you all in the audience in from the outset. Could you do me a favor? Raise your hand if you work for BBG, IBB, VOA, RFERL, MBN or Cuban Broadcasting. Okay. Well, you all are not allowed to ask questions, okay? (Laughter.) Maybe at the very end. We will see.

I’ve been in this job for four years now as president of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. We’re based in Prague and I know someone you think very highly, very fondly of, Walter, Václav Havel, who we kind of think is the patron saint of Radio Free Europe. One said, when the Berlin Wall fell and the Iron Curtain was no more, Havel said, it was from Voice of America that I learned about America and the world and it was from Radio Free Europe that I learned about my own country.

Well, a lot has changed since then. And that’s part of the panel and the discussion today, this morning and currently. But some things haven’t changed, it seems to me. I was in Tashkent, in Uzbekistan, meeting with a small group of young people who claim to be listeners of Radio Free Europe in that country. And I asked them if they and their friends listen; they said yes.

And I said, but what do you and your friends – young people; 19, 20, 21 years old – I said, what do you and your friends think about RFE and who we are and how we’re funded and what our purpose is and what we do? And they all laughed a little bit, giggled even. And I said, what’s so funny? And they said, well, you know, everybody thinks that you’re CIA radio. And I said, well, if you think we’re CIA radio, why are you listening? And they said, oh, it’s very easy. First of all, it’s an alternative source of information and second of all, it proves to be accurate and honest and reliable.

So some things change but some things don’t change. We’ve got a terrific panel here to probe the questions of this session and kind of wrap up and sum up what we talked about today. Let me introduce them very quickly, first of all.

To my immediate right, Chris Walker from Freedom House, who has been a great partner, does a terrific job in programs and research and in particular, is an expert on how authoritarian regimes use new technologies, use social media to impede the free flow of information in countries like China, in countries like Saudi Arabia. And as a result, how democrats – low “D” democrats – can band together and promote that flow of information. So Chris, welcome to you this morning.

To Chris’s right, two over from me, is Kambiz Hosseini from Voice of America. Both Voice of America and our Persian service do satire work. In fact, those aren’t the only services in U.S. international broadcasting that use satire as a device. Kambiz is famous inside Iran for the political-satire commentary he does, but I think you also know him as the man who launched the career of American comedian Jon Stewart, so congratulations – (laughter) – Kambiz, for that. Very well done.

Andrei Lankov, to my left, is an extraordinary guest for us today. He is a professor in South Korea but is one of the few people you'll meet who has actually lived in and worked in North Korea. He writes, he studies, he researches, he blogs and I think has some very interesting things to say about what's happening inside that country and society, what people are looking for in information and how we can assist.

And then Carlos, you were already introduced by our chairman this morning. Carlos Garcia-Perez, who is the head of Cuban broadcasting and brings a very, if I may say, youthful, exuberant and entrepreneurial style to his work. And he'll be at a good position to tell us what is the same and what is different in all these societies which we're dealing with in this panel, which are more or less closed but really not to the same extent. And I would like to begin with you, Kambiz, if I may, and ask a question.

KAMBIZ HOSSEINI: Sure.

MR. GEDMIN: What is it – I want to start very basic – what do Iranians want and need? That is to say, we're going to talk about North Korea, but North Korea is arguably far more closed than Iran. In Iran, you have people – businesspeople, students, academics and scholars who regularly flow in and out of the country. They go to Dubai, they go to Erivan and Baku and Istanbul. We heard this morning, it's a big blogger nation, to some extent largely connected, so what in the world is it that Iranians want from people like you sitting here in Washington, D.C.?

MR. HOSSEINI: They want to laugh, probably, in the first place. (Laughter.) But information, accurate information is what they need. Whatever they get from state media, they don't believe. They don't trust their own state media, so they go to alternative sources like VOA, Radio Free Europe, or BBC Persian to see what's going on.

What do they need? In the first place, they want to be connected to the rest of the world. They feel isolated, and there is stuff going on outside somewhere they don't know anything about. So they want to break through and see and know what's going on.

MR. GEDMIN: You said that state media does not suffice, but then I'm always told that state media in Iran is not a monolith. It's not like North Korea, and as we just said, some Iranians do flow in and out of the country and are allowed to travel. What is it that you're competing against in state media and what is the nuance? What is there that's not classically authoritarian?

MR. HOSSEINI: When you say Iranian people travel outside and inside – when we say "Iranian people," we have to know, what people are we talking about? There are middle class, there are lower class and there are all kinds of people in Iran. People who voted for Mr. Ahmadinejad are lower-class people. They are not – they don't have money to go outside of Iran. And those are the people we're trying to reach out.

Middle class, yes, they watch us, they know us, they believe what we do. They agree with what we do. What we're trying is to reach out to those people that can't actually go out and – outside of here and know what's going on. And the way we do it, we – the only way people

can have access – I want to emphasize on this, in Iran and about specifically Iran – is downloading. That's the only thing they can have access to anything. They can't stream and watch anything on the net.

And what we do, and we've been able to do in my show, we designed the show that was web-friendly. We spread it out inside Iran through forums and social media in pieces. And people were able to download those pieces of the shows and put them together so they could watch the whole show, you know? And they enjoyed it because – and we have the largest Facebook – Iranian Facebook page right now. It's higher than Mr. Mir-Hossein Mousavi, the opposition leader. And it's funny the satirical show could reach this high.

And the success of what I do and what our show is doing, what VOA is doing by this show, shows what people – there is the page; you can see. We have almost 300,000 people on that page right now-290-, and I could go to the – I can log in and show you some insights of how many people are reaching out with that numbers.

This success, Jeff, shows that – what people in Iran need and what are – they're thirsty to get information, and we are giving it to them by satire.

MR. GEDMIN: So what – say a word about the show. What are you giving to them? How are you touching this chord? Because it's not easy to do. What's the trick, what's the secret, what's the magic of why this is so popular?

MR. HOSSEINI: Well, we started to – I come from that society. I am one of those guys who shared the same pain with them. I grew up after the revolution. I – my family live in Iran. I share those same values with those people. I know what they need. When I do this show and I create this show, when I look at the camera, I talk to myself, an 18-years-old kid who was sitting in a small room in a small city in Iran, thirsty to get information. I produce this show for myself.

Q: (Off mic.)

MR. GEDMIN: Let me ask you this – I'll get our other panelists in just a moment – but you're here. How long have you been here?

MR. HOSSEINI: Ten years.

MR. GEDMIN: Ten years. And is there a part of the audience inside Iran who says, he's not here anymore or he's in the United States or he's working for the United States government. Does that hurt you?

MR. HOSSEINI: Yes and no. Yes, because there is this VOA label right here that you're Voice of America, and no because they listen and they watch what we say, you know? And they use their common sense and they judge. So this all depends about the content and what we do and what we say, so –

MR. GEDMIN: Kambiz, thank you, we're going to come back to you. Andrei, North Korea is a more closed society. Could we start with the basic, the first thing I asked Kambiz? What is the baseline and what is that people, ordinary citizens, as best you know, want to know, need to learn, are curious about the world, the region, the United States, that they don't get?

ANDREI LANKOV: Well, honestly, they get nothing. Very simple answer, because it's not a closed society, it's not – it is usually described as a Stalinist society, but many – in many regards, it's possible to say that Comrade Kim Il-Sung, now late for 15 years but still officially an eternal president of the republic, managed to be more Stalinist than Stalin himself. I believe nobody has ever been so successful in controlling information ever in history like, not Kim Jong-Il, but his late father.

Look, we had a society where if you possess a radio-set with free tuning, you are committing a political crime, five to 10 years of imprisonment. It still technically is the case. Actually, it has changed. It was a society where 80 foreign publication, including publications from other Communist countries, was – any kind of foreign publications – they are off-limit for people without security clearance.

So in order to read People's Daily or Pravda back in the '70s, North Korean had to have a security clearance, because it was dangerous. It was a society where nobody was allowed to travel overseas. And you probably heard about students – North Korean students in the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries. Few people are aware that in 1960, North Korea essentially recalled back all their students. And only since the late '70s, they began to send again in very small numbers.

Plus, you have unusually tough system of surveillance and secret police which is virtually everywhere. So the official picture which existed until, say, roughly 15 years ago was very simple. North Korea is a paradise and envy of the world, the most prosperous society. All news about the outside world was bad. The worst place in the world was, of course, South Korea, a starving American colony.

In math books, people were asked to solve questions like, South Korean city is suffering under the yoke of the two-legged, wolf-like American imperialist bastards – it's much shorter in Korean. Yes, in this city – (inaudible) – let's say 5,325 students, of who, say, 1,327 are polishing shoes of the American two-legged, wolf-like imperialist bastards and, say, 2,000-something are begging for food. What is the – you know, it's a mess – yeah, four or five, you have to work out proportions.

MR. GEDMIN: Can I ask you – that is, of course, what is communicated in this very restrictive environment. Now, I remember traveling a lot in Eastern Europe in the 1980s. Now, it's not the same and you're going to jump in and say it's not comparable –

MR. LANKOV: It's not the same.

MR. GEDMIN: But I also recall, in that not-comparable situation, that as heavy and intense as the propaganda was, everybody pulled you aside and said, don't worry, we don't believe that.

MR. LANKOV: Yes, nobody believe it.

MR. GEDMIN: Now, in North Korea, is it your judgment, based on study but also living and working there – is this actually believed and internalized by a majority of citizens?

MR. LANKOV: Unfortunately, until roughly 20 years ago, yes, because they were much more cut from the outside world than (when I was growing ?) in the Soviet Union. Indeed, nobody believed official story. Nobody. But it's not – it was not the case in North Korea.

However, in order to keep this surveillance system, it's very expensive. You need money, and the economy collapsed in the early '90s. They had no money to pay enforcers, plus there is a great deal of smuggling through the Chinese border. Chinese border is essentially unprotected. It's much more now, much better protected now. Used to be unprotected.

So information began to get in. Many people essentially became refugees during the famine, when half-a-million to one million people starved to death in the '90s. Roughly a quarter-million North Koreans went to China, and they came back with stories about Chinese success and stories about the outside world.

And people began to smuggle shortwave radios, which are technically illegal, but because country suddenly became very corrupt – when it was perfect Stalinist state, it was not very corrupt. It didn't make sense for an official to be corrupt in a Stalinist state. Now, it does make a lot of sense.

So you can basically – even if somebody discover you to be in possession of radio, you can just pay a small bribe and keep it.

MR. GEDMIN: Can I ask you – forgive my ignorance, but how many people in North Korea have access to Internet? Five people, 11 people, 22 –

MR. LANKOV: Last time – maybe slightly more. Last time I checked, they – I would not bet on that – last time I checked, they said they have about 100 IP addresses in the country. So I would say it should be low hundreds.

MR. GEDMIN: Okay –

MR. LANKOV: Yes, but they have intranet, which is completely cut off from the outside world. They have their local system, which is absolutely in no way physically connected to the Internet.

And what is important and not widely understand in the – (inaudible) – in the United States. You know, just a small remark aside, over the last few months, I spent roughly half of

every single day talking to the freshly arriving refugees from North Korea. And what I myself was surprised to see, the level of penetration of computers. It's still very low, but it's much higher than I expected, myself.

You know, even in high school in the countryside, you would expect to have one or two computers. They are not connected, but they still have USB. They still have USB drives, which makes a difference, because it's now becoming possible to use modern – first time in history – modern technology. IT-based technology are becoming applicable in dealing with North Korea.

But even – what is much more important still – in the long run, it's a tremendous change, but now, I still believe it's still basically a very – an era of radio, of radio broadcast. But we should not forget about new opportunities.

MR. GEDMIN: And Walter Isaacson said this morning that the BBG is platform-agnostic and ruthlessly pragmatic, so thank you. We're going to come back, Andrei, and we're going to get in a moment to what bad guys are doing to block and impede and what good guys ought to be doing, but let's get to know our countries first.

Carlos, Cuba is not North Korea and it's not Iran either. What is it?

CARLOS A. GARCIA-PEREZ: It's a beautiful island 90 miles away from the Florida coast – (laughter) – where there is tremendous repression to any civil society – Andrei kind of made me feel good, I think we have more e-mail addresses than they do – where our challenge to deliver content to our audience starts from two airplanes that we have in the Keys – I think I'm the only guy in the agency that signs for jet-fuel invoices – to sending text messages.

We view ourselves as – when I first started this job a long time ago, three months ago, I thought that we were going – that the Martíns are the window to the Cubans, to the outside world. I have come to learn otherwise. We are the window to the outside world to the Cubans and to our audience, but we also are the window to the street across the street from the neighbors, from the town over.

We've come to learn, like a lady told us in a focus group – unsolicited, irrelevant to the focus group – the only way we find out about events in Cuba that are not related to sports or the Castro brothers or cultural, if it's happened before your eyes. So we have focused tremendously to report and broadcast events that happen in the island to the Cubans. Our goal is to become the number-one station in Cuba delivering the news to the Cubans.

MR. GEDMIN: Carlos, how do you know what Cubans think? I guess, if you mention a focus group, that didn't take place in Havana.

MR. GARCIA-PEREZ: It did not. (Laughter.)

MR. GEDMIN: How do you measure not only audience size but audience attitudes?

MR. GARCIA-PEREZ: That's a very good question. One of the things that we've done is we open the telephones to our audience. We have – we engage our audience now in our programming. They call us. They tell us what's going on. They are tremendously brave individuals. Some – we have a woman's show in the morning that the first week that we opened the telephone lines, she gave us her address. I'm here, and she knew the entire radio and TV Martí program, and it was amazing.

So through the telephone calls and e-mails that we get now, Jeff, we find out more about what our audience needs. We've done focus groups. We did focus groups in December, which are – they were targeted actually to find out how Cubans use text messaging and Internet. We met three days. We left – we had, like, six focus groups, and basically our conclusion was, they do have access to the Internet, but they use it to mail. They cannot browse, because they get censored or they can get some type of retaliation.

Mobile phones are like when you used to use pagers back in the '80s, maybe, or '90s. You get a phone call, you identify who's calling you, you hang up, you go to a public phone and you call back. They do text each other. It's expensive, but they use text among themselves and they use intranet, which is – intranet is within the island. So that's the challenges that we face. We are using our radio broadcasts to educate our audience on how to better use the Internet, how to use Twitter and Facebook.

MR. GEDMIN: Thank you, Carlos. We'll come right back. Chris, let's go over to you for a second. When we use these things at RFE/RL – texting and Facebook and social media – anything, actually – in our harder countries, we assume that authorities are monitoring and infiltrating and participating. Let me give you one example, by the way.

I can't prove what I think I know, but a year-and-a-half ago, in June, when the Green Movement was launched in Iran and tens of thousands of people were in the streets throughout the country, we got – and probably, Kambiz, you did, too, at Voice of America – we would get messages like – and they'd come through Facebook, they'd come through all sorts of media – we'd get a message conveying to us that we should make sure that people don't go to a demonstration on Thursday because snipers will be pre-positioned and there will be a massacre.

And as it would turn out, there were no snipers and there was no demonstration. And we suspected that that was old-fashioned, classic disinformation with new-media tools. Chris, would you say a word, not about how good guys and small-“D”-democrats, liberals, use these things, but how are authoritarians thinking about new media, new technology, social media? Pick a country or pick an issue.

CHRISTOPHER WALKER: Thanks, Jeff. I think I might just share a quick observation on the distinction between Iran, North Korea and Cuba, since that's on the agenda.

You indicated that Cuba isn't quite North Korea, and that's right. If you look at our findings, you'll find that North Korea in some ways is sui generis, for all the reasons that Andrei just described. It's the worst performer on our scale. If you look at the “not-free countries” we produce, it's all the way on the farthest side of the spectrum, for clear reasons.

If you look at Iran, I think some of the issues that Kambiz just touched on gives you a sense of the sort of sophistication that the authorities will use to prevent access to information. This includes what I would call different degrees of the nuisance factor. So you have a demand for information, people want the information.

The authorities either slow down Internet-connection speeds – it makes it very frustrating, requires those who deliver information to find new and nimble ways to get it through, requiring slicing and dicing along the lines of these downloads that people described. Also a nuisance; people do it, but it makes the access to the information weaker.

I'd include in this state media. This is another piece of the puzzle, while the same people who aren't downloading podcasts are probably watching state media out in the hinterlands. This would be the bread and butter, the political base of the authorities. It's a very important part of the equation, so when you look at the entire media pie, as it were, I think the authorities in Iran have been very clever in how to increase the nuisance factor in the face of great demand for this information.

MR. GEDMIN: Thank you, Chris. Tell us a little bit about how – you've done a study on this, you work with Libby at Radio Free Asia and us at RFE – how were authoritarians employing and deploying the new social media and new technologies to, as I said, to block, impede, infiltrate – to suppress their citizens, but also – Ken's topic, Ken Berman's topic – to keep information out?

MR. WALKER: Well, I think there is also a distinction here between regimes that simply reject information technology, like North Korea, those who haven't really put their chips on the Internet in new information technologies. There are a number of countries, several of which are in the news today, that by and large have made this choice.

And it's a very interesting point to consider, if you think about Egypt, for example. China certainly is in this category. They're trying to have it both ways – get the economic benefits without allowing meaningful political conversation.

MR. GEDMIN: Where does Russia fit?

MR. WALKER: Well, I should note that Freedom House about two months from now will release the new edition of its "Freedom on the Net" Internet assessment. Russia will be included there. Russia is a country that, for the time being, has in our view a partly free Internet. It's largely free. There are some looming challenges and issues that we see. I think there's a real concern that the potential for more meaningful political communication on public-policy issues will generate greater encroachments by the authorities.

So I think at the moment, they're in the middle. They can go in either direction, and there's a real concern on our part that they can make the wrong choices in the coming term, which would be a really dreadful development, given the degree of interest that certain

demographic groups in Russia have in the Internet, who, by the way, are turning away from state television.

If you look at 30-to-40-year-olds in Russia, they're fed up with the limits that you find in the content of state television. They're the ones who are turning to the Internet to find meaningful news and information as an alternative source.

MR. GEDMIN: Very good, thank you. I would like to open it up now. We have 35 minutes, up to 35 minutes for discussion. And you've raised your hand and you don't work for the BBG, the IBB, VOA, RFE – (laughter) – yeah, so we give you the floor.

Q: (Chuckles.) Okay, this is for – I don't know if I'm pronouncing your name right, Kambiz?

MR. GEDMIN: You have – first of all, you have to pronounce your own name.

Q: Okay, I'm Maha Swais. I'm from the MBN networks. Actually, with the new media department for Radio Sawa and Alhurra.

As we saw in Egypt, the revolution started – or, like, it was facilitated with the use of social media. But I know in Iran, it's not – I mean, they're not as, I guess, free to do that. Do you think that they will be able to ever start a revolution without the tools of social media? Are they ever going to be able to, kind of, mobilize?

MR. HOSSEINI: Without it?

Q: Yeah, like – or I mean, obviously they have Facebook and, you know, as we saw, you had – your fan page had 300,000 fans –

MR. HOSSEINI: Yeah.

Q: But I mean, like, with the censorship being a bit more strict?

MR. HOSSEINI: Well, let me remind you that the whole social-media revolution using Twitter and Facebook started from Green Movement in Iran last year, if you recall. And I think Iranian youth, they were the first youth in the world that they used Twitter and Facebook to get – and YouTube – to get their message out.

Without it, I don't – look, without Facebook, nothing is possible these days. (Laughter.) Seriously, we are on Facebook 24/7. I just – you know, I was in a plane from San Francisco last night, and it was funny, I went to the bathroom really quick coming back – it was U.S. Airways, they provide Internet – everybody was on Facebook. Everybody. It was like, you know – I was laughing – and including Iran.

People love Facebook. People – it's a new trend. I don't think that two, three years from now, we can – just like – in last five years, everything has changed because of the tremendous

success of Google and YouTube and Facebook and all that. They changed our life. And I don't think that – everybody has e-mail today, here, in this room, and everybody is going to have a Facebook account and Twitter account five years from now.

MR. GEDMIN: Kambiz, can you try this one for me, please? Walter mentioned this morning Malcolm Gladwell, and they're starting now a small industry of social and new-media skeptics. And of course, in a way, it's an easy target, because no one says – I didn't hear anybody say that social media is a panacea and it solves all problems, all places for all people at all times.

Could you say a word about Iran and the new technologies of social media? When you're thinking about doing what you're doing, which is providing information broadly in support of human rights, civil society, rule of law, democracy, what are the – as specific as possible, what can this new media do and what can it not do? Not in a theological debate, but what's the promised opportunity, but what are also the limits?

MR. HOSSEINI: Well, what social media and other formats, they can do, they connect people. And they connect us to people inside Iran. And they can collect their thoughts and share things. That's what we do in Facebook. We share our thoughts, we share videos, we share things. We share information.

And the only thing that is scary for me, honestly, is the money that the Iranian government is spending with this cyber-army that they have. And they are spending a lot of money organizing an army of people, organized army of people, that they are in social media and Twitter and they are trying to send out wrong information. And that's the only thing, actually, we fight against right now in social media.

Other than that, I think it's working for closed societies like Iran, because it's connecting people.

MR. GEDMIN: Thank you. Next question, please. The microphone is coming right to you.

Q: Hi, I'm Susan Schindehette and I just left TIME, Incorporated after 32 years. Hi, Walter. (Chuckles, laughter.) I was the top writer at People magazine, which is only interesting because that meant that I wrote for a weekly audience of 43 million. And when you were asking, what are the limitations of social media, I'm platform-agnostic and I believe that Twitter is a tool. And what I'm doing is a website that is the People magazine equivalent for 3 billion people who are never heard from in mainstream media.

And I think when things are really going to get interesting – we're just using little flip cameras in the hands of NGOs which can be uploaded and professionally produced so that audiences really want to see the content. And this is the window that opens up – you know, as you know, guys like Clay Shirky and Zuckerman at Global Voices are worried that we're hardening silos, in a way.

It's wonderful to have all this information being disseminated within communities. It absolutely has to be done, but I see it as a first step, and I think where this is really going to get interesting is when we start connecting people on opposite sides of the world, not as institutions or causes or problems or charities, but as real human beings.

And I think you started to see it with Cairo. I was down at the demonstration in New York outside the UN, and there were a lot of Americans who were watching Al Jazeera because it was the only place they could really get information about the other side. So I just wanted to toss that into the hopper in terms of platform-agnostic.

I showed this to Bob Boorstin at Google. I presented at the U.S. Center for Citizen Diplomacy, and he was talking about exactly what you're saying, about the repression. And he said, yeah, this will work over the long haul. It would. If you get this in the hands of a tracker and the kid uploads in hours with a raw video to us, by the time he gets to the border checkpoint, it's gone and it's not traceable.

MR. GEDMIN: Thank you. I'm going to take the liberty of asking Enders Wimbush a question, if I may, because Enders is a governor of the BBG and he is a former director of Radio Liberty and he is – which makes him a kind of old-media/new-media guy at the same time.

And Enders, it seems to me – now, I'm going to overreach for sake of argument and suggest that a key part of the mission of U.S. international broadcasting is to promote the free flow of information, ideas, promote this connectivity we're talking about. But it's also to promote a certain set of values.

We have – one of our services – I'll tell you which one, the Tajik service, where the director came to some associates of mine and said, we're doing social media and we have so much connectivity and collaboration and cooperation, the audience is really talking to each other. And it's all Islamic extremists. They love it, they use it, they occupy it, they dominate it.

And when we were talking about Egypt, it seems to me – again, an overreach. I exaggerate for effect for the point of conversation. The social media may well connect people, inspire people, mobilize people, bring people to bring down an unjust regime. But it doesn't necessarily, does it, inculcate, promote, deepen, internalize, liberal – broadly speaking – liberal values that at least help assure that what comes next is more liberal and not more authoritarian?

Could you take the microphone? I mean, you did this during the Cold War. You didn't have new media, but as I understand, you were interested not just in imparting information but also providing a kind of intellectual and values nourishment to people who had a vision of something different and better.

ENDERS WIMBUSH: Yes, thank you, Jeff, that – I find myself in aggressive agreement with just about all the assertions in your question. I am one of – I am one of the new social-media skeptics, not because I –

MR. GEDMIN: I didn't say that you're a social media – by the way – (chuckles).

MR. WIMBUSH: – but for precisely the reasons that you have raised, it seems to me that the question that we have to ask – and I can tell you, the board wrestles with this – the question we have to ask is, how does it advance the goals of American foreign policy? And how does it propagate the kinds of values that that foreign policy espouses simply by connecting people?

Is the whole idea of connection and engagement sufficient to achieve those goals? I am not certain it is, and I wrestle all the time with where the connective tissue is. So I can't answer this exact – I can't answer this explicitly. I'm not – I'm learning, I'm here and enjoying it.

But I can tell you, in the old broadcast environment, the broadcasts that we put into the Soviet Union, for example, that I was responsible for were drenched in values of one kind or another. And it was very – it was done very conscientiously, the idea that the very act of broadcasting into a controlled-monopoly media environment was inferential in its values.

But we loaded up our broadcasts with discussions of liberal values, democracy, great thinkers – I mean, all the sorts of things that seem to me – do not necessarily go into new social-media activities. But I don't know.

MR. GEDMIN: Enders, thank you. Let me, if I may, extend and take the liberty of asking Walter Isaacson a question. And now that I'm leaving RFE/RL, I can ask the chairman a question and not worry about whether he's mad at me about the question I've asked.

Walter, you said something this morning in compliment to Paul's presentation about, this is a model and template of what we do want for U.S. international broadcasting. I don't know if you used the word integrated, but you suggested something like that. And you still used the word journalism.

And this morning, I was in my cab and I heard NPR doing an advertisement. And NPR said – I'm paraphrasing – we still do reporting and fact-based journalism, as if others would have them do differently or abandon that. Could you help us – we're going to come back to Andrei, come back to Carlos, come back to the audience – but as we're thinking about the mission of U.S. broadcasting – the values, the needs of the audience – how do we calibrate this? What's the right – what's not enough, what's too far?

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah, and it ties in with what Enders just said in your original question, which is whether connective technologies are inherently democratizing or whether or not it helps to integrate them with other things.

I think that's a very theological question, your first one. On balance, connective, sharing technologies that allow the flow of information between people tend to be, over the long run, democratizing and liberalizing, because they do empower people. Whether it's Gutenberg's printing press or the Internet, it allows a flow of information that then allows individual empowerment, which brings the arc of history towards democracy and liberal values.

However, it is a long arc of history and Islamic fundamentalists or, you know, repressive regimes can dominate social and connective technologies and use them for their own purposes. So it's not inevitable or inherent in any technology that leads to a certain direction. In fact, technologies can be used for good or bad purposes, as people use them, which I think was the thrust of what Enders said.

Therefore, it's why I liked what Paul presented. If we thought connective technologies in and of themselves would democratize this world, we could actually just step aside and let Facebook and Google groups do everything, and we wouldn't need to be part of this conversation.

But what Kambiz does or what Paul does or what we do is say, let's integrate these connective technologies with very good journalism, with an explanation of values and America's values, let's infuse the conversation with what we believe in, in terms of democracy, liberty, individual empowerment and America's foreign policy values, so that these connective technologies won't become an echo chamber where, perhaps, the bad guys can dominate, but we'll have infused in them journalism that is fact-based and values that reflect American foreign policy, so we're not ceding this connective technology environment to people whose values we don't fully share.

MR. GEDMIN: Thank you. Chris, we're going to get you in. Then we're going to go back to the audience and urge you to pick on Andrei and Carlos, who are getting only there for a moment. Chris?

MR. WALKER: A very quick observation on this point. I think, for the example that was raised on Iran – I think this may apply to Egypt as well – it's clear that social media has played a role in the stage of democratization we're witnessing. I think if we look at other examples of democratic change, even in the recent past, the really tough slog comes in the institutional change.

And I think the research and the assessments on how these connecting technologies impact, say, meaningful change of the judiciary or state media over time, that's a large, open question. You only have to look as far as Ukraine, which, if you look at Freedom House indicators, probably had in its mix of democratic ingredients a few advantages over Egypt today. And they're having their own tough go right now. So nothing's a given.

And I think the way in which social media can be leveraged in addition to the traditional ways of mobilizing and keeping people engaged with the spirit of democratic values and democratic change is something we haven't fully come to grips with yet.

MR. GEDMIN: Chris, thank you. I was going to pick on John Fox because he's standing and tall but I don't know if he was actually first. Well, Heather, give it to John first, right there, and then we'll work our way forward. He's –

Q: Thank you. Yeah, a question each on North Korea and Cuba, if I may. On North Korea, what do you think are the most effective kinds of programming for the international broadcasters to be sending in?

And on Cuba, what does the – what's the status now? Could you give us an update on the Cuban regime's jamming and countermeasures? Expand a little bit on what you did say and what new measures the U.S. is undertaking and what's in the pipeline on that front. Thank you.

MR. LANKOV: So talking about the programs: First of all, I would say news and all kinds of information related to South Korea because North Korean audience is generally very much interested in the outside world, to an unusual degree. But their major interest is about South Korea. And essentially, when we are talking about North Korea, it's their peculiarity. They have a vulnerable spot: the existence of South Korea, which used to be a poorer part of the country and now has a per-capita income between 15 and 50 times greater. And they believe that this difference, in the long run, is what will decide the outcome of the North Korean problem.

So North Korean audience want to learn about news and everything about the outside – life on the outside world but above all, life in South Korea.

Plus, I would say, maybe more than culture – popular culture to which expanded to because they are cut off from the modern culture to some extent. But major kind of interest should be in South Korean society, South Korean life and political views. Thank you.

MR. GARCÍA-PÉREZ: I want to answer, first, Jeff – I did not answer the focus groups before. They're recent arrivals; they're not held in Havana like Jeff – they're not trying to imply. But they're recent arrivals, more than – not more than three months since they got into the United States. And that's how we picked our focus groups.

On the jamming question, that's, I guess, the most fun that I have since I started this job. It's the never ending story: Do they jam us? They don't jam us? The only way I can answer that is by telling you, from my experience working at the station, what goes on. And again, we get phone calls from all over the island on AM. Short-wave continues to be important for us because they do listen to short-wave. AM we think is jammed in Havana – not purposely but it's kind of difficult to get there.

I was at our marathon station, our transmission station, two weeks ago. And we unplugged the transmitters to see what kind of noise we were getting from Cuba and it was silent. So maybe that day, they knew we were there and they would say, let's fool them. We never know.

We know from the audience and from the calls that we get that they listen to us. Ways that we're getting away from the jamming issue and the jamming stories is through new media. We are texting; we are receiving Twitters; we are Tweeting. And we are receiving e-mails and exchanging information through e-mail.

I think that's really where our great opportunity is. There's a new cable that Chavez has laid out from Venezuela to the island of Cuba. They were done laying it out on February 9<sup>th</sup>, my mother's birthday. So I called, I say, Mom, happy birthday. And we think that that's going to expand the access to Internet and new media inside the island.

It seems like this is something that they're not going to be able to stop. The regime has already stated that they have bloggers on the Internet and on cyberspace blogging their cause and their ideas. So it's a constant war.

And I say "war" because the chief cyber police from the Cuban regime was in a – they caught him on a YouTube video and he was saying that the revolution's new battlefield is the Internet. And it was 55 minutes; I took notes. And believe me, we understand what our battlefield is and we're pursuing it aggressively.

MR. GEDMIN: Carlos, before we go back to the audience, what – I'm going to ask you a question not about what you think but what you feel because you're connected to this issue. When, one day, the Cuban – the Castro regime falls and a more liberal order emerges, what do you think people will be saying about Martí and Cuban Broadcasting? Big role? Small role? Intellectual roles? Popular effect? What do you imagine? What do you think?

MR. GARCÍA-PÉREZ: I think they're going to say that we got the truth from Radio and TV Martí. It was jammed; it was – sometimes, there was a lot of rhetoric because we do have programs where we have a lot of rhetoric. We're changing that.

But I think they're going to say, they provided us, again, the window. They were the window for the outside world and they were the window to the events that are happening across the street. I think it's going to be a very important role because we are also – and I feel; like, you asked me what I feel – I feel our current broadcast methods, radio and TV, are going to be very useful to educate our audience on how to use social media and the opportunities that are there.

We're actually using it as we speak. We have a show where we announce or broadcast articles that are being sold on the gray market in Cuba. And we do – that show started for a half hour; now, it's an hour long. The e-mails and calls that we get inquiring about the show and where things are being sold are incredible. But we're also taking the opportunity to tell our audience, look, you can go on the Internet when you can do that and look it up yourself. So I think that's – it's an educational role and providing information. It's going to be a very important role.

MR. GEDMIN: Thank you. Next question, please. Let's take this gentleman here because I think he was first and then this gentleman here in the third row. Thank you, Heather.

Q: Charles Silver, Department of State. I'm clean. Three of you have begun by going back to the Cold War. And let me do that for a minute. During the '80s, there were really two ways that the Soviets kept USIA from fulfilling its 1980 mission of telling America's story to the world. One was through jamming but the other was through a very large and well organized disinformation campaign.

Cutting to the Internet, we have a large discussion that's been going on today about technical obstacles. But one of the other sides of it is sort of the parallel to misinformation. A lot of what is out in social media is absolute nonsense. Let me offer two bits of evidence.

My last overseas assignment was Indonesia and I would meet reasonably mobile, intelligent Indonesians who were confident and would cite evidence on the Internet that 9/11 was a plot of the Mossad and the CIA to embarrass Muslims. If you want to look closer to home, an astonishing percentage of the American people believe that the president was not born in the United States and he's a Muslim.

So my question is this. On the editorial policy side, how do broadcasters who are working in social media deal with the fount of misinformation out there? Do you take it head-on and risk validating it – “if BBG says it’s not true, it must be”? Or do you ignore it and hope that your voice is louder?

MR. GEDMIN: Anybody?

MR. HOSSEINI: Look, social media is – we can’t stop social media. It’s growing. We can’t do anything about it. It’s out there. Islamic fundamentals or whoever says what they say – they can say whatever they say. But my experience: We created a product in this platform that is attractive and people are watching and listening and we have more audience than they do right now.

So it’s a competition. It’s out there. They can say whatever they say. We have to get creative and in an – it’s not a regular market. We have to think outside the box and get creative and – to be able to deliver the message.

(Off mic.)

MR. GARCÍA-PÉREZ: I think it’s a different ballgame. The world has changed. And I think, us, as United States and international broadcasters, can use these platforms not to be paternalistic about our values but to provide platforms where these issues can be fully discussed. And I think if these tools are used correctly – and you’re right; Enders has a very good point too – but if we use them correctly and we put resources into them, they could be very fruitful and beneficial to the world.

MR. GEDMIN: Now, Art is over here lobbying for his constituents. (Laughter.) This gentleman was – really, 10 minutes ago, so let’s get him and then we get your group. So this gentleman here first. Heather is coming to you with a microphone.

Q: Thank you for the conference and I find the example of China very interesting because even though they have that authoritarian regime, in order to have a successful economy, in order to have successful businesses, they have to be in contact with the world.

So this question is for Professor Andrei Lankov and for Carlos García-Pérez. In the case of Cuba, the Cuban state is trying to promote international trade with more countries. But if you have international trade with other countries, you need to keep in contact with your clients. You need to keep in contact with the people you have – to the people you are selling your goods.

You can have this by Internet, for example. The Cuban state is promoting tourism. But when the tourists are in Cuba, what do the visitors want? They want to see their e-mail addresses. They want to go to Facebook.

In the case of North Korea, I think the decision more dramatic because the government is so desperate for getting cash. In fact, I saw the North Korean – the official webpage of the North Korean government, because they do have an official webpage – and there's a section for tourism. They organize, once a year, a trip – business – a trip for business. What they do is they select like eight or 10 people; they all meet up in Shanghai; you pay \$4,000 cash – not credit, all in cash – and they take you to Pyongyang, to Pyongyang and you have meetings with all of the top officials of the government. A funny thing is that they offer you access to Internet. If you are a visitor for business, they offer you access to Internet because they know that you need, as a businessperson, to have contact with the world.

What I was wondering, in the case of North Korea and Cuba, is this necessity of the governments for getting cash, for having businesses. When, at some extent, at some point in the future will be like a hope for the opening of the countries' information or other stuff? Thank you.

MR. GARCÍA-PÉREZ: In the case of Cuba, you're right. International trade is going to forcibly open the access to Internet, although they still control who gets access to the Internet or not. I mean, I'm not an expert on the future but certainly this cable that's been laid out from Venezuela to Cuba with a huge broadband, it's going to have – it's going to open the information to a lot of the Cubans inside Cuba.

In terms of the tourists – and I think I understood correctly your question; if not, please repeat it – in terms of the tourists having access to the Internet, they do have access to the Internet in the hotels and other television stations that are not available to the regular Cubans. For example, two weeks ago, they took away from the hotels CNN en Español. They don't broadcast that anymore into the hotels in Cuba. Why? We have no idea.

So we always try filling those gaps and provide the information that we know that Tele Rebelde and Cubavision do not provide. I don't know if I answered your question or not but –

MR. LANKOV: Well, I think it's a sort of common misperception that North Korean government needs economic growth. It's unique in being one of very few countries, very few governments in the world which don't put – which does not put high priority on achieving economic growth. It doesn't mind having some money coming from overseas.

But the bottom line is that money should come on their conditions. They believe that all contacts with the outside world are inherently dangerous because all kind of these contacts might

get them killed. And unfortunately, it's usually described as paranoia. It's not paranoia. It's a very rational, pragmatic assessment of their unique situation.

So Internet access exists in few major international hotels, plus foreign embassies from 2004 and foreign economic offices have access to Internet. It was provided by a German company and directed by former East German officials, of all people. But talking about you, there are still – in spite of what I just said, there is one important thing. They are very skeptical about growth but they still have a hope, a great hope which is shared by many regimes of this type coming from – starting from Chairman Mao and Comrade Stalin.

They believe that the major problem of their economic difficulties is not their exceptionally ideologic economic and social system – irrational, crazy, inefficient. They believe that the major issue is that they have not discovered the right technology. This type of regimes are technological fetishists. They believe that there must be somewhere some technology which will solve all the problems.

And this is good because had Kim Jong Il been a really evil, bad dictator – completely, 100 percent, not just 95 percent but 100 percent – he would simply ban all computers in the country. But he cannot do it because he and his people believe that there must be some wonder technology which will – sooner or later, might solve their problems.

And because they have some access – very superficial – to the outside world, they also are not very knowledgeable about the outside world. They have heard about wonders of IT and they suspect that this technology, future wonder technology, must, must be somehow related to computers. So they do try to spread computers in the country. They do support spread of IT technologies but as long as they don't have Internet access.

And this is good because I believe that they are digging their own grave by doing so. But I don't mind. Thank you.

MR. GEDMIN: Chris, on the subject of digging one's own grave – I'm thinking about what Andrei just said and something that Walter said as well. Could one argue, actually – I mean, if you consider, Andrei just said that the North Koreans don't want any contact with the outside world and other authoritarian regimes do want contact, often for commercial and business reasons, but they want to manipulate it and control it.

But could one argue that in the long game, these regimes are done because the openness that this new media promotes is the oxygen for the bottom-up stuff, the grassroots, the civil society? And it really is ultimately mild poison or deadly poison for those who are trying to control these things?

So if you look out 10, 20, 30 years, isn't time on our side? And isn't the new social media going to undo a lot of these authoritarian structures one way or another anyway?

MR. WALKER: I think it all depends on your timeline. I'd like to think that yes, the answer is, over time.

But I'd play devil's advocate just for the sake of argument, which, if you look back 10 or 15 years ago, the conventional wisdom on China was, economic growth, a growing middle class would inexorably lead to greater information, greater competition, a desire by the middle class for more responsiveness from the government.

I think it's happening, right, so we're going to assume China is growing. I use China as the example because it's the most interesting exhibit of these countries. At the same time, there's a lot of evidence to suggest that the authorities have been very adept at adapting and finding new ways to not entirely suppress information but to manage it in a way that marginalizes politically consequential news and information.

Not for everyone – they realize they can't control everything. But they control what they believe is critical through multilayered Internet filtering and other technical controls, through a very sophisticated method – commercially-based control in traditional media, still maintaining control of state media.

So I think as a snapshot, looking right now, one could argue that the Chinese authority is doing pretty well in creating obstacles to meaningful information. Not entertainment but meaningful information – the sorts of things we've been talking about.

Over time, I'm relatively confident that the wheels will come off the wagon. I think the issue is are we talking about two years or 10 years or 20 years? There's a big difference between those. If it's 20, the strategic calculations for how we're interacting with China, China's role in the world is dramatically different than if it's in the next handful of years. Of course, you can't predict that but –

MR. GEDMIN: Fair enough. We have time for one more question. And all right, to your side of the room.

Q: Hi. Steven Starr, Citizen Global. I just wanted to thank everybody for their enthusiasm for what was presented earlier. It's very exciting for us to be here.

I have a couple of comments. First of all, it's very interesting to note that the turning point in Cairo was when they shut off social media. And that was a moment where people couldn't stay home, and they went out in the streets – just an interesting observation.

But the word that hasn't been mentioned here today which I really think is valuable is co-creation. The best evidence of co-creation on the Internet today is Wikipedia – 3.5 million communities interested in a specific subject collaborated on that subject. When people talk about expertise and they talk about the concern about the randomness of social media, I just want to make the observation and open it up to comment.

The tools that allow people to story-tell online, that enable them to bridge the tension between traditional command-and-control media and social media, is the future of the narrative of this planet. I would argue that what we're seeing is an explosion in the impulse to create. We

have seen the technology grow proficiently, but we haven't seen the story-telling tools and the professionalization come forward quite as it should.

Just another note would be, imagine a journalist supervising a community on the Human Rights Project. Imagine a documentarian with an outpouring of contributors all over the world on any given subject. There are many, many ways for the concern around the randomness and the lack of voracity and the inability to vent and prove facts in social media – they're all coming.

They're all in front of us, and I would just suggest that the impulse to create is a liberatory impulse, and if people are going to create against authoritarian ideas, you will see that the smell of that is easily spotted and the reaction to that is easily deployed. So I think there's a noble future in front of us for this social media, and I'm very excited to be here today. Thank you.

MR. GEDMIN: Thank you. We're going to let that stand as a statement. Before I give it over to one of our colleagues, Governor Dennis Mulhaupt, for a concluding word, thanks to all of you for coming and spending the morning. Dennis as well, thank you as well. Thank you to Diane Zeleny and her team and her counterparts at the BBG and the other broadcast groups for organizing this wonderful program and intelligently crafting it.

And before I give up my microphone, Andrei, I have one question to you: Do you still – first – I have three questions – first, do you still have friends in North Korea?

MR. LANKOV: Frankly, no, because all my friends, old friends, I think it's very dangerous to communicate with them. Then, a couple of people get out of the country. They manage sometimes to send a short memo, but it's at maximum telling essentially, we are here, we are still alive.

MR. GEDMIN: Then let me ask you this question, because you know this country. You've lived in this country, you have a passion – the others do too, of course. If one of your North Korean contacts or acquaintances or friends were here with us today –

MR. LANKOV: Yep.

MR. GEDMIN: – knowing the subject, knowing the purpose, knowing the mission, what would they want people to know? Succinctly, what would they want this group to hear about, about their needs and what's happening in their country?

MR. LANKOV: Well, first of all, I – when you ask about friends, I thought you were asking about friends from high school, yes, from university, yes, because I have a lot of friends and very good contacts in the refugee community. And what do they want? Above all, they believe that the major thing is to bring information, as I have said, news and knowledge about the outside world.

I also say something which I don't share. There is a great interest about, you know, political rumors about North Korea itself. But you know, the ruling family, it sells very well

with North Korean refugees. Even so, I am sort of skeptical about it, but this is what they want to know about their own country. Unfortunately, they tend to associate it with the high-echelon politics, not the country in general. I don't see much interest, say, in many of North Koreans about the North Korean history, about how it has developed in such a way, and so on.

But there is a great deal, as I have said, interest in the outside world, in South Korea and in the current high politics of South – of North Korea itself.

MR. GEDMIN: I take it when they're interested in South Korea, they're interested in Korea and what Korea could be or what Korea could look like.

MR. LANKOV: Yes.

MR. GEDMIN: Thank you very much. Now, Dennis Mulhaupt is a member of the Broadcast Board of Governors. He is chairman of the RFE/RL group, and I invite him to the microphone, the podium, to offer a concluding word. Dennis?

DENNIS MULHAUPT: Well, thank you, Jeff, and thank you very much to the panel – Chris, Carlos, Kambiz and Andrei. I don't want to stand between you and lunch or you and getting back to work, but a couple of quick remarks.

First of all, this was mentioned earlier, but I want to say it again: This, I believe, is Jeff Gedmin's last official act in Washington as president of RFE/RL, of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Is that correct, Jeff? (Laughter.) I think it – publicly, and I just want to say on behalf of the board – I have the honor to chair the RFE/RL board, but on behalf of the BBG, thank you for your exceptional service, Jeff. (Applause.) And we know we'll be seeing a lot of each other, I hope, in the days, months, years to come.

I want to express my appreciation and that of my colleagues to Senator Reed for sponsorship of this event and to his staff for helping the coordination. I want to thank the Senate Recording Studio, the Senate Superintendent's Office and the Office of the Sergeant at Arms for their help in making this event a reality.

Most especially, thank you all for coming and for those of you that are watching online at [www.bbg.gov](http://www.bbg.gov). I hope we were able to give you some sense of the really important and dynamic work that's happening across U.S. international broadcasting today.

We are not like a private media organization. We have many of the same platform and technological challenges, but as you know, we can't make decisions alone on the basis of private-sector models. New technologies, new tools and new ways – and the winds of democratic change are transforming everything we do, and our board is very aware of this and talks about it every single day.

We want to make sure that we respond boldly and in a cost-effective way, and we want to promote the values that Enders has talked about – that we all talk about when we get together. I just want to say that that's the one content for our – the one constant for our mission – the

commitment to free and independent journalism and to the promotion of values of freedom and liberty.

These are things that we stand for, and we thank all of you that are on the frontlines, doing that in such an important way. And we are grateful that in the last few weeks, we've seen such wonderful demonstrations of the success of our mission and our people that put their lives, in many cases, and their families' lives on the line to provide the important – to do the important work that we undertake.

So thank you all for coming. We look forward to seeing you all again, and thanks so much for being here. Good afternoon. (Applause.)

(END)