

THE IMPACT OF RADIO ON AFRICAN DEMOCRACY

JOINT HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEES ON AFRICA AND
INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

—————
JULY 15, 1997
—————

Printed for the use of the Committee on International Relations



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

43-775 CC

WASHINGTON : 1997

For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402
ISBN 0-16-055692-9

H461-5

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

BENJAMIN A. GILMAN, New York, *Chairman*

WILLIAM GOODLING, Pennsylvania

JAMES A. LEACH, Iowa

HENRY J. HYDE, Illinois

DOUG BEREUTER, Nebraska

CHRISTOPHER SMITH, New Jersey

DAN BURTON, Indiana

ELTON CALLEGLEY, California

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida

CASS BALLENGER, North Carolina

DANA ROHRBACHER, California

DONALD A. MANZULLO, Illinois

EDWARD R. ROYCE, California

PETER T. KING, New York

JAY KIM, California

STEVEN J. CHABOT, Ohio

MARSHALL "MARK" SANFORD, South
Carolina

MATT SALMON, Arizona

AMO HOUGHTON, New York

TOM CAMPBELL, California

JON FOX, Pennsylvania

JOHN MCHUGH, New York

LINDSEY GRAHAM, South Carolina

ROY BLUNT, Missouri

JERRY MORAN, Kansas

KEVIN BRADY, Texas

LEE HAMILTON, Indiana

SAM GEJDENSON, Connecticut

TOM LANTOS, California

HOWARD BERMAN, California

GARY ACKERMAN, New York

ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA, American
Samoa

MATTHEW G. MARTINEZ, California

DONALD M. PAYNE, New Jersey

ROBERT ANDREWS, New Jersey

ROBERT MENENDEZ, New Jersey

SHERROD BROWN, Ohio

CYNTHIA A. MCKINNEY, Georgia

ALCEE L. HASTINGS, Florida

PAT DANNER, Missouri

EARL HILLIARD, Alabama

WALTER CAPPS, California

BRAD SHERMAN, California

ROBERT WEXLER, Florida

STEVE ROTHMAN, New Jersey

BOB CLEMENT, Tennessee

BILL LUTHER, Minnesota

JIM DAVIS, Florida

RICHARD J. GARON, *Chief of Staff*

MICHAEL H. VAN DUSEN, *Democratic Chief of Staff*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA

EDWARD R. ROYCE, California, *Chairman*
AMO HOUGHTON, New York
STEVEN J. CHABOT, Ohio
MARSHALL "MARK" SANFORD, South Carolina
TOM CAMPBELL, California

ROBERT MENENDEZ, New Jersey
DONALD M. PAYNE, New Jersey
ALCEE L. HASTINGS, Florida
JIM DAVIS, Florida

TOM SHEEHY, *Staff Director*
GREG SIMPKINS, *Professional Staff Member*
JODI CHRISTIANSEN, *Democratic Professional Staff Member*
SHANNON GAWRONSKI, *Staff Associate*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey, *Chairman*
WILLIAM F. GOODLING, Pennsylvania
HENRY J. HYDE, Illinois
DAN BURTON, Indiana
CASS BALLENGER, North Carolina
PETER T. KING, New York
MATT SALMON, Arizona
LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, South Carolina
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida

TOM LANTOS, California
CYNTHIA A. MCKINNEY, Georgia
GARY L. ACKERMAN, New York
ENI F.H. FALEOMAVEGA, American Samoa
DONALD M. PAYNE, New Jersey
EARL F. HILLIARD, Alabama
ROBERT WEXLER, Florida

GROVER JOSEPH REES, *Subcommittee Staff Director and Chief Counsel*
ROBERT R. KING, *Democratic Professional Staff Member*
DOUGLAS C. ANDERSON, *Counsel*
ELISE M. KENDERIAN, *Staff Associate*

CONTENTS

WITNESSES

	Page
Mr. Kevin Klose, Director, U.S. International Broadcasting Bureau	6
Ms. Evelyn Lieberman, Director, Voice of America	7
Mr. Kenneth Best, Publisher and Managing Director, the Observer Company Gambia Ltd., Liberian Observer Corporation, Monrovia	17
Ms. Kukuna Kerina, Program Coordinator, Africa, Committee to Protect Journalists	18
Mr. John Marks, President, Search for Common Ground	20

APPENDIX

Prepared statement of Mr. Kevin Klose	33
Prepared statement of Ms. Evelyn Lieberman	40
Prepared statement of Mr. Kenneth Best	48
Prepared statement of Ms. Kukuna Kerina	58
Prepared statement of Mr. John Marks	67

THE IMPACT OF RADIO ON AFRICAN DEMOCRACY

TUESDAY, JULY 15, 1997

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, JOINT WITH SUBCOMMITTEE
ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittees met, pursuant to notice, at 1:10 p.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC, Hon. Edward R. Royce, chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, presiding.

Mr. ROYCE. This joint hearing of the Africa Subcommittee and the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights will now come to order.

Today's hearing will examine the role radio plays in facilitating or frustrating the advance of democracy and human rights in Africa. On a continent with at least 2,000 different languages, radio is the primary means of transmitting vital information to African populations, as different languages and dialects can be accommodated inexpensively and efficiently. Poverty, a lack of literacy and logistical difficulties render television and the print media unlikely alternatives at this time.

Radio broadcasting is increasingly being used to advance democracy. Radio is the primary vehicle through which voters are told not only where and when voting will be conducted, but also the method they must use in casting their ballots.

Radio broadcasts of national news, but more often international news, inform citizens of the issues important to their lives. The Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, for example, sponsored candidate debates for the first multi-party parliamentary elections in 1994.

Radio broadcasts also have been the vehicle for alerting refugees of the location of food and shelter and lost relatives. The International Organization for Migration, Mozambique Radio project, for example, helped displaced persons to register for transportation back to their home districts. These broadcasts were important in bringing stability to that war-torn country.

Unfortunately, radio has had its negative impact as well. All too often African governments manipulate radio broadcasting for their own purposes. Biased government radio broadcasts have inhibited the free flow of information necessary for citizens to fully exercise their electoral choices. Broadcasts such as those by Radio Libre des Mille Collines in Rwanda in 1994 helped stir ethnic hatred. In

that case, broadcasts contributed to the killing of more than a half million people in an ethnic and political cleansing operation.

In our hearing today U.S. Government and private witnesses will tell us about the current uses of radio broadcasting in Africa. We will hear what role our government is playing in facilitating a more thorough and professional distribution of news through radio in Africa, as well as innovative radio programming to meet the needs of Africans involved in crisis.

We also will hear about U.S. efforts to make radio a better vehicle for enhancing democracy and human rights in Africa. In this regard, I am very interested in surrogate broadcasting in Africa, which would use African broadcasters to report on events in their own countries. Fostering this development, I believe, is crucial to providing necessary information for African citizens.

Again, we are pleased to share today's hearing with the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, and I invite that panel's chair, Mr. Chris Smith of New Jersey, to make an opening statement.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank Chairman Royce for his strong leadership on the question of freedom of broadcasting in Africa.

At the outset let me note that at Mr. Royce's suggestion I included in the Foreign Relations Authorization Bill a provision that USIA and the Broadcasting Board of Governors conduct a study on the feasibility of a separate Radio Free Africa. I am confident that we will keep this provision in conference, which as you know is underway right now at the staff level, and will soon be bumped up to the Member level. And I am looking forward to seeing the results of that study when it is completed.

I would also like to give credit to the Voice of America for the fine broadcasting they already do in Africa. VOA broadcasts have been very important in combating hate radio in Rwanda and elsewhere, and continue to be a source of very important and accurate and timely information.

I think it is important to distinguish between Voice of America, which is quite literally the official voice overseas of the U.S. Government and the American people, and the surrogate broadcasting services such as Radio Free Europe and Radio Free Asia, which are an attempt to provide a voice to the people of oppressed nations themselves.

Sadly, there are many African nations whose people do not enjoy freedom of expression. In these nations, it is appropriate to provide a service like Radio Free Asia, staffed by exiles and others who are intimately familiar with conditions in these countries, and provide the same news in other broadcasting services these people would provide themselves if and only if they had lived in a free society.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for taking the lead in this joint hearing, and I want to welcome Mr. Klose and Ms. Lieberman, and thank them for the good work that they do on behalf of broadcasting, both radio and television, and the good work they do on behalf of freedom and democracy.

Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Chairman Smith.

Now, at this time I would like to recognize the Members on the Africa Subcommittee who are present: Our ranking Minority Member is Mr. Robert Menendez from New Jersey; Mr. Donald Payne also of New Jersey is present; and on Mr. Smith's subcommittee Mr. Earl Hilliard of Alabama is present. And at this time let me ask Mr. Menendez if he would like to make an opening statement.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Perhaps there is no place on the earth where radio is as powerful or where radio has as great a listenership as it does in Africa. And in sub-Saharan Africa where much of the population is illiterate and where televisions are scarce, the tradition remains strong, and radio is the primary source of information for many people. So the need for unbiased radio programming is clearly tremendous.

The leader of South Africa's consciousness movement, Steven Biko, once said that the most powerful weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed. How true. In far too many African countries radio is controlled and used by the government or political parties to broadcast propaganda rather than as a resource for the African people. Whether we are speaking of Liberia, Rwanda, or Angola, we can find examples of radio being used as a political tool rather than as a community resource.

Rwanda is the most obvious example. In 1994, hate radio broadcasts by Radio Libre des Mille Collines promoted and encouraged ethnic Hutus to take up arms and murder their Tutsis neighbors, men, women and children.

In Liberia, Charles Taylor has the only radio station in the country, giving him a tremendous advantage over his political opponents in this month's election.

In Angola, all media are restricted by the State and journalists are subject to de facto State censorship. When we were in Angola members of the legislature noted the great need for independent media and radio broadcasts in Angola.

As African nations increasingly turn toward democracy, the United States and the international community need to promote independent radio programming early on as a necessary component for democratic development. Its absence in the presence of biased programming has proven to be an impediment to free and fair elections, healing in the case of ethnic conflicts, and in general democratic growth.

Instead radio can be a resource for the African people, not just to disperse the daily news, but to convey lessons about agriculture, the environment, health and democracy. Radio can be an educational tool for people in their daily lives, and a crucial resource in times of crisis. The high listenership of radio makes it a good resource for informing people during a time of crisis. We could potentially save thousands of lives over the radio waves, for example, by instructing people where to go to receive humanitarian assistance when such is needed, or to avoid armed conflict.

Now, there are some positive examples in Africa. In recent years both Ghana and Uganda have privatized their airwaves, and South Africa is making progress to offer independent broadcasting authority. The BBC and the Voice of America also have programs which help to bridge what I would term the information crisis in Africa.

The Voice of America beams 82.5 hours a week of broadcast to Africa in seven languages, reaching more than 20 million listeners. Yet the decline in resources for the Voice of America has begun to seriously impact its capabilities to operate in Africa.

Clearly, on a continent where there are 800 ethnic groups and 2,000 indigenous languages this is not enough. We have got to encourage and support African-led radio initiatives, and assist in the training of African radio technicians and journalists. But most importantly we must stress in our relationships with African leaders that a free press cannot be foregone on the road to democracy.

I want to thank our witnesses, this panel and the next, and appreciate the opportunity for this hearing, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Menendez.

Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and to Chairman Smith for calling this very important hearing dealing with the question of radio as it relates to democracy in Africa. It was really during my trip to Rwanda in 1991, that I realized the impact of radio on the people of that country. As we have heard from each of the speakers, and I have stated many times that Mille Colline, the radio that sits on the hill, was a vehicle used to broadcast "genocidal messages" which ultimately led to the death of hundreds of thousands of Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

In almost every village that I traveled to everyone owns a radio—you can see people hovering around a small box trying to get the only day-to-day information that is available in some of these very remote places.

I can think of many places where radio is vital even today, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the newly installed President Kabilla has promised that elections may be held within the next 2 years. Because of the vast size of that tremendous country and the low rate of literacy, the main vehicle will be the radio.

We look at Kenya where currently we have seen conflict because of public assembly bills where people are being restricted from meeting together by the government and the Kenya party which has the upper hand. Radio is going to be vital there. I was there a week ago on Sabah Sabah when up to 10 people were killed in rioting in the city; and Kenya, which was the most progressive in the move to remove colonial powers back in the forties and fifties with Joma Kenyan and all—to see them revert back to the situation that I saw there when I was there on that Monday a week ago is very sad. And so radio there would be extremely important.

And in Liberia where just this week there will be elections, and hopefully they will be transparent and free and fair, it is going to be very important there and has been during this time.

Radio is also important in Nigeria where BBC at one point was the only reliable source for local people to hear broadcast messages because the government controls so much of the media. And we know that there with the government of Abatcha, there has to be continued support for radio so that the people of Nigeria can get the message and perhaps will be able to be free again one day.

Finally, another example that comes to mind, as has been mentioned, in Malawi where radio contributed to a referendum that led to the multi-party democracy. At that time life-President Banda al-

lowed the radio to have debates and discussions with candidates and multi-partyism was voted in, and then in the election life-President Banda took the defeat and left and went back to his village. And so radio was extremely important in that important election.

Let me just conclude by saying that USIA, Voice of America, and many others have shifted their resources from post-cold war Europe to many countries in Africa and I can truly say that when used properly communications can help shape Africa's economies, education, economic and political development.

Thank you very much.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

Now let me ask Mr. Earl Hilliard of Alabama if he has a statement he would like to make, and then Mr. Jim Davis of Florida.

Mr. Hilliard.

Mr. HILLIARD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I am very happy that you have called this Committee together to discuss something that I feel is the best weapon for democracy. My background is radio. I have been involved in the radio business for about 15 years prior to my service here in the U.S. Congress. As a marketing person, I understand the impact of the voice. I understand the impact of information transfer. And understanding that impact, Mr. Chairman, I have never been able to understand why we will always have Voice of America, why we will have Radio Free Asia, but we never had Radio Free Africa.

If we are to promulgate democracy throughout the world, it is absolutely necessary that we have a free flow of information, and that free flow of information should be universal. As we know, one of the very first things that a dictator does when he takes control in a country is to control or seek to control radio and TV and every other source of communication.

In situations and countries where there is very limited democracy, we find that the government always is in control of the communication media. This is because of the powerful impact of radio, TV and the printed media. However, radio is the prevalent mode of communication in Africa. Therefore, it is very important that we have a system that is uniform, that is universal, and that is continuing so that we would be able to get the type of impact we need to expand and preserve democracy.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the opportunity to give that opening statement.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Hilliard.

We would appreciate it if witnesses would summarize their testimony and hold their presentations to no more than 5 minutes. This will allow more time for Members' questions and we invite witnesses, of course, to submit the full text of their testimony for the record.

It is a pleasure to introduce the members of our distinguished panel. Mr. Kevin Klose, director of the International Broadcasting Bureau, is responsible for all non-military international broadcasting by the U.S. Information Agency. His bureau oversees operation of Voice of America, Radio and Television Marti, and Worldnet Television, as well as all engineering, technical and support functions. A veteran journalist who spent 25 years with The Washington

Post, Mr. Klose previously headed Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty.

Ms. Evelyn Lieberman became the 23rd director of Voice of America last December. She came to her position from the White House where she served as Deputy Assistant to the President, and Deputy Press Secretary for Operations. In her communications career Ms. Lieberman previously headed the communications divisions at both the Children's Defense Fund and the National Urban Coalition.

Mr. Klose.

**STATEMENT OF KEVIN KLOSE, DIRECTOR, U.S.
INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU**

Mr. KLOSE. Chairman Royce, Chairman Smith, Members of the Committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to participate in this hearing on the impact of radio on African democracy. I am very pleased to be here to discuss how U.S. public broadcasting enhances the democratic processes in Africa. My colleague, Ms. Lieberman, will provide in greater detail the current activities of the Voice of America and its impact on Africa.

To just summarize my remarks, members of the panel, Mr. chairman, U.S. support for international broadcasting began in the 1940's with the Voice of America, and in the 1950's for Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty. The focus was on countering the spread of communism into Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union throughout the post-war period.

Broadcasting by the Voice of America to Africa was initiated in 1963 with a similar mission of providing an alternative source of news and information for millions of listeners on the continent. African audiences heard about the fall of communism in the democratic revolution in Eastern Europe largely from the broadcasts of the Voice of America. This exposure to the East European and other democratizing experiences may have had an impact on furthering the spread of democracy in Africa.

From my perspective as IBB director, and my previous position as president of Voice of America, Radio Liberty, and my years as a foreign correspondent and national correspondent for The Washington Post, I can say that international broadcasting is by far the most cost efficient means by which the United States can further democracy around the globe. From Belarus to Bosnia, from Chechnya to Zaire, our broadcasts symbolize the U.S. connection with truth and democracy for millions of listeners.

The U.S. Government-sponsored radio and television broadcasts are dynamic, and integral elements of U.S. foreign policy.

The International Broadcasting Bureau is responsible for coordinating the engineering and transmission operations of the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, TV and Radio Marti, and Radio Free Asia. Our ability to reach people in Africa depends in large measure on IBB's short wave and medium wave transmitters.

I would like to tell the Committee that 7 years ago we almost lost all our broadcast capacity to Africa due to the upheaval in Liberia which forced the shutdown and eventually the destruction of what was then the VOA transmission station, a very powerful relay

station in Liberia. However, our engineers immediately set up temporary transmitters in a variety of strategic locations and planned for construction of transmitters in other areas. With radio construction funds authorized by the Congress, we built powerful new short wave and medium wave facilities in Botswana and Sao Tome, and completed a new station in Morocco. Our Sao Tome facility began operating at full power in May 1996. It is 600 kilowatts, it is 12 times as powerful as the strongest AM station in the United States. This significantly improved VOA's capacity to project strong short wave and medium wave signals throughout Africa.

Our broadcasts to Africa originate in our studios here on Independence Avenue, but also include substantial segments from in-country correspondents, trainers and others, and Evelyn Lieberman will give you more detail on those issues.

What I would like to say is that we now transmit to the broadcast region via the following relay stations, and I think it is important to note that we blanket the continent with short wave and strong medium wave signals from Greenville, North Carolina; Kavala, Greece; Botswana; Morocco; Udorn in Thailand; and Sao Tome. And my prepared remarks include a listing of the transmitter stations and sites and the languages which are broadcast to Africa.

The IBB's greatest challenge is to continuously improve our method of distribution to accommodate changing listening patterns. With private stations now growing throughout regions of Africa, our office of affiliate relations is pursuing partnerships with the local independent broadcaster in recent years. Our network of VOA affiliate stations in Africa has grown to some two dozen partners. The VOA English, French, Portugese, Hausa and Swahili Services are all rebroadcast on private or public FM channels from Radio Gold in Accra, Ghana—to Radio Free Africa in Tanzania and elsewhere.

I would simply like to submit my entire remarks with the consent of the Committee, and I await your questions with interest.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Klose appears in the appendix.]

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you again, Mr. Klose.

Ms. Lieberman.

STATEMENT OF EVELYN LIEBERMAN, DIRECTOR, VOICE OF AMERICA

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Mr. Chairman, may I just correct one of your statements for the record? Most recently before joining the Voice of America in March I was Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff to President Clinton. You are one job short.

Mr. ROYCE. I stand corrected. I need to brush up and get a more current resume. Thank you.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Thank you, and I will try to read very fast.

Thank you for inviting me to participate in this hearing. For 34 years the Voice of America has served a vital role in Africa. In the early 1960's, then-USIA Director Edward R. Murrow traveled through the continent and returned home convinced of the dire need for news and information in the emerging African States. His goal in inaugurating Voice of VOA's Africa Division was to "bring

news of Africa to the citizens of Africa." Today this mission is more important than ever, and I am proud to say that Mr. Murrow's goal has been realized; VOA's African language broadcasts have become the most trusted source of news and information about African societies, about America and about the world. These broadcasts reach an estimated audience in the tens of millions.

Today, the Voice of America broadcasts in 52 languages, over 700 hours each week to about 100 million listeners. Our Africa Division now broadcasts 94 hours weekly in 10 languages.

The VOA's particular strength is its ability to understand and report news from parts of Africa that are rarely reached or understood by the commercial media. Daily broadcasts include a comprehensive round-up of African world and U.S. news, and policy toward Africa. Regional correspondent reports are filed from VOA bureaus in Abidjan, Nairobi, Cairo, and Johannesburg. The Africa Division maintains a network of more than 100 stringers, local reporters on the continent who bring listeners up-to-the-minute news about events affecting their lives, including local elections, genocide, civil war, famine, AIDS, and economic news. VOA features included information on agriculture, starting a small business, and African and American culture. We broadcast several hours of medical programming to Africa each week, providing listeners with an interactive forum to discuss diseases prevalent in the region, offering information and advice on health-related issues that would not be otherwise available.

Because of the local nature of coverage about Africa in Africa from the Africa Division, the Africa Division acts in large measure, unlike any other VOA division, as a surrogate broadcaster might, and hence our broadcasts to Ethiopia and Eritrea, and to reach a wider audience, in July of last year, VOA began broadcasting in Tigrinia and Oromiffa. Although Amharic is the official language of Ethiopia, Tigrinia and Orominffa are widely spoken in the region and initial feedback indicates a significant increase in the listenership in this critical region.

In response to the crisis in Eastern Zaire in 1996, the Central African languages of Kirundi and Kinyarwanda were inaugurated at VOA. These broadcasts are funded by a special grant from the USAID as part of an initiative to combat hate radio and prevent a repetition of the terrible genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

Some of the highlights of this service, of the Kirundi/Kinyarwanda service include: Programs on conflict resolution, refugee assistance, democracy, and a trauma and mental health series, a series of 12 features, written by a refugee trauma team from Harvard's School of Public Health, providing specific ways to deal with trauma; particularly with children who have been affected by war and by having to leave their homes.

The Family Reunification Program is particularly noteworthy. Last year VOA established a family reunification hotline beginning with daily announcements and messages concerning people who have lost contact with their loved ones during the Central African conflict. In one 2-month period, the service received over 2,000 faxes and letters. The Family Reunification Program broadcasts messages to assist families in their efforts to reunite families and

can claim at least 35 confirmed reunifications and a hundred relayed to our services through anecdotes.

We have responded favorably to requests from UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Save the Children, and World Vision to broadcast information on places where parents, separated from their children during the Zaire-to-Rwanda mass migration, should go to find their lost family members.

The VOA is among the most respected and widely listened to of all the broadcasts that can be heard in Africa. VOA listening rates, the percentage of adults who listen weekly, are far higher on average in Africa than anywhere else in the world. In Nigeria, for example, there are 12 million listeners; in Ethiopia, 6 million.

Throughout the continent, loosening of government controls have led to the development of independent FM radio stations in major cities. VOA has been in the forefront of the international broadcasting community in developing affiliate arrangements that will allow our programs to be heard on these popular new outlets. With affiliated arrangements in places like Dakaar, Accra, Kampala, Ouagadougou, Bamako, among other capitals, VOA can now reach larger audiences among the urban elites who are so vital to public opinion in these countries.

I know that this Committee and others have been considering the concept of creating a Radio Free Africa. I feel compelled to tell you that Radio Free Africa already exists in two forms. The first is a VOA affiliate named Radio Free Africa in Tanzania—a private commercial station run by a Tanzania Harvard Business School graduate—which simulcasts VOA Swahili to the Great Lakes communities south of Lake Victoria. We hope to expand this partnership to a medium wave transmission covering parts of nine nations impacted by continuing civil unrest.

The second place where Radio Free Africa broadcasts exist already is within VOA itself. The Radio Free concept historically refers to surrogate broadcasting or an intense focus on local and regional issues. VOA's African language services do just that. They always have. I firmly believe that we do not need a new broadcast structure and radio entity funded by U.S. tax dollars competing with VOA for scarce resources, for talent, for example, Kinyarwanda journalists, there are only so many of them, for prime-time broadcasting slots, for frequencies and—worst of all—for listeners. It takes a long time to build a reputation. Who broadcasts for America will be the question many listeners will have.

I agree that we need increased broadcasting to Africa and I will be looking at new ways within VOA to do just that, and I hope that you will all visit us at the Voice of America before you make any final decisions about Radio Free Africa.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be happy to answer any of your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Lieberman appears in the appendix.]

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you very much, Ms. Lieberman.

Let me start at this point, if I may, just in asking about your closing comments, where you warn against Congress establishing a Radio Free Africa, a surrogate broadcasting effort focused on just that in Africa.

Very generally, what percentage of VOA broadcasting in Africa is surrogate broadcasting, to use your own terms, focused on local and regional issues?

Ms. LIEBERMAN. I would say all of it.

Mr. ROYCE. In your view, all of it is focused on local and regional—

Ms. LIEBERMAN. I would say that the Africa Division, unlike any other division in the Voice of America, focuses equally on in-country stories, local stories, as it does on the U.S. and U.S. policy.

I have Steve Lucas who is sitting behind me, who is head of the Africa Division, and Negussie Mengesha who is head of the Central Africa Service.

Mr. ROYCE. Can I assume that your opposition to the concept of a separate Radio Free operation would not extend to Radio Free Asia?

Ms. LIEBERMAN. No. Well, here is my feeling about this. I will be candid. I came to Voice of America in March. By the way, I worked for Senator Biden, who was the force behind Radio Free Asia.

Mr. ROYCE. Right.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. And in looking at Radio Free Asia and the Voice of America I realized that we have competed for the same reporters. Some of the VOA reporters have been recruited by Radio Free Asia. We compete for some of the same time periods, and we have been able to work cooperatively, but I believe that it will take a lot longer to establish Radio Free Asia's reputation because VOA has been broadcasting to Asia for such a much longer time.

So my feeling is that it seems as if when the Voice of America does something well somebody wants to take it, and I say this respectfully, it seems like somebody wants to take it and make it into a separate entity. I assume that that is the sincerest form of flattery, but why are we creating something that we are already doing?

I would not use Radio Free Asia as an example. I would use our Africa Division because I do think it is unusual in that we perform as a surrogate broadcaster to Africa.

Mr. ROYCE. They could all be surrogate. I mean, you mention international news and U.S. news.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Well, that is our mission, to do—

Mr. ROYCE. So you would not say 100 percent surrogate?

Ms. LIEBERMAN. No, no, no. Of course not. But we do focus a lot more on local broadcasting in that particular division.

Mr. ROYCE. But the idea of surrogate broadcasting, certainly Radio Free Asia, is that we are broadcasting truth that sometimes challenges the party line, and there is little different emphasis there in terms of surrogate. I wonder if you could give me an example where VOA efforts in local African broadcasting have been objected to by offended African governments; where we are in fact challenging the party line and where we are hearing about the fact that we have challenged the party line.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Would you like to address this? I think there are many examples of this. Do you mind if Mr. Lucas addresses the Committee?

Mr. ROYCE. Absolutely not. Let us have Mr. Lucas join us here.

Mr. LUCAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We have numerous examples where our affiliates, for example, have been attacked and taken off the air because of things that they had been rebroadcasting that the VOA had sent out. A recent example is Radio 2000 in Lubango. They have been threatened with closure. They have been personally threatened for the rebroadcast of the new Angola program we are doing.

Another example is in Niger. Radio Enfanne was affiliated with us a couple of years ago. They were physically attacked. The equipment was smashed, and thankfully, these people have courage and are back on the air again and broadcasting, but nevertheless, this happens more or less regularly.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. That was my first day of work, by the way, writing the letter to the President of Niger, and the Committee to protect journalists.

Mr. ROYCE. Well done.

Well, let me ask you a followup question. In your written testimony, looking over the listener statistics, you say, for example, that in Zambia, the VOA audience is 8 percent. While significant, that number is not high.

Does VOA have listener goals? Do you apply, for example, in Zambia's case, a listener goal in terms of what you are trying to achieve in each market?

Ms. LIEBERMAN. I think in the last year we have started to do a lot better research in where our listenership really is, although I think in rural places in Africa it will always be difficult to measure exactly who listens to us. I believe, of course, that our audience is far wider than indicated.

Our goals, of course, are to increase our listenership as much as we can. What we would like to continue doing is to refine the methodology that we use for audience research and find some more accurate and sure numbers, to the extent that that is possible.

Our goals are to reach everybody, of course.

Mr. ROYCE. All right. Now, let me close with just a question for Mr. Klose. What role do you feel a surrogate station, a Radio Free Africa, if you will, could play at this time? If I could just have your observations, the benefit of your vantage point on this, Mr. Klose.

Mr. KLOSE. Mr. Chairman, I come to this as a former president of a surrogate operation, Radio Free Europe, and that is where I first encountered U.S. International Broadcasting.

Speaking generally, I think what is extremely important is that there be—whether it be one single named service or differently named services, there must be a reach and a contact at the local level for populations country-by-country or region-by-region to have relevance, for the broadcasting to have relevance right now.

I think we are facing an era of extraordinary challenge and change to the accepted way in which governments either functioned as we see in Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, or as in Africa with tremendous stresses and tensions inside the country spread across entire regions that spill over national boundaries.

I believe that U.S. International Broadcasting as it is in contact directly with those events and the peoples caught in them, which it essentially has been, at least in Central Europe, is essentially the surrogate focus.

As we can do that, whether it is a single named enterprise or a separate enterprise, I think that we are then best serving U.S. foreign policy interests, and in this particular way helping to explain and therefore ameliorate the tensions that are arising and deal with hate radio directly.

As to the specific doctrinal issue of whether it should be a separate service devoted entirely to that, or whether the Voice of America, which as Evelyn has said, already has a very strong component that does that now, and that could be built upon or strengthened or focused more, I think that is a fair issue to ask.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you very much, Mr. Klose.

I am going to turn to Mr. Menendez and let him continue with a question.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Klose, in your written testimony, you talk about the journalist training program. I would be happy to hear from either of you who can answer the question. What is the selection process used for the Voice of America's journalist training program? And what type of impact, when I say the selection process, what is the criteria that you use to seek out journalists? And what impact have you been able to gauge from the program?

Mr. KLOSE. With specific regard to the specifics of the VOA selection process, I cannot speak. I can tell you generally that the international broadcasting entities which do engage in journalistic training, whether it be Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, or the Voice of America, have quite a consistent standard for finding innovative, effective, and energetic broadcast journalists in the regions; that they are then vetted. In some cases, they are found by posts abroad, by U.S. embassies or public affairs officers who know the local media and their names are suggested to review committees, and then they are brought in either directly to the United States or in some cases there is training done directly in-country.

The Voice of America has done a series of very effective in-country workshops and training cycles in Africa. But more specifics I cannot provide for you now, but I would be happy to provide detail in supplemental comments.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Yes, I would like to get some sense of it. Your brief explanation of it seems somewhat subjective, and maybe that is the way it is in terms of how you choose people. But I would like to get a sense of the nature of this program. It sounds interesting to me. It sounds valuable, but I would like to hear whether or not it is—

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Mr. Menendez, may I introduce Negussie Mengesha, who is head of our Central African Service, please?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Sure.

Mr. MENGESHA. Thank you very much for giving us this chance, Congressman.

Actually, concerning training, we just finished a week ago a training program in Kigali. The money was granted by USAID, and the selection process has been done partly by USIA in Kigali, and they were a group of journalists from Burundi and Rwanda. There are roughly 15 people. There is also another training program which took place in Angola and Rwanda also.

The Kigali case was from government and a couple of private ones from the print media. But in the Rwanda case, for example, is the private press, as a matter of fact. These are a group of journalists who work with VOA. They actually produce their program on the ground, mostly are local news-focused programming, and experienced editors from VOA have been sent there for a number of months to train them, and actually they have become now part of the VOA broadcasting program from Angola. So we can give these two examples. But there are a number of journalists who come from across the continent, working both for private and government media as well who have come to get training.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I see.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Mr. Menendez.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Well, I thank you for your answer. If you could submit that for the record. I would like to get a broader sense of it. I appreciate what you say.

So you do have government journalists coming as well as part of your program?

Mr. MENGESHA. Yes.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Let me ask you, and when you submit that if you can give me any sense of the criteria in which you choose these people, I would be interested in knowing it.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Alan Heil, our Deputy Director, has just said that the general criteria are the need and potential for developing independent media, members of our affiliates, and something else which I am sure is really important, but I cannot read his handwriting—countries where elections are imminent.

I would just like to read one paragraph of a letter that I got this morning from the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights field operation in Rwanda.

"Could it be possible to get a 3- or 6-month training in your installations about radio/TV production for one of our staff?" He describes that "...we watch you and we are happy to inform you that VOA provides the best quality of information."

So I think it comes from different sources. Carnegie has given us a large grant to train VOA journalists in Africa and conflict resolution, so I think it comes from many sources, but we will give you a more thorough answer in writing.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you.

Last, what are, if any, the consequences of budget restraints in terms of their effect on broadcasting to Africa, especially in view of the Chairman's question, which I will not pursue as I basically heard what your answer was about Radio Free Africa. What is the context of budget cuts—I saw that in a very pastel way you in your testimony mentioned something about being creative and innovative in the solicitation of funds from other sources. Could you uncolor it for me?

Ms. LIEBERMAN. In the 3 years prior to my arrival at the Voice of America the budget cuts as I understand have been about 25 percent. The most important effect on broadcasting in Africa is that we have had to cut our money for travel for reporters and we have also been unable to hire the number of stringers that we would like. And that is why we have had to be a little bit more creative

about getting money from other sources. We spend about \$9 million a year in the Africa Division.

Mr. MENENDEZ. And in that 25 percent cut up here, in that 25 percent cut overall, I assume that is for Voice of America. Is there a portion of an amount that has happened to Africa? Is that how you do it? Has Africa taken a bigger cut? Has Africa taken a lesser cut in the process?

Mr. KLOSE. Mr. Heil says less, less than 15 percent cut in Africa. The cuts have been elsewhere. I would assume some of the cuts were in Central Europe.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Right.

Mr. KLOSE. And the former Soviet Union.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Right, and in Europe in general. I think part of that is a recognition of the importance of the region.

Mr. KLOSE. If I could add, one of the effects of the cuts has certainly been to thin out the availability of resources to us. Our affiliates' operation, which makes field trips talking to local independent broadcast operators, and then shows them, in effect, provides for them samples of what our programming is. We have been really struggling there to make sure that that is well funded.

At the time we are stretched right to the limit at prime time hours, both in Africa and elsewhere in the world, because we have taken many shortwave transmitters off the air to meet the budget cuts that have come our way. We are right at the limit, we believe, in terms of being able to facilitate strong signals in prime time in a variety of major venues both in Africa, in Europe and in Asia.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.

Mr. Davis of Florida.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Klose, in your statement you mentioned credibility being among your most important assets. With respect to the issue of the creation of a Radio Free Africa, could you discuss what would be necessary in building credibility for a newly created network or name like that?

Mr. KLOSE. I think there is experience in that, and I think we look at the experience of Radio Free Asia, which a year ago barely existed. What they did there was to fund, in some cases they found them at the Voice of America, but they found very fine broadcast journalists to establish a core group. They found very well recognized western journalists and broadcast experts, beginning with the president, Dick Richter, who was an experienced television producer at ABC, CBS and PBS. Their chief of their broadcasting operations is chief of operations—is a former colleague of mine, also from "The Washington Post", Dan Southerland, with wide experience in Asia. That is a beginning point.

So they established an experienced management team to begin with, and then began looking for experienced broadcasters. All these efforts to build credibility always take longer than anyone anticipates because finding the right mix of both experience, energy and contact in the region, especially in regions where you may be denied access as Radio Free Asia is difficult. And there, as we know, because of turmoil and difficulties in Africa there are substantial problems in Africa for the free flow of information gathered

by journalists. The journalists have been harassed, threatened, beaten and have had terrible experiences in certain parts of Africa.

It is always a challenge. It can be done.

Mr. DAVIS. If you were to take the same people you just described and add them to the existing Voice of America programming efforts, what benefits do you get from them joining an existing network that has a name recognition and has the existing relationships, again as relates to the issue of credibility?

Mr. KLOSE. I think there can be great benefits. The Voice of America has a leading role in Africa, and has so for many, many years, and there has not been widely in Africa, although there are difficulties in terms of denied territory, there have not been the same issues there that shut off Eastern Europe and had the same effect and required the same sort of specifically directed, almost exclusively targeted broadcasting as Voice of America has done.

What I would say is that it has been my observation both at Radio Free Europe and at the Voice of America that what listeners are looking for ultimately is credible, accurate information increasingly about their own lives. Joe Leliveld, now the executive editor of the New York Times, once observed that whatever else is true in the world for foreign correspondents, one thing is always true; that when they are in a foreign land the people who are experts about their own lives are the people who live there. And when we touch them at that level I think we are gaining tremendous credibility and contact for U.S. International Broadcasting, and it is not accidental that the Voice of America's Africa Division has that aspect to it and has been very intently pursuing that kind of contact and context in their broadcasting.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.

Mr. Payne of New Jersey.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, I am sorry that I was unable to hear the testimony. I am on a conference budget reconciliation conference committee and just kind of broke away from there for a little while. So rather than to be perhaps redundant, I will simply waive the opportunity to ask a question, but I do really appreciate your coming, and I will read the testimony. And if I have some questions, I would appreciate it if we wrote you, if you would be kind enough to respond.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Be happy to.

Mr. KLOSE. Sure.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

I am going to follow up with one last question to Ms. Lieberman, if I may. One of our witnesses on our next panel will speak of independent radio broadcasters with international affiliations, such as the VOA, which are being forced off the air, and indeed we have discussed a little bit about this pressure in our first round of questions.

Do you think a Radio Free Africa component surrogate broadcasting would be more immune from these types of pressures, and how would you react in these instances?

Ms. LIEBERMAN. I do not see how or why they would be more resistant to these types of pressures.

Maybe you can answer it, but I do not see how.

Mr. KLOSE. The experience of Radio Free Europe in Central Europe and the former Soviet Union has been pretty much as follows: that Radio Free Europe surrogate broadcasting in placement on local stations, it is often the requirement that they will not take it down free. They want the radios to in effect rent transmitter time or pay them in some way. That serves several purposes. It establishes not a bad monetary, you know, a practical relationship in which it is not provided for free. It helps them build their radio stations because they have a form of revenue which they would not otherwise have. It has been generally the case that there are many stations in that part of the world which will take the Voice of America. Period. Just do it, they take it down.

But for the surrogate, the surrogate often has to pay its way. The reasons are, to some extent, because the broadcasting is direct right in the area, it is nation by nation in the events of that particular nation. It has a special quality to it, and the broadcasters feel that it is incumbent upon them sometimes to ask for payment to do it, to seek payment.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Someone just handed me a note that said, "When forced off local stations, the Voice of America always has shortwave as a backup." We do, by the way, cover the continent on shortwave, and all programs on local affiliates are subject to being knocked off the air.

Mr. ROYCE. One of the advantages, I guess, of some of our surrogate radio operations in the past is that they have been offshore basically, so there was not effectively the ability to shut them down, and this is part of the question.

Well, as we go forward, as you know, a number of Members on both of these subcommittees are interested in the concept of a Radio Free Africa.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. I know that.

Mr. ROYCE. Including Chairman Smith, who asked me to let it be known that he had to leave to meet with President Aquiv of the Kyragese Republic.

Let me just say, I am sure the interest of the Members will continue, and the Committee looks forward to continued discussions with you, and very much appreciates, Mr. Klose and Ms. Lieberman, your attendance at this hearing today.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Mr. KLOSE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. I hope you will all come down and visit us at the Voice of America, see what we do and be interviewed.

Mr. ROYCE. We will be down again. Thank you very much.

On our next panel we will hear from an African journalist, a human rights specialist on media, and an NGO official who manages radio projects in Africa. Our theme is the state of radio broadcasting in Africa and its impact on democracy and human rights. Mr. Kenneth Best is founder and managing director of both the "Daily Observer" in Gambia, and the "Daily Observer" in Monrovia, Liberia. A Senior Fellow at the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, Mr. Best has done considerable research on African media and has written a book he expects to publish soon on "Media, Democracy and Development in West Africa."

We also have Ms. Kakuna Kerina, Program Coordinator for Africa for the Committee to Protect Journalists, covering 45 African nations. Ms. Kerina previously worked for the U.N. Development Program and the U.N. Institute for Training and Research. She also is an award-winning documentary film maker.

And last, we have Mr. John Marks, president of Search for Common Ground, and Common Ground Productions. A foreign service officer, Mr. Marks later served as foreign policy aid to Senator Clifford Case. Mr. Marks, a noted author of print articles, also has produced several television documentaries, including the 1994 Series, "South Africa's Search for Common Ground" for NNTV in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Mr. Best.

STATEMENT OF KENNETH BEST, PUBLISHER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, THE OBSERVER COMPANY GAMBIA LTD, LIBERIAN OBSERVER CORPORATION, MONROVIA

Mr. BEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to say thanks to the Committee and yourself for the privilege of participating in this important hearing.

I would like first to tell you that I am not a radio expert. I am a print journalist and basically a newspaper man, but I know enough about the power of radio. I know and appreciate enough about the power of radio to remember that whenever there is a coup d'etat in Africa one of the first places the soldiers go to is the radio station, and to take that over because I believe they have learned only too well from their bosses, from their civilian bosses, the overwhelming power of radio.

I want to first talk a little bit about the history of radio in Africa. It actually started in 1920 in South Africa, mainly for the white minority, and later on the British introduced radio in 1927 in most of their colonies. And so they trained hundreds of Africans for radio broadcasting at BBC in London, and the British established what they called public corporations for broadcasting, hoping that the nations when they became independent would maintain a certain amount of independence. The radio and television stations would maintain an independence.

The French had a more centralized approach to radio. They too established many stations in all of the francophone countries and trained hundreds of people in France. Of course, their objective mainly was to use radio as an instrument of the colonial policy, and also to make sure that the French—I mean, for radio to help turn Africans into black Frenchmen rather than French-speaking Africans.

When the independence era came, especially beginning with Ghana in 1957, they discovered that many of the African nations, beginning with Nkrumah, immediately took over radio as an instrument of government policy, and all of the other nations followed suit. But if you look at the history of the media in Africa, you discover that the governments were not satisfied with their State control of radio and television; they also took over most of the independent newspapers which were being published, many of them by British press tycoons in Nigeria, Malawi, most of the Anglo-formed countries.

And that led, unfortunately, to a one-way flow of information in Africa. It vigorously depressed dissent and made it impossible for the public to express themselves.

Along with that was the establishment of one-party States throughout the continent. I think they followed Tubman in that respect; Tubman of Liberia, who became President in 1944, in the last multi-party election that was held in Liberia, because from 1952 onward he vigorously repressed every other competing party and by 1955 multi-party democracy in Liberia was dead, and we did not see another multi-party election in Liberia until 1985 under Samuel Doe. That election, of course, was rigged.

But a repression of dissent and the establishment of one-party States had very negative consequences on the whole continent because it led to a lot of chaos and instability. The people rejected the safety valve of free expression and therefore they led people to engage in clandestine operations, and that led to coup d'etats and so forth, and today among the 353 African countries, you have 35 or 40 military governments, and that is most unfortunate.

Now, the second African revolution was sparked by radio in early 1989 and 1990 when the fall of communism took place and it was radio that brought this information directly to the African people, minute-by-minute play of this information was brought to the people. Therefore, you immediately found that throughout the continent there was a widespread demand for national conferences that led to democracy.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Best appears in the appendix.]

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Best.

I am going to now call on Ms. Kerina to please summarize her testimony and give us her observations.

STATEMENT OF KAKUNA KERINA, PROGRAM COORDINATOR, AFRICA, COMMITTEE TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS

Ms. KERINA. Thank you very much for the opportunity to contribute to this discussion. Just some background for those who are unfamiliar with CPJ: the Committee to Protect Journalists is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization based in New York City that is dedicated to the defense of the professional rights of journalists around the world, regardless of ideology or nationality. We are funded entirely by private donations and accept no funds directly or indirectly from any government.

As CBP's coordinator for Africa, I am responsible for all of our research and advocacy projects in 45 countries that are generally classified as sub-Saharan Africa.

Democratization, while heralded by Africa's citizens and supported by Western governments, has brought unexpected and often painfully familiar conditions for the press in recent years. Few leaders appeared willing to tolerate the free speech they promised fellow citizens on the campaign trail. As a result, the broadcast media remains State-owned throughout most of Africa, with governments showing no signs of relinquishing its control over the airwaves. By restricting private ownership of the broadcast media from independent press and opposition political parties, State officials deny the majority of the population access to information

which could threaten current governments' future success at the ballot box.

Instead of being viewed as a partner by officials of the new democracies, Africa's press, which played an invaluable role in fostering and encouraging the democratic process throughout the region, is today being attacked by the same leaders who proclaimed to the West that they have successfully completed the transition to democracy.

Because of high illiteracy rates, low incomes in high-inflation economies, and large numbers of citizens living outside urban areas, radio is truly the medium of the masses and the most effective tool for reaching most of the continent's population.

Government intolerance for criticism and demands for more transparency in State operations and policymaking has resulted in numerous cases of both independent and State journalists being detained, threatened, interrogated, and attacked by State security personnel. Journalists who continue to question or report on the contradictions between State official rhetoric and their actions run the risk of being viewed as agitators and antagonists. As a result, radio journalists employed by the State practice self-censorship, or what they often term "practical journalism," as a defense against such harassment. State journalists, who have limited opportunities for employment in the private media, often live under a psychological obligation to three conflicting sides: the government, their fellow citizens and their dependents. In a profession where the term "job security" is an oxymoron at best, private radio journalists walk a fine line between branded as government enemies and retaining their licenses which are granted by the State.

Even countries that permit independent radio today are not taking any chances. Licenses are granted to religious organizations or allies of government. As a result, while publicly claiming to support pluralism, State officials have institutionalized the means to perpetuate their views and their rule by broadcasting ruling party propaganda to the poor and undereducated.

With the exception of community radio, such as the stations which are flourishing in post-apartheid South Africa, most of the region's privately owned FM radio stations air music programming and rarely broadcast issue-oriented shows or information relevant to a population whose daily life is shaped by poverty and unemployment.

One cannot overemphasize the importance of international radio networks, such as VOA, the BBC, RFI and others, who broadcast in numerous African and European languages. Often they are the sole source of international news, and local news that does not make it onto State-run radio broadcasts. At this very moment Sierra Leone's besieged citizens are tuning into VOA and BBC for information about the current clashes that are taking place within earshot of everyone in Freetown.

It is no coincidence that State-owned radio stations are among the most well guarded properties in Africa. After all, a coup is only successful when its leaders can broadcast that they have captured the State house.

Affiliate relations between local broadcasters and international networks, such as the VOA, have provided vital information to vast

segments of Africa's rural population, and also provided invaluable opportunities to local broadcasters and journalists. By airing original broadcasts from local broadcasters internationally, the VOA has also provided a desperately needed and long overdue outlet for Africa's journalists to broadcast their views to the outside world.

Additionally, this relationship has also helped to promote the professionalism and quality of the often-underestimated skills of the region's journalists, even though these relationships do come at a cost. Many of the independent radio broadcasters with affiliate relationships with VOA have been targeted by governments for their refusal to restrict their broadcasts.

At a time when many of Africa's new democracies are not yet secure enough to face and weather challenges by disgruntled militaries, the risk of underfunding international broadcasts are significant and could result in a reversal of the gains of internationally funded programs supporting the democratic process and the media to date. I really encourage continued support for international radio broadcasts, but this support must be combined with policies that encourage democracy and pluralism for Africa's citizens so that they can be afforded the opportunity to participate fully in democratic governance.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kerina appears in the appendix.]

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you very much.

We will now hear from Mr. Marks.

STATEMENT OF JOHN MARKS, PRESIDENT, SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND

Mr. MARKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would maintain to you that there is a third way, you have talked about government and surrogate broadcasting efforts. My organization is an NGO, and we as a private organization do probably more broadcasting in Central Africa than the other two are able to do. We have a studio in Liberia, and we have a studio in Burundi. In Burundi, we do 15 hours a week of programming, with one ex-patriate and the rest local staff. We have Hutu and Tutsi journalists who work for us. They do the news, they do features, they do a half-hour show kind of like NPR's "All Things Considered", and they also do soap opera. They do a soap opera about a Hutu family and a Tutsi family. It is 52 episodes long, and it is about reconciliation, and the message that comes across is one of reconciliation.

We are able to do things because we are on the ground, localized, privatized in a way that I think we spend a lot less money than the government broadcasters. And I think as you consider the options, Mr. Chairman, I hope you keep that one open.

In Burundi, we are called Studio Ijambo, which is in the local language of Kirundi, and means "Wise Words." And Nightline did a piece about us. It is a profile of the station. They called it "The Voice of Hope." We are able to put out messages there which—perhaps a good example comes—our executive producer just went home last week, and he got two phone calls on his last day. He got one call from a leading general in the government saying thank you for what you are doing, and then the other from the opposition leader saying thank you for what you are doing.

And our radio is conflict resolution-oriented. It is problem-solving radio. It is not to increase polarization in the country, and it reflects the reality. I think if you are talking about bringing in something from outside that reflects a different kind of—I mean, we have all heard the phrase of not wanting to be cultural imperialists. When you have people on the ground working with locals, most of the work actually being done by locals, you get a different kind of sound.

In Liberia, we are called Talking Drum Radio. There we have about 20 local journalists who work for us from the various ethnic groups. We broadcast in the local dialect of English. Our programs, incidentally, in Liberia are carried by eight different stations. We do not do any of our own broadcasting. That is very important. We do not try to compete with them. We give our programmings to anybody who will carry them, and that works very well.

In Burundi, we are carried by State radio and we are carried by kind of the opposition radio, and the Voice of America takes some of our programming, the BBC takes some of our programming. And because we do not have a journalistic ego, if we are closed down one place, we are going to come out another place, and we just try to get it out as broadly as possible, and that is quite important to us.

Another thing that we just finished doing is a 6½-hour radio and television series with a South African partner which is in French, English and Portuguese, and that is going to be broadcast right across the whole continent in both television and radio form. And it is about conflict and its resolution across the continent. And at least the initial reaction to this is that we are talking about these ideas in an African voice, but yet I think the values of democracy and conflict resolution and pluralism that my colleagues are talking about are very much present in these kinds of radio broadcasts.

Now, the last thing is in Liberia we, with a grant from USA, OTI and UNDP (U.N. Development Program), we just distributed 5,000 wind-up radios. And, Mr. Chairman, I have taken the liberty of bringing one of these and I would like to demonstrate if I could wind my radio up for you. These come from South Africa. They cost about 40 bucks a piece. In a place like Liberia, there are almost no radio batteries available and there is almost no electricity available, if you want to reach a refugee population, if you want to reach people out of the capital center.

So what you do is you wind up your radio like this. You get about half an hour of it, and then you—shortwave, FM and AM. I mean, it is the whole band. They are this size apparently, I am told, because they did some market research from South Africa, they do not have to be so big, but people wanted a substantial piece of equipment resembling a boom box in some ways. You know, \$40.00, you cannot beat it.

Mr. ROYCE. We will not ask you to leave the wind-up radio, Mr. Marks, but if you could leave the Nightline tape.

Mr. MARKS. OK.

Mr. ROYCE. We would like to copy that.

Mr. MARKS. OK, I would like to say I brought some radio tape for you from some of our programming about Angola, and I encour-

age you perhaps in your car radio to put this in also. So if the staff wants to pick up.

Mr. ROYCE. Sure.

Mr. MARKS. And I have some material for the record.

I hope that you do not create a monolith that knocks the NGO's out of business in the effort to make something that—an absolutely laudable goal, but I think there are ways around these problems and through these problems that reflect African kinds of solutions which carry our values, and I hope that you keep those in mind also.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Marks appears in the appendix.]

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Marks, and you mentioned the NGO approach.

Mr. Best brought up the question of the once prevalent press tycoons. One of the questions I was going to ask Mr. Best is if today there are a sufficient number of individuals in Africa with the interest and the financing necessary to significantly expand radio ownership to the public. Do you think that is also an additional possibility? Do you have some would-be media barons that might be interested in expanding in the private sector as there are here in Western nations? What do you think the prospect for that is, Mr. Best?

Mr. BEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The prospects are excellent, and they are not only prospects but the thing is happening. There is a group in Senegal called Sude Communication that has two radio stations. They have several newspapers. They have magazines, and last I heard they were still anxiously waiting for word from the government to issue a television license.

In Mali alone, there are some 30 privately owned FM stations which are proliferated in many parts of the continent. I have said to my people there is a station in Nigeria called Frequency Radio, which is invisible, but is the most popular radio in the country. As you know, there is a lot of repression in Nigeria. Magazines, newspapers have been—hundreds of thousands of copies have been confiscated, journalists put in jail, men and women, and media houses went down and so forth. But the journalists, they are still courageously struggling on, but some have gone underground.

We understand also that Ole Soyinka, the Nobel Laureate from Nigeria, has established, with the backing of some Europeans, a station that is named after the assassinated wife of Chief Abiola, and that station is broadcasting on shortwave to Nigeria from some point in Europe; nobody knows where.

But there are many things happening. In Ghana, there are several licenses that have been issued to several private entrepreneurs in Ghana, even in Kenya, and many other parts of the continent. So people are now realizing that there is a need, and also that if it is well run money can be made, or some of these institutions can be self-supporting.

And I would urge the Congress, as well as the administration in America, to look seriously at some of these efforts that are being made on the ground, because we have people risking their lives involved. They need a little encouragement, especially in the way of

planning, in the way of technology, in the way of technical support; not foreign aid as such, but encouragement to keep them going.

Mr. ROYCE. Yes. I wanted to ask Ms. Kerina as well. In your opinion, which African countries have the most liberal media laws and which have the worst?

I know that in Kenya a restrictive media law has repeatedly been discussed and introduced into Parliament but not enacted due to international and external pressures. What lessons are there for us in this question of advocating freedom of the media in terms of what has happened in Kenya in response?

Ms. KERINA. Well, actually, the bulk of our activity at CPJ has been in working with local journalists as well as their attorneys and various other branches of the legal profession in trying to support journalists who are challenging repressive media laws. What we have seen over the past couple of years has been almost a ripple effect. One country gets away with passing media bills secretly in Parliament, and the neighboring country sees that that happened, and they pick it up, and it is ongoing.

But certainly in the situation with Kenya about 1½ years ago when the draft legislation media bill was in Parliament and it was illegal for Kenyan journalists to have a copy of that bill, we saw the foreign correspondents and the international community responding and having a positive effect.

Honestly, it is very difficult to say at any given moment because often what transpires is that these media bills are discussed in secret, and oftentimes if journalists do not have good sources within the Parliament, they do not find out until it is way too late to challenge them.

However, this is an issue that journalists have been very aggressive in tackling, and I think, you know, in conjunction with international organizations when campaigns and lobbying take place at an optimum pre-, I guess, solidification of media bills, we have seen success. I mean, certainly when it comes to restrictive media bills you have at the top of the list Ethiopia; you have a crisis situation in Nigeria, certainly a crisis situation in Kenya, and then in countries like Zambia and others where from month to month bills are being added and media laws are being changed.

But I would also just like to follow up on your previous question about whether there are individuals, private individuals as well as those linked with opposition political parties who are ready to step up and take over the responsibilities of radio broadcasting as private entrepreneurs, and I can honestly tell you that there are long lines at every ministry of information that has a media bill in place that allows for private ownership of media, of radio and television licenses. The problem is that, of course, those licenses are granted by government.

You can look at the example of the Nation group of newspapers that has had an application in with the Kenyan Government now for 6 years for radio and TV licenses. They still have not received those licenses, and certainly they are not going to receive them before the elections this year, and who knows when.

But for the most part I think there are many, many individuals across the continent who are pushing the issue at great cost financially as well as at great cost within the political climates that they

inhabit to be able to accomplish this. In that regard, this is something that we have to support very, very strenuously as part of our policymaking here in the United States.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you very much.

I am going to go to Mr. Davis for questions, and then to Mr. Chabot of Ohio, who has joined us, and then proceed from there.

Mr. Davis of Florida. No questions at this time?

Mr. Chabot of Ohio.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple of questions.

First, Mr. Marks, you mentioned Hutus and Tutsis and some programming that you have done. I am just wondering, back at the time of the actual tragedy that was occurring in Rwanda in particular, how much access was there at that time to radio coverage or stations or whatever terminology you want to use? Were there multiple points of access that people in the country could have gotten through the radio? And what was being said by whom over the radio waves at the time of the killings? Was there truth out there or was it just—what was happening?

Mr. MARKS. Right. Our kind of radio did not exist then. I mean, it was extremely partisan. I mean, it gives hate radio a new meaning. It is not like a radio here. It was inciting people to genocide.

But normally in Africa a political faction or an ethnic faction that has a radio uses it for its own political agenda. That is just the way life works. And so the sectarian hate was being reflected on the radio waves, and the kind of things that we are doing now did not exist at the time. There was no voice of Hutus and Tutsis together at the time.

Obviously, you had international radio broadcasters like VOA and BBC which were talking about it with a Western voice about the violence, but there was nothing reflected that, you know, kind of the voice of reconciliation within the society.

Mr. CHABOT. OK. So some people at least did have access to Western radio views of what was going on within Rwanda at the time? In fact, the killings were taking place with—

Mr. MARKS. Absolutely. You know, VOA and BBC have very wide listenerships in those places, and their shortwave broadcasts. It is pretty much coming in on shortwave at that time. So it is not something that everybody has in their transistor radio, but within a village you would find, I mean, usually the radio penetration in Burundi or Rwanda is 90–95 percent of the population, though it might mean a dozen people around a radio set.

Mr. CHABOT. OK. Thank you.

And then for any of the panel members, I guess, the next question I have is how, and again I guess it depends upon the source, whether it is government-controlled or what, but how much do the people who listen to the radio believe what they are hearing? Is there a fair amount of skepticism, depending upon the source, or what?

Ms. KERINA. I think it depends on who the listener is. I mean, for example, the urban population generally has access to a much broader range of information and has, I think, certainly a more sophisticated, in certain aspects, analysis or process of analysis of information as compared to undereducated populations who often, I

think, traditionally have believed what they were told. I mean, you do not question authority, and the first person to give you information is generally the authority.

So in that regard, we have seen certainly in recent years now, especially with the types of work that Search for Common Ground is involved in and Community Radio, that there are more types of information available that are not easily classified as Western versus State, where people are hearing what they consider their community's voice on the air, and now I guess there is a much more wide range of choices by the rural population.

So I think in the past the race was to get the information to the population—to be the first, and whoever did that, which was obviously for the most part the State, was able to influence the thought process.

Today, you have everything from shortwave to community radio to independent radio in some countries, and you can see that certainly in a country like Ghana where there were elections recently, in November of last year, December of last year, and there really was not any threat to the local independent radio stations because they have become so firmly ingrained in the community and, you know, talk shows have become a part of the political analysis and political discussion process during the election campaigns that the government would have too, too much to lose by threatening those independent radio broadcasters.

However, the opposite is the case in other countries such as Niger where the VOA affiliate was shut down last year. It does run the gamut.

Mr. CHABOT. OK. If you have a particularly corrupt regime, let's use Mobutu for an example, prior to his overthrow, do the people within Nigeria, is there access to other radio stations outside the country where perhaps they are getting a more critical picture of what their own government is doing to them?

Ms. KERINA. Well, within Nigeria there certainly is now—well, you have about two or three pirate radio broadcasters beaming into Nigeria from outside the country: The Radio Kudirat, which is the national democracy campaign's official radio organ. You also have a couple of local pirate radio stations that broadcast off and on. But for the most part, you know, I think the majority of the population depends on the international networks such as BBC and VOA, and then supplemented by whatever pirate radio they can access, which is also very limited in the regions that it can broadcast to.

And then, obviously, Nigeria is a very, very extreme case because even with that type of information you are talking about an environment where there is just literally no freedom of movement and association, and therefore for people to be able to act upon or with that information that they have gathered from those sources, it is very restricted.

Mr. MARKS. Right. And these wind-up radios can receive international shortwave broadcasting, so you do not even need batteries or electricity anymore. You just have to be able to spend your 40 bucks somewhere.

Mr. CHABOT. OK. Thank the folks. Thank the Chairman.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Payne, and then Mr. Hilliard.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

You know, for example, you mentioned Kenya and the problems and I mentioned it also. The print media seems to be relatively free, but the radio seems controlled. I wonder if anybody had any kind of thinking on why, for example, in particular, in Kenya where you have, you know, overt criticism of the government by newspapers, why that can flourish and there is so much restriction on other areas, or if you think that the government is only tolerating it for the time being?

Ms. KERINA. Well, certainly freedom of the press does not end at the newsstand. As long as people can be persecuted for publishing, for example, journalists are detained in Kenya, you know, photo journalists are being attacked in these same instances that we have been reading about in the international newspapers.

Obviously, I think the Kenyan Government has made a decision as to how far they are going to crack down, but there is no shortage of seditious libel cases in the Kenyan courts against independent publishers and journalists. There is no shortage of defamation cases in the courts either. But for the most part, yes, we have not seen recently the increased escalation in the quantities of attacks and abuses against journalists that we would have expected, and to a certain extent I think the Kenyan Government is making a conscious decision in some way, shape or form to control that type of activity.

However, if you notice recently, the types of actions against journalists have taken place at demonstrations where obviously army personnel or police have a certain amount of liberty to do as they will with citizens and with those who are recording what is going on.

Once again, it is a similar situation in Nigeria. People say, well, you know, the Nigerian press seems to be free. It can criticize. It can write anything it wants about the government, but in fact the number of journalists who are detained without charge and the number of journalists whose family members are detained, and the number of offices that are bombed and what have you are a result of that kind of coverage. I think it is remarkable that the African journalists in these environments continue to do the work that they do, knowing full well what the repercussions will be.

So, again, I say that freedom of the press does not end when you publish your newspaper or your magazine. If you face repercussions for what you have printed, then you are still at risk.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Mr. BEST. The other thing about the Kenyan situation is that the two major newspapers in the country have been traditionally independent. The "East African Standard" or now called "The Standard" was established before the turn of the century, and the "Daily Nation", which became the most popular paper in the country, was started in 1960 by a very powerful and wealthy religious leader called Agha Kahn. And so they have a long tradition of dissent, and public criticism of the government.

On the other hand, the broadcast media has been dominated for the most part by the government and until the nineties there was no private station. Now, the government has found out that they have the capacity to give out licenses, and they are choosing very carefully whom to give those licenses to. So the two privately

owned television stations in the country right now are owned by cronies of the establishment, and therefore no one can expect them to rock the boat.

Mr. PAYNE. And just on that whole question, it even becomes worse, I guess, for example, in Kenya where the television is definitely controlled by the State, and with multi-party elections supposed to be held within the next 4 or 5 months, access to that media is very restricted. Of course, the coverage is much less also because the typical person out in the villages may not have access to television, so it is definitely the fact that radio is by far the most effective means.

Maybe you might tackle this question too. There have been allegations of irresponsible journalism, which has happened too, and sometimes the government officials probably use that as an excuse.

How do you think you can go about handling, especially in the print media, but just in general how can you keep slander or how can you keep irresponsible journalists, for example, from just saying whatever they wanted to say, unfounded or rumor? There are some sensational stories that come out in the papers there. Does anybody have an idea of how or whether you feel that that is a very serious problem?

Mr. BEST. It is a problem. Take Sierra Leone, for example. The papers there are not professional. Many of them are scandal sheets, and that is because of the lack of training. Some of them have been to college, but they do not really have any professional experience in journalism. And also anybody can start a newspaper and many people run their newspapers from their bedrooms.

In such a situation where you lack a professional approach to newspaper publishing, it harms the profession because even the civilian government found itself almost immediately in conflict with the press shortly after it took over because the boys were just writing all kinds of stuff, a lot of it unfounded, and it forced the government's hand and several arrests were made 3 or 4 weeks into the new administration.

But that is why it is critically important that all of us do what we can to help promote journalism training on the continent.

Ms. KERINA. Well, I would like to follow up, Kenneth, before you go any further because we always have extensive discussions about this.

I think that you underestimate the ability of the African citizen to decide what they want to read and what they do not want to read, and the ability of the market to decide what flourishes and what does not flourish. I mean, we have our "National Inquirers", and our "Globes" in the United States as well.

And when you look at a population that does not necessarily have a tremendous disposable income, I think people are very careful about what they decide to buy. In that regard, regardless of whether journalists are professional or unprofessional according to whichever standards, I still do not believe that anyone should be thrown in jail for publishing information and I still do not believe that the punishments that journalists receive for either their unprofessional journalism or otherwise are warranted for this so-called type of offense.

I mean, we have courts of law on the continent. If someone has a problem, go and file a libel or defamation case. And I think this is exactly the type of argument that governments use to persecute journalists. So in that regard I really do not want to start putting the blame on journalists for what is happening to them.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, I think all of us, both Mr. Best and I agree that you should not break up their press and lock them up because they write some bad stories. But I do have to concur with Mr. Best that there is a need for a general improvement in the journalism. If you only have "National Inquirers" printed, then that is what you are going to read, and you have to somehow perhaps escalate the level of information and the usefulness. You know, people say let us lengthen school days in the United States. Well, if you are not teaching for 5 hours, you know, 9 months a year, what more are you going to learn by not teaching them for 8 hours 11 months a year? You are still going to even be worse off.

And so I do agree that the level of journalism, as that improves I think the situation improves. I certainly concur with Ms. Kerina that we do not go and lock them up and throw away the key because they write a scandal sheet or bad information, but it is a continued problem, and when that problem continues, these guys are not looking for good excuses; maybe just sometimes no excuse, but given no excuse then they will make a big thing of it. So I think it is important on both sides that they become more responsible.

It seems like my time has expired.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you. We will conclude with Mr. Hilliard of Alabama.

Mr. HILLIARD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

My question is more of a technical nature. Mr. Marks, what type facility does your organization own for broadcasting facility?

Mr. MARKS. That we use?

Mr. HILLIARD. Yes.

Mr. MARKS. We have studios in the two countries which means some pretty rudimentary tape machines, editing machines, the kind of place if you went into a talk radio station.

Mr. HILLIARD. Shortwave?

Mr. MARKS. Yes, we do not do broadcasting. We do software. We do programming which we give to other broadcasters.

Mr. HILLIARD. Only programming.

Mr. MARKS. Right.

Mr. HILLIARD. OK.

Mr. MARKS. Yes. We only produce these; we do not try to broadcast and we do not try to be competitive.

Mr. HILLIARD. I understand.

That type radio you kept saying costs only \$40.00. Is that 40 American dollars?

Mr. MARKS. Yes.

Mr. HILLIARD. What would that translate to in terms of dollars in those two countries? How long would it take a person to work to get a radio like that?

Mr. MARKS. Well, I mean, you are dealing in some countries where, you know, maybe a week. In South Africa, it—

Mr. HILLIARD. Oh, no. We are talking about the two countries where you just mentioned where you have studios.

Mr. MARKS. Well, in Liberia, we just got a grant from AID and from the United Nations to essentially give them away for the election purposes, to get election news out.

Mr. HILLIARD. How many did you give away?

Mr. MARKS. Five thousand of them.

Mr. HILLIARD. And how many people in the country?

Mr. MARKS. I am sorry?

Mr. HILLIARD. How many people in the country?

Mr. MARKS. I guess in Liberia there are about 3 million all together, though about a million are outside the borders.

Mr. HILLIARD. And how long would a person have to work to be able to get \$40.00 to buy that radio?

Mr. MARKS. I would guess probably if you were working it might be a couple of weeks.

Mr. HILLIARD. A couple of weeks?

Mr. MARKS. Yes.

Mr. HILLIARD. Yes.

Mr. MARKS. I am sorry. I may have misunderstood you, sir.

Mr. HILLIARD. Well, the rate of exchange in Liberia is about 50 to one. So under normal circumstances it would cost about 2,000 Liberian dollars to get that. And most people are not working in Liberia. They go to work and they do not get paid.

The government itself has not paid people for almost a year, and people just make do with what they have. So it would be difficult to tell how long somebody will be able to work to buy that, but people do survive, and even if they have to walk they go to work every day. But the rate of exchange is 50 to one. In other countries it is even more. So it varies from country to country.

OK, all right. Let me—both of—well, all three of you, would you be in favor of some type of program that would have continuous broadcasting in Africa on information concerning democracy and those type programs?

Mr. MARKS. Yes.

Ms. KERINA. Are you talking about the Radio Free Africa?

Mr. HILLIARD. Yes.

Ms. KERINA. I actually am really not comfortable to be able to make a statement on it because I do not have enough information as to how it would be structured and, you know, why, I am also trying to figure out why Radio Free Africa in addition to VOA and the existing Africa broadcasts come out of the United States. So I would have to reserve my judgment.

Mr. HILLIARD. Right, I understand.

And that poses another question, do you understand how the three of them operate in Europe, madam?

Ms. KERINA. What, Radio Free Europe?

Mr. HILLIARD. And Voice of America.

Ms. KERINA. I understand how Voice of America operates in Africa, specifically and generally how they operate in Europe, and I am not very familiar with Radio Free Europe and Radio Free Asia. That is why I want to reserve my comment.

Mr. HILLIARD. And I understand your reservation.

Yes, sir. Mr. Marks.

Mr. MARKS. I would be very wary of building a new institution. I think that there are some very good mechanisms already in exist-

ence which are underfunded, and rather than have kind of a monolith who is getting its ideological direction from a central place in Washington, I think you are much better within a context of a country having a country-specific, a local approach that reflects what needs to happen in the country rather than a faraway place. I think that NGO's and private organizations can do this probably as well, alongside of government. And I think there are a lot of other ways to do it. And I think the money could be much better spent by not having a centralized monolithic structure, but having lots of different ways of doing it.

Mr. HILLIARD. All right. Mr. Best?

Mr. BEST. I believe also that so much is happening on the ground in Africa today that perhaps the first approach should be to give some encouragement to those efforts. And then also the whole modus operandi of the Voice of America could be looked at again with a view to planting the view more firmly in the soil of where it is being broadcast. For instance, Africa, where you get a lot more people from Africa, a lot more African professionals broadcasting.

Even if not from Africa itself, because if a broadcaster—I mean, broadcasted through about his country and we know that he is down the street, they might go and pick him up. But if he is, you know, at another place but is not yet in Africa, it would give the Voice of America a lot more credibility.

But I think the priority attention should be given to those initiatives that are indigenous to Africa, and I think that would be an excellent place to start.

Also, I believe that the efforts of radio could be buttressed, radio and other pro-democracy movements on the continent need to be buttressed by something else, and that something else is political, economic and diplomatic support for democracy, pro-democracy movements in the continent. It is a very distinct possibility that the whole of Africa could be democratized, but all of us have to put efforts together, and we saw that economic sanctions worked in South Africa, not as quickly as we had hoped, but they worked. They worked in many other places, and they can work in Africa as well. And I believe that this country has the capacity, given your geo-political position, you have the capacity to make a difference.

So in addition to using radio and all these other things, I think that some impetus should be given to the pro-democracy movements throughout the continent, especially through political and diplomatic means. I believe that many of your partners in Europe are willing, but they need a shot in the arm, the same as what you gave them in the context of Bosnia.

Mr. HILLIARD. Thank you very much. And let me thank the Chair. He has also given me the liberty of getting a response to that question both from Ms. Evelyn Lieberman and from Mr. Kevin Klose. So if you would, would you answer that question, please?

Ms. LIEBERMAN. As I think I made clear—

Mr. HILLIARD. Would you stand up?

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Sure. I do not have a microphone.

Mr. HILLIARD. Please sit down.

Ms. LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

As I think I made clear in my testimony, Mr. Hilliard, I do not support a Radio Free Africa because I think the Voice of America,

Africa Division, is providing a similar service already, and unlike many of our other divisions we have 100 local reporters on the ground, we have four or five African bureaus, and I think that we are providing news of Africa as well as the United States, and I am not sure what advantage or benefit a Radio Free Africa would serve. I think it already exists in the form of the Voice of America.

Thank you.

Mr. HILLIARD. So you are satisfied with what Voice of America is doing in terms of its broadcasts in Africa?

Ms. LIEBERMAN. I am satisfied in terms of what we are doing with the money we have, with the resources we have. As I explained before, we have been seeking other sources of money to enhance our broadcasting.

Would I like a lot more money and many more personnel to do a better job? Absolutely. But considering what we are operating with, I think we are doing an excellent job.

Mr. HILLIARD. Thank you.

Mr. KLOSE, Congressman, I do not view the Voice of America as a distant reality from a centralized authority. I believe that the Voice of America's African service has international dimension to it, which is terribly important to set context for what is happening elsewhere in the world. We have heard several witnesses, or at least one other witness testify from this very panel that news of what happened in Central Europe from 1989 on inspired people in Africa to begin to take measures into their own hands to reform and challenge the repressive authorities in their own countries. That news came from international broadcasting to them.

What I think is very important is that Mrs. Lieberman and her colleagues here for the Voice of America, and as I say, I came from surrogate broadcasting, I led a surrogate broadcasting service through some extraordinary challenges in the past several years. What they have said is that there is a very lively and effective means of broadcasting to Africa now which the Voice of America has been doing for many years.

I think that the issue of resources is always in front of all of us. I do not think it is an either/or situation. I do not think that John Marks' Search for Common Ground activities in any way should be portrayed as or contrary to the issues or the activities of the Voice of America. I think that these are complementary activities. I think it is very significant that the Voice does use some of Search for Common Grounds' programming in its own programming.

I think the people of Africa, as the people of Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, after years and years of repression of information to them are eager to hear balanced, accurate, objective sources of information coming to them so they can help to understand and sort out the issues themselves and take matters in an informed way as much as they can into their own hands.

Mr. HILLIARD. Thank you very much.

Mr. ROYCE. Yes, I think I have very much the same question or concern. We saw the effectiveness of Radio Free Europe, and you are to be commended. You are to be commended for your tenure there, because when we have listened to Lach Valhava and Lech Walesa and even Boris Yeltsin; each have said what changed their mind were those radio broadcasts. But what you had was broad-

casting truth that challenges the party line. That is what they were listening to; a specific function there with Voice of America and with Radio Free Asia, a specific function.

And what we are talking about is that same function—there is not a Radio Free Africa in the same sense. Now, the VOA is there and it is going about surrogate radio though in a different way. Part of this hearing is to see if we can get the focus back on how we press the case, how we press freedom of speech there in Africa, and how do we achieve what was achieved in Europe.

In any event, I really want to thank the witnesses from both panels for being here today, and it is a dialog which we will continue and especially with the input of all five of you. Let me just say thank you for your good work on behalf of freedom of speech in your careers, we want to acknowledge that, and thank you again for your appearing.

Yes, Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Before you totally conclude, I just wanted to mention to Mr. Best that I think your point is well taken that it has to be more than just a message, and I am not sure that you are aware of legislation that is being worked through the Congress, the Africa Trade and Development bill which is very substantial legislation which will actually take the countries that are doing the reform of its government and, you know, transparency and improving the quality of life for the people, and five or six will be targeted for this trade and investment legislation.

What we are hoping that will do is to be in addition to the word that is going out that, well, if you do the right thing you are going to be concentrated on for investment because we know that aid is certainly not the total answer. We still need it to build roads and to—to build things; hospitals, humanitarian, food when it is drought, but that sustainable development is going to be through investment. We believe that this would really be a carrot approach to countries to get their house in order because we will certainly target the Botswanas or the countries that are moving in the right direction, and hold that as an incentive for change.

So I just wanted to say I do agree with you that it needs more than the Voice of Africa, but we have something in the works that really might be the key that may be able to spring sub-Saharan Africa in the right direction.

Mr. ROYCE. Good point. Mr. Hilliard had one last question.

Mr. HILLIARD. Yes. Mr. Klose, do you really believe that we could have gotten the same results in Europe and the type of results we are getting in Asia with Voice of America alone without Radio Free Europe? And if so, how much longer would it have taken us?

Mr. KLOSE. I think that the people of Central Europe and the then Soviet Union massively denied access to accurate information. The continents really benefited from two separate perspectives coming to them. And I cannot say otherwise.

Mr. HILLIARD. Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. I want to thank all our witnesses again. Thank you, panel members.

[Whereupon, at 3:10 p.m., the subcommittees were adjourned.]

APPENDIX

OPENING STATEMENT

KEVIN KLOSE

DIRECTOR

INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU

BEFORE THE

HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA

AND

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

JULY 15, 1997

(33)

Chairman Royce, Chairman Smith, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this hearing on the impact of Radio on African Democracy. I am pleased to be here and happy to discuss how U.S. public broadcasting enhances the democratic process in Africa. My colleague, Evelyn Lieberman, Director of the Voice of America, will provide in greater detail the current activities of VOA and its impact in Africa.

U.S. support for international broadcasting began in the 1940's for VOA and 1950's for RFE/RL with a focus on countering the spread of communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Broadcasting by the Voice of America to Africa was initiated in 1963 with a similar mission of providing an alternative source of news and information. African audiences learned about the fall of communism and the democratic revolution in Eastern Europe largely from the broadcasts of the VOA. Clearly, this exposure to the East European and other experiences has an impact on the spread of democracy in Africa.

From my perspective as IBB Director, my previous position as President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and my years as a foreign correspondent for The Washington Post, international broadcasting is the most cost-efficient means by which the United States can further democracy around the globe. From Belarus to Bosnia, from Chechnya to Zaire, our broadcasts symbolize the U.S. connection between truth and democracy. U.S. Government-sponsored radio and television broadcasts are dynamic and integral elements of U.S. foreign policy.

U.S. international broadcasting has consistently served as an inexpensive, effective tool for encouraging peaceful change and democracy. It is an essential element in defending and promoting the freedom and security of the United States abroad while encouraging the evolution of a more stable and peaceful world. What excites me about our broadcast entities is that, despite budget reductions of over 30% in the past four years, U.S. international broadcasting is engaged with its audience. It is interactive, it is shortwave, it is AM and FM, and satellites, it is television, it is the Internet and "real audio," available via computer worldwide in over 17 languages. It has evolved to meet the challenges of today, to meet the needs of its listeners and to serve U.S. foreign policy interests globally.

In the U.S., freedom of the press and access to multiple sources of news are guaranteed by our Constitution. But the world to which we broadcast knows the reality of powerful governments controlling radio and television, intimidating or shutting down independent media that criticize or speak truthfully of shortcomings and political repression.

I know each of us here today is interested in assuring that our broadcast to Africa are truly the best they can be. I would like to share an interesting and timely experience I had last week when I was the featured guest on "Talk To America", VOA's international talk and call-in show. A listener from South Africa called in to say:

"...Voice of America means everything to me ... I cannot wait until evening, South Africa time, to turn my radio on it's such an exciting station to listen to...you're up to date and it's so professional...I love it."

This ability to listen to our audience provides a perspective that we all need to understand the value of what we do. I also took questions from listeners in China, Iran and other countries, reflecting the diversity of VOA listeners and their intense appreciation for what the U.S. provides to them through VOA broadcasting. I know the VOA Director will join me in inviting any members of this committee to be a guest on Talk To America and hear first-hand what our listeners think. Talk To America guests like NIH Director Harold Varmus and numerous authors, human rights experts, politicians and scientists have found the experience to be quite stimulating.

TRANSMISSIONS

The International Broadcasting Bureau is responsible for coordinating the engineering and transmission operations of VOA, RFE/RL, the Martis, and Radio Free Asia. Our ability to reach people of Africa depends, in large measure, on IBB's own shortwave and medium wave (AM) transmitters. This committee should be aware that seven years ago we almost lost our entire audience in Africa. In 1990, nearly all of VOA's coverage of sub-Saharan Africa was transmitted through a very powerful relay station in Liberia which was forced off the air -- and ultimately destroyed -- during the 1990 revolution there. Our engineers immediately set up temporary transmitters in a variety of strategic locations and planned for construction of transmitters in other areas. With radio construction funds authorized by Congress, we built powerful new shortwave and medium wave (AM) facilities in both Botswana and Sao Tome and completed a new station begun earlier in Morocco. IBB's Sao Tome facility began operating at full power in May 1996 -- at 600 kilowatts, it is 12 times as powerful as the strongest AM station in the United States. This significantly improved VOA's ability to project strong shortwave and medium wave signals throughout Africa.

VOA broadcasts to Africa originate in our studios here on Independence Avenue. They are

transmitted to the broadcast region via IBB owned and operated relay stations in Greenville, North Carolina, Kavala (Greece), Botswana, Morocco, Udom (Thailand), and Sao Tome:

RELAY STATION	HARDWARE	LANGUAGES	HOURS
Botswana (exclusively Africa)	1-500KW, MW 4-100KW, SW	Amharic, English, French, Hausa, Oromiffa Kirundi, Kinyarwanda Swahili, Tigrini	313 hours/wk
Sao Tome (exclusively Africa)	1- 600 KW, MW 4-100 KW, SW 1- 100 KW, SW	English, French, Hausa, Kirundi/Kinyarwanda, Portuguese, Swahili	327 hours/wk
Greenville, NC (30% Africa)	10-500 KW, SW 6-250 KW, SW	English, French Hausa, Portuguese	147 hours/wk
Kavala, Greece (3% to Africa)	10-250 KW, SW 1-600 KW, MW 1-500 KW, MW	Amharic, English, French, Tigrigna, Oromiffa	28.5 hours/wk
Morocco (18% to Africa)	10-500 KW, SW	English, French, Hausa, Portuguese, Swahili	126.5 hours/wk

The IBB station in Udom, Thailand, is used minimally (12 hours/week) to Africa. In addition to these IBB owned and operated facilities, we also have arrangements to use BBC facilities in the Ascension Islands (40 hours/week), and Woofferton, England (2.5 hours/vk). The coverage provided from these facilities is significantly enhanced by the arrangements with local affiliate stations which I will discuss in further detail later.

Radio, rather than TV, is the dominant medium in Africa. Shortwave remains the predominant source of information in many parts of Africa, although FM is gaining popularity in many areas. As many of you who have traveled to Africa know, we broadcast to portions of Africa where electricity, if available, is at best sporadic....where millions of people live in remote villages....where radio is often the only source of news and information about regional and world events.

TELEVISION

Despite the continued dominance of state controlled television, the limited growth of African private broadcasting, cable television, and direct satellite broadcasting in the region provides some windows of opportunity for U.S. international broadcasting. G-TV, Ghana's government owned television broadcaster, will soon begin carrying 6 hours daily of our WORLDNET television programming. In Zambia, Benin, Ethiopia, Uganda, Nigeria and other countries, broadcasters routinely place WORLDNET news and information programs on local and regional television stations.

WORLDNET programs to Africa cover topics such as conflict resolution, AIDS, freedom of the press, peacekeeping, elections and economic development. TELECHAD, the national television station of Chad recently broadcast a WORLDNET program on the very controversial issue of female genital mutilation. These and other programs on human rights and the U.S. elections process provide much needed information and insight to our listeners. Supplementing our original TV broadcasts, acquired programming includes video programs on democracy, civic education, business, English teaching, journalism and health. These programs are regular carried on prime time TV from Mali, Cameroon and Guinea to Nigeria, Botswana, Kenya and South Africa.

AFFILIATES

The IBB's greatest challenge is to continuously improve our method of distribution to accommodate changing listening patterns. With private stations becoming more prevalent in many regions of Africa, the International Broadcasting Bureau's Office of Affiliate Relations has aggressively pursued partnerships with local independent broadcasters in the last several years. Our network of VOA affiliate stations in Africa has grown to some two dozen partners. The VOA English, French, Portuguese, Hausa and Swahili Services are all rebroadcast on private or public FM channels from Radio Gold in Accra, Ghana -- to Radio Free Africa in Mwanza, Tanzania (Radio Free Africa, a private commercial station run by a Tanzanian Harvard Business School Graduate, simulcasts VOA Swahili to the so-called Great Lakes communities at the south of Lake Victoria). We are currently exploring an opportunity to expand this partnership to a medium wave transmission covering parts of nine nations impacted by continuing civil unrest. However, shortwave remains our most reliable means for continent-wide coverage.

By providing these stations with material that is well produced and popular, and informative, VOA is helping private stations to grow -- and they are helping us to gain an even greater audience for our programs. Affiliate station managers have spoken of recent audience growth following arrangements to transmit VOA programs. For example, Raga FM in Kinshasa, Congo, began carrying VOA French this spring, joining other international broadcast services who are heard on FM stations in the region.

Although the Internet is not yet widely used in most of Africa, VOA provides access in Swahili, French and English and has proven a valuable tool for those with access. This multi-media approach, utilizing shortwave, AM, FM, television and the Internet, provides our listeners throughout the world with the greatest access to our broadcasts.

TRAINING

One of the most effective tools we have for bring about long-term, positive media change in our broadcast regions is the training of journalists. The IBB's International Media Training Center has organized numerous in-country programs in Africa designed to develop journalistic skills based on First Amendment principles and to strengthen commercial, independent media in the region. In the past two years, the training center has conducted:

- three short-term seminars in Angola run by American broadcast journalism professionals, including a one-day national conference on the role of the media in a democratic government;

- a regional Radio Sales and Management workshop last month held in Tanzania. Dr. Sam Swan (University of Tennessee) visited Radio One and held question and answer session focusing on broadcasting sales techniques.

- a two week Media Skills workshop held in Kigali, Rwanda June 2-13 for 30 journalists from Rwanda and Burundi. Course participants included: journalists from broadcast and print media; faculty and professional associations; and five journalists nominated by Studio Ijambo in Bujumbura, Burundi. Topics included: news definitions and news values; newswriting and editing techniques and formulas; newspaper layout and design; investigative reporting and journalistic ethics and responsibility.

The workshop was conducted in French by Professor **Tim Gallimore**, University of Missouri. Gallimore also provided a mini-seminar in Civic Education to address the responsibilities and opportunities for journalists, as professional members of the fourth estate, to promote civil society and democratic values.

BUDGET

Today, U.S. interests in Africa include support for emerging democracies, economic reforms, conflict resolution, and the end of corruption and authoritarianism. VOA's broadcasts to the region in 10 languages for 94 hours weekly is a cost effective and impressive operation. In fiscal year 1997 we will spend almost \$9 million on broadcasts to Africa.

In the current budget environment we have engaged in innovative thinking and solicitation of

funds from other sources. The new African language services of Kirundi/Kinyarwanda were initiated and remain funded today by AID. A Carnegie Foundation grant to VOA for conflict resolution programming has funded the travel of correspondents to crises regions, travel significantly restricted by budget cuts of recent years.

We appreciate the link you have identified and called attention to today between broadcasting and the furthering of democracy. We welcome your interest and would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

OPENING STATEMENT

EVELYN S. LIEBERMAN

DIRECTOR

VOICE OF AMERICA

before the

HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA

AND

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

JULY 15, 1997

Chairman Smith, Chairman Royce, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this hearing on the Impact of Radio on African Democracy. I welcome the opportunity to discuss how the Voice of America furthers democracy and upholds human rights in Africa.

BACKGROUND

For 34 years, the Voice of America has served a vital role in Africa. In the early 1960's, then-USIA Director Edward R. Murrow traveled throughout the continent and returned home convinced of the dire need for news and information in the emerging African states. Murrow's goal in inaugurating VOA's Africa Division was to "bring news of Africa to the citizens of Africa." Today this mission is more important than ever, and I am proud to say that Edward R. Murrow's goal has been realized: VOA's African language broadcasts have become the most trusted source of news and information about African societies, about America and about the world. These broadcasts reach an estimated audience in the tens of millions.

Since 1942, VOA's mission has been to tell the truth to the world. In our first broadcast we said, "The news may be good. The news may be bad. We shall tell you the truth." VOA believed then and we believe now that credibility is our most important asset. In 1976 Congress established the VOA Charter, which required our programming to be accurate, balanced, objective and comprehensive. Now we broadcast in 52 languages over 700 hours each week to about 100 million listeners.

I will concentrate my remarks today on VOA programming, initiatives and audience in Africa. My colleague, Kevin Klose, Director of the International Broadcasting Bureau, will speak to you about technical operations and transmissions, the growth of our affiliate stations in Africa, as well as broad U.S. broadcast policy. I am pleased that the committee will also hear from a representative of the Committee to Protect Journalists, which provides valuable insight on repression of free media in all of our broadcast areas.

VOA PROGRAMS

VOA broadcasts over 700 hours each week in 52 languages, including English. I should note that on my first day as VOA Director, I was intensely immersed in the intricacies of broadcasting to Africa. Radio Anfani FM, VOA's affiliate in Niger, was temporarily taken off the air and the station vandalized. I wrote to the President of Niger and the Committee to Protect Journalists to get their assistance in resolving the problem. I am pleased to say that Radio Anfani is retransmitting VOA programs today to the region.

Voice of America's Africa Division now broadcasts 94 hours weekly in 10 languages:

- English
- Hausa
- Tigrinia to Ethiopia and Eritrea
- French
- Swahili
- Oromiffa to Ethiopia
- Portuguese
- Amharic
- Kirundi and Kinyarwanda to Burundi, Rwanda, Congo

VOA's particular strength is its ability to understand and report news from parts of Africa that are rarely reached or understood by the commercial media. Whether it is U.S. policy toward Nigeria, political transformation in South Africa, the descent of Sierra Leone into anarchy, or political disintegration in Central Africa, the Africa Division of VOA covers these stories and presents them to Africans and to the rest of the world in ways that are clear and meaningful. VOA provides news and information that helps Africans build democracies and fight for human rights.

Daily broadcasts include a comprehensive roundup of African, world and U.S. news and policy towards Africa. Regional correspondent reports are filed from VOA bureaus in Abidjan, Nairobi, Cairo, and Johannesburg. The Africa Division maintains a network of more than one hundred stringers (local reporters) on the continent who bring listeners up-to-the-minute news about events affecting their lives, including local elections, genocide, civil wars, famine, AIDS, and economic news. VOA features include information on agriculture, starting a small business, and African and American culture. VOA broadcasts several hours of medical programming to Africa each week, providing listeners with an interactive forum to discuss diseases prevalent in the region, and offering information and advice on health-related issues that is not otherwise available.

In South Africa, VOA has comprehensively covered activities of Nelson Mandela since his release from prison. The English, Hausa, Swahili and Portuguese language services provided election coverage in 1994 unsurpassed by other broadcasters. VOA audiences have benefited from the intensive coverage of conflict resolution in South Africa and the process of democratization in the region.

PROGRAM INITIATIVES

NEW LANGUAGES - Oromiffa and Tigrinia

To enhance our broadcasts to Ethiopia and Eritrea and to reach a wider audience, in July 1996, VOA began broadcasting in Tigrinia and Oromiffa. Although Amharic is the official language of Ethiopia, Tigrinia and Oromiffa are widely spoken in the region and audience response to this initiative has been very positive.

CENTRAL AFRICA - Kirundi/Kinyarwanda

In response to the crisis in Eastern Zaire in 1996, the Central African languages of Kirundi and Kinyarwanda were inaugurated at VOA. These broadcasts are funded by a special grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development as part of an initiative to combat hate radio and prevent a repetition of the terrible genocide in Rwanda in 1994. The seven VOA staffers in this service include Tutsi and Hutu journalists with stringers providing regional coverage from Kigali, Bujumbura, Brussels and Geneva.

Some programming highlights of the Kirundi/Kinyarwanda service include:

- * **CONFLICT RESOLUTION** -- a weekly program on conflict resolution examines root causes of conflicts, peace-making and human nature, topics most relevant for the target area.
- * **REFUGEE ASSISTANCE** -- Providing Rwandan and Burindian refugees with relevant information on where to go to get assistance, in coordination with UNICEF, the UN High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), the International Red Cross and other non-governmental organizations on the ground.
- * **DEMOCRACY** -- A weekly program teaching the basics of democracy, including the role of political parties, the role of media, and elements of local, state and Federal government elections.
- * **TRAUMA AND MENTAL HEALTH SERIES** -- A series of 12 features, written by a refugee trauma team from Harvard's School of Public Health, providing specific ways for dealing with trauma; the Harvard team contacted our Kirundi/Kinyarwanda Service to translate and broadcast the scripts which had such an impact that several thousand listeners have requested that VOA repeat the programs.

* **FAMILY REUNIFICATION** -- Last year VOA established a family reunification hotline beginning with daily announcements and messages concerning people who have lost contact with their loved ones during the Central African conflict. In one two-month period, the service received over 2000 faxes and letters. The *Family Reunification Program* broadcasts messages to assist families in their efforts to reunite and can claim at least 35 confirmed reunifications and hundreds relayed to our services through anecdotes.

VOA has responded favorably to requests from UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Save the Children, and World Vision for VOA to broadcast information on places where parents, separated from their children during the Zaire-to-Rwanda mass migration, should go to find their lost family members. On several occasions, VOA's Kirundi/Kinyarwanda public service announcements helped Rwandan refugees lost in the forests of eastern Zaire to find U.N. transit and food stations.

In March, the Kirundi/Kinyarwanda Service also translated First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton's Easter message to the people of Rwanda during her recent Africa trip. She praised Rwandans for their efforts for peace, stability and reconciliation. I'd like to read a segment from a letter I received from a listener to that broadcast:

"Let me tell you that Rwandans were more impressed when the American First Lady Hillary Clinton addressed them during her African visit. I guess the grassroots people will be able to listen to her very often on your Kirundi/Kinyarwanda Service. Particularly, women were impressed by her speech and they were feeling empowered. I hope this way of programming will continue for Rwanda and Burundi. Women would like to hear much from women like the US First Lady. I have the conviction that your program is ameliorating the lives of Rwandans and Burundians who seemed abandoned by the whole world. Now is the time that America is really showing its democratic leadership by trying to build a country which was divided by conflict."

(Mr. Bernard Bizimana)

CARNEGIE GRANT

Thanks to a \$220,000 grant from the Carnegie Foundation in support of its Conflict Resolution Initiative, a dozen reporters have traveled to diverse regions reporting on war and conflict resolution, including trips to Rwanda, Burundi and South Africa.

ANGOLA PROJECT

A two-year, \$1.4 million grant from USAID allowed VOA to launch a new radio show in Portuguese to Angola designed to coincide with the United Nations-supervised peacekeeping operation. Launched in March 1996, the new program provides Angolans with news and information that is critical to a peaceful transition to a democratic rule. In a country where the media operates under conditions of intimidation, self-censorship and official restrictions, these programs provide Angolans with a wealth of news and information. VOA has more than a dozen freelance Angolan journalists in the capital, Luanda, and throughout the country to develop this innovative programming. The show is transmitted via shortwave and AM signal to Angola and is also relayed via satellite to Radio 2000 FM in the city of Lubango.

LISTENER FEEDBACK AND AUDIENCE

Amidst the administrative quagmire I often face, my appreciation for our broadcasts increases with the many distinguished foreign visitors who come to VOA for interviews or to meet with our area specialists. On a July 7 visit to VOA, Congolese Foreign Minister Bizima Karaha said that VOA broadcasts are widely listened to in Congo. He noted that the VOA Kirundi/Kinyarwanda Service is doing an impressive job in Central Africa, providing balanced information and promoting reconciliation and democracy.

VOA is among the most respected and widely listened to of all of the broadcasters that can be heard in Africa. VOA listening rates (the percentage of adults who listen weekly) are far higher on average in Africa than anywhere else in the world.

Recent research suggests that VOA audiences in Africa remain robust, in contrast to the decline in listening to international radio stations that has occurred in some other parts of the world. In Nigeria, weekly listening to VOA rose from 16% in 1993 to 18% in 1996 -- meaning that some 12 million adults in that country listen regularly to our English or Hausa language programs. In Zambia, 1996 data shows the VOA audience at 8%, vs. 7% in 1993. The last survey for Ethiopia (1995) showed VOA to be the leading station by far in that country, with a regular audience of 19%, representing nearly 6 million adults. In Libreville, Gabon, a just-completed survey showed VOA with a weekly audience of 35%, thanks to our affiliation with a popular local station.

This last point illustrates an important trend. Throughout the continent, loosening of government controls has led to the development of independent FM radio stations in major cities. VOA has been in the forefront of the international broadcasting community in developing affiliation arrangements that allow our programs to be heard on these popular new outlets. With affiliation arrangements in place in Dakar, Accra, Kampala, Ouagadougou, Bamako, among other capitals, VOA now can reach large audiences among the urban elites who are so vital to public opinion in these countries.

Some recent research data reveals double-digit listenership in much of Africa:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Weekly listening rate</u>
Angola (urban)	5%
Cameroon (urban)	10%
Ethiopia (national)	19%
Gabon (Libreville)	35%
Ghana (national)	6%
Nigeria (national)	18%
Senegal (urban)	34%
Uganda (urban)	14%
Zambia (national)	8%

VOA REGIONAL COVERAGE

The founding mission of VOA's Africa broadcasts was to provide Africans with news about Africa. We do this on a daily basis and at an accelerated level in times of crisis. When U.S. and allied troops went to the aid of Somali civilians in 1991, VOA quickly launched a Somali Service. When Malawians lacked in-depth coverage of electoral politics in the period before the country's first multi-party elections in memory, VOA rapidly assembled a Chinyanja service to report on both government and opposition party campaigns.

VOA's Angola and Central Africa initiatives have also been in response to the needs of our listeners for very specific information at critical junctures in their democratic struggles, as well as in response to personal crises connected with mass migrations and the related trauma and health problems.

This committee and others have been considering the concept of creating a Radio Free Africa. I feel compelled to tell you that Radio Free Africa already exists in two forms. The first is a VOA affiliate named Radio Free Africa in Tanzania (a private commercial station run by a Tanzania Harvard Business School graduate) which simulcasts VOA Swahili to the Great Lakes communities south of Lake Victoria. We hope to expand this partnership to a medium wave transmission covering parts of nine nations impacted by continuing civil unrest.

The second place where "Radio Free"-type broadcasts already exist is within VOA itself. The "Radio Free" concept historically refers to surrogate broadcasting or an intense focus on local and regional issues. VOA's African language services do just that. They always have. I firmly believe that we do not need a new broadcast structure and radio entity funded by U.S. tax dollars competing with VOA for scarce resources, for talent, (e.g., Kinyarwanda journalists), for prime-time broadcasting slots, for frequencies and -- worst of all -- for listeners.

I commend this committee for the attention it has focused today on the role of international broadcasting. I wish I could say that VOA is doing everything possible to address the issues and needs of our African audience. We need to increase our stringer network in Africa, enhance our correspondent travel budget, and allow contingencies for surge broadcasting in crises. In Fiscal Year 1997 we will spend almost \$9 million on VOA broadcasts to Africa, supplemented by AID and Carnegie Foundation funding of special programs.

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

The Impact of Radio on Democracy in Africa

A testimony to the United States House of Representatives Sub Committee on Africa

by

Kenneth Y. Best,
 Publisher and Managing Director
 The Daily Observer Newspaper in Monrovia, Liberia and the Daily
 Observer Newspaper in Banjul, The Gambia

Honorable Edward R. Royce
 United States Congressman and Chairman, Subcommittee on Africa of the
 Committee on International Relations
 U.S. House of Representatives;
 Honorable Members of the Subcommittee on Africa;
 Fellow Panelists;
 Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

My name is Kenneth Yakpawolo Best. I am the publisher and managing director of two independent newspapers in West Africa--the *Daily Observer* in Monrovia, Liberia, and the *Daily Observer* in Banjul, The Gambia--the first independent dailies in both countries.

Permit me first, Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the esteemed House Subcommittee on Africa, to thank you sincerely, for affording me this rare and privileged opportunity to address you all today, Tuesday, July 15, 1997, on the important subject, *The Impact of Radio on African Democracy*.

I am admittedly not a radio person but rather a print journalist. However, as publisher of two independent daily newspapers in West Africa--one in my native Liberia and the other in The Gambia, I have been directly involved since 1980 in the critical issues of press freedom and pluralism in Africa; and have been, along with my wife and family as well as my staff, the persistent target of repressive regimes in both countries. In Liberia, our newspaper was closed down five times, my wife, secretary, woman reporter and advertising lady as well as myself and several male members of staff have been to prison--they once and I three times--under the regime of Samuel Doe. Twice the regime tried to burn down our newspaper office in Monrovia, which, on the third

attempt, was completely destroyed by fire in 1990. In The Gambia, where we started that country's first independent daily newspaper in 1992, my family and staff were hit again when in October 1994 following a military coup d'etat in July of that year, I was summarily put on a plane and deported back to war-torn Liberia. Despite these setbacks, both papers are still being published.

In May this year as a fellow at the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center in New York, I completed a book on Media, Democracy and Development in West Africa. In this work, I tried to depict the reality of the African media, especially in that sub-region, in the face of widespread repression, and the continuing struggle of print and broadcast journalists. Many of these journalists, bloodied but unbowed, are striving to do their work under very difficult and often dangerous circumstances.

Harsh as the treatment of the press has been in Africa, governments have readily understood that they can usually allow a modicum of criticism and dissent in the newspapers, as long as the state continues to dominate a far more powerful weapon, the broadcast media. Of course a newspaper can still occasionally excite the population with a powerful article or editorial; but its reach is usually limited to the educated elite in the urban areas. Even when enterprising publishers somehow manage to overcome poor transport availability and penetrate overgrown and dilapidated roads, their efforts to increase distribution run squarely into overwhelming high illiteracy rates and the oral traditions of the African people. In many countries, illiteracy has been and continues to be high not only in English, French and Portuguese, the official languages in most African countries; but in the indigenous languages as well. In the face of these realities, leaders in post-independence Africa have moved very grudgingly--or not at all--to relinquish control of state radio and television or to allow private broadcasting.

To this day, broadcasting continues to dominate the media, a reality that has been made manifest within the past decade. It was radio and television that helped the post Glasnost democratic movements in Africa, when the broadcast media, especially the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Voice of America (VOA), brought to Africans the minute-by-minute play of the dramatic changes in Central Europe. Africans heard and saw the sounds and images of the fall of the Berlin Wall and of demonstrators demanding freedom and democracy. These dramatic developments prompted them, as they reflected on the widespread and perennial repression under which they, too, were suffering, to ask themselves the momentous question, "Why not here?" On a far different tangent, Rwanda's Radio and Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTL) is widely blamed for having encouraged the ethnic cleansing of the country's Tutsi minority through the broadcast of hate

propaganda. This led to the massacre of over a million people in three months, one of the worst cases of genocide in history.

The reach of the broadcast media has considerably expanded over the past few decades. In 1965 a mere 32 of 1000 people owned radios; 10 years later, the number rose to 69 per 1000; by 1984 the figure rose to 164 per 1000. The number of transmitters also skyrocketed from only 252 in 1960 to 428 in 1976 to 1,059 in 1987. According to 1984 figures, some 200 African languages were being broadcast via radio in 63 countries.

During the exciting times following independence in the early and mid 1960s African leaders had entertained grand visions of radio networks extending deep into the countryside and remote areas. These rural areas would, they predicted, even have their own stations, which would broadcast locale-specific programs. These stations would contribute to the process of nation building by broadcasting messages of national unity produced by the national government. Kwame Nkrumah, like some other leaders, took these ideas a step further: he led the push to expand Ghana's radio network so as to expand his philosophy of pan-Africanism and socialism throughout the continent. Nkrumah, like William Tubman of Liberia, Houphouet Boigny of the Ivory Coast and Gbassingbe Eyadema of Togo and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, also made two more effective uses of radio: they turned the medium into an instrument for the establishment of *de facto* or *de jure* one-party states, for the development of the cult of personality and widespread personal rule.

The emphasis on regional stations and rural broadcasting began to wane as countries moved further and further away from the euphoria that came with independence. Governments started to face increasing dissent, to which they responded by tightening the noose on political opposition, especially in areas not immediately under their thumb. Many rural services were discontinued in favor of investments which strengthened the broadcasting power of the central station. Radio--and television when it was introduced later--became essentially the mouthpiece of governments, leading almost every newscast, morning noon and night, with report of some utterance or activity of the president, the head of state or chief executive.

But this tight control of the airwaves, the most powerful means of communication, was for most leaders, not enough. In almost every country with the exception of Nigeria and Kenya, governments either created or bought out the existing independent newspapers, completing the public ownership and control of the media. This crisis of ownership, as I have called it in my book, sealed the establishment of an one-way flow of information in African societies--from government to people, with the people effectively deprived of the chance to respond concretely or dialogue wholesomely with their leaders. This state of affairs, coupled with the establishment of one-party states, led to what I have also called the false start in governance.

When the people are denied their political right of opposition and are also deprived of their right to free expression, either personally or through the media, they are left with no alternative but to engage in clandestine means of making their grievances heard; and this, I am convinced, has led to so much chaos, instability, stagnation and regression on the African continent.

In order to confirm their control of the electronic media, especially radio, most leaders have taken no chances in selecting leadership. They were often not professional media people, rather politicians or military personnel, who would institute or maintain self-censorship. Many a broadcast media staff was bloated with civil servants with no broadcast experience, as the medium became a grand depository for political patronage and yes men. And many professional people who refused to follow the government or party line were marginalized or dismissed.

The military class in Africa, meanwhile, have never ceased to be keen observers of the behavior of their civilian bosses. They were swift in fully comprehending the power of radio, the speediest and most effective means of reaching the people. Hence, one of the first moves the soldiers have made upon staging a coup d'etat has been to move on and take over the state radio station. This is because the men in uniform know only too well that if the people can be convinced that the government has been overthrown, then the coup is already a fait accompli, since the people are so used to identifying the radio with the government itself.

The signs of rigid state control are not always easy to spot, as Frances D'Souza, Executive Director of Article 19, and Ursula Owen, Editor and Chief Executive of Index on Censorship, note in their introduction to *Who Rules the Airwaves--Broadcasting in Africa*, a joint publication of their two organizations. "More than in most instances," these two noted media watchers point out, "censorship in a state-owned radio station involves a complex of unspoken limits, a system of informally acknowledged 'gatekeepers' and a large degree of self-censorship. The familiar apparatus of censorship of the press--bannings, injunctions, seizures and arrests--is not usually to be seen." More often than not, journalists and other employees at the state media do not need to be intimidated to perform their sycophantic roles; the threat of dismissal and the slim chances of finding other work in a depressed economy effectively smother independent reporting and commentary. In countries without a viable private media, the pressures increase, as potentially rebellious employees at state radio and TV do not have the option of seeking their kind of work elsewhere.

Regional Differences

English-Speaking Africa

Radio has a long history in Africa, beginning first in South Africa in 1920. Intended initially as a service primarily for the European minorities, the medium eventually spread throughout the continent. As with the press, the development of broadcasting in certain regions depended greatly on the particular philosophies of the colonial powers, especially Britain and France.

As in South Africa, radio also began in the anglophone or former British colonies as a diversion for white settlers, who received their first transmissions of the British Broadcasting Corporation in 1927, from a relay station in Nairobi, Kenya. By the mid 1930s, nine stations had appeared in the Anglophone colonies, though their transmissions were so weak that they did not reach much beyond the city limits. It did not take long, however, for the British to decide that broadcasting should not be limited merely to settler communities. In 1936 the authorities concluded that radio in their African colonies would function as a public service for the colonialists and indigenous peoples. Their efforts to staff the station with locals accelerated in the 50s, particularly in West Africa. Starting in 1951 dozens of African broadcasters were sent to Britain for training courses at the BBC. By mid decade the number of native managers and technicians at Ghana Radio, for example, had risen more than ten-fold. In direct contrast to the French, the English also encouraged the use of vernacular languages in order to reach a greater share of the population.

The British did more than just support the notion of public broadcasting; they also attempted to replicate the structures for public media that they know from England. By the time of independence, most anglophone colonies could boast of public corporations modeled after the BBC, created in fact, with the help of top BBC officials. Soon after independence, unfortunately, many of these public corporations lost their special status. Some were absorbed into the state structure, so to be under the strict management of various government ministries, especially the Ministry of Information. Others kept the public corporation label, but gradually became more and more strongly tied to the government and to the whims of the political elite. By the 1970s the transformation was over in virtually all of the English-speaking countries; radio and TV had lost their independence. The same was true in Liberia which, though never a European colony, received considerable assistance from the British in establishing the state apparatus of the Liberian Broadcasting Corporation (LBS)

French-Speaking Africa

The evolution of broadcasting in the francophone colonies was completely different from that in English-speaking Africa, yet another legacy of French policy of direct rule and centralization. While the English soon decided to transform the fledging medium into a public service, the French authorities saw broadcasting as an effective and cheap way of smothering anti-colonial dissent. At the same time, they believed radio could be a powerful tool in the overall goal of making Africans into model Frenchmen and women. When the French moved to partly indigenize radio toward the end of the colonial period and to use some vernacular language broadcasting, the decision was mainly practical and not idealistic; they wanted to extend the reach of their pro-governmental broadcasts and to compete with the vernacular services offered by anglophone countries.

As independence approached, Paris evidently viewed radio as an important means of keeping the soon-to-be former colonies tied to France. The authorities decided to create quasi-governmental organizations to assist African broadcasters and, in effect, bind them to France for years to come. The most important of these was founded in 1956: the Societe de Rediffusion de la France d'Outremer (SORAFOM). In the beginning the French government funded all of SORAFOM's activities; later African governments pitched in 30 to 40% of the expenses. SORAFOM constructed the stations, bought the equipment, organized the programming and operated the stations. In the first year alone the agency oversaw the training of more than 300 African broadcasters at the Studio-Ecole de Maisons-Laffitte outside of Paris. Some scholars have suggested that the French method of training and the vast numbers trained in Paris contributed to the minimal role played by radio in the independence movements in francophone countries.

While the post independence era saw the development of national networks, the close relationship with France remained and continues until this day. Vast amounts of French programming still dominate the airwaves, especially in Cote d'Ivoire, discouraging to some extent the development of domestic productions.

The Impact of Radio on Democracy Today

The rapid advance of technology, especially in the past 15 years, has accentuated the primacy of radio in mass communication worldwide, and especially on the African continent. The relative inexpensiveness of FM radio equipment has made it easy for non-governmental institutions and private entrepreneurs to plunge into broadcasting; and many have done just that as a direct result of the fall of communism in 1989. The worldwide clamor for freedom and democracy quickly led to the demands of Africans

in some of the most repressive regimes for national conferences to discuss not just the political future of their countries but the introduction of multiparty democracy. Many of these demands had been articulated in some places before, for example among the professionals, students, academics and trade unions in Ghana and Kenya; but they were met with vigorous resistance and repression. But after 1989 things would never be the same again. Along with this came also the demand for pluralism in media, especially newspapers and radio stations.

So fervent, persistent and widespread were these demands that dictatorial and tyrannical regimes in such places as Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mali, Togo and Zaire were forced to relent. Even Life President Hastings Kamuzu Banda, who for nearly 30 years had ruled his landlocked country with an iron fist, found himself in a completely changed world. Challenged single handedly by a courageous trade unionist Chakufwa Chihana, who dared to return home and begin the direct struggle for democracy, Banda had no choice but to listen, for the very first time. The whole of Africa heard on BBC and VOA the daily and hourly unfolding of events in that beleaguered country, and the announcement from Western donors that they were suspending foreign aid, critical to Malawi's survival, until Life President Banda decided that the country was ready for democracy. It was this, coupled with the determination of the Malawian people for change, that forced Dr. Banda to submit to democratic pluralism, leading to the elections of 1994.

Almost the identical thing happened in Kenya. President Daniel Arap Moi had been insisting that it would take at least 10 years before Kenya would be ready for multiparty democracy. Scarcely two weeks later, however, Kenya's finance minister returned empty-handed from a meeting with the Paris Club, where he was told that the West would withhold any further economic aid from Kenya until it was "ready" for democracy. It was at that point that President Moi suffered a sudden change of heart. He announced that Kenya was ready for multiparty democracy, which his people had demanding for years.

But Moi, like Mobutu of Zaire, Eyadema of Togo, Biya of Cameroon, Generals Babangida and Abacha of Nigeria and other leaders, have vigorously striven to frustrate the democratic movements in their countries. Many of them had taken initiatives to frustrate and divide the opposition. An essential part of their strategy has been not only to limit opposition access to the public media, but to continue a pattern of harassment and intimidation of the private media as well. The aim here seems to be to restrict the opposition access to the wider public; to limit media's capacity to hold the government accountable; and to minimize forthright public discussion of the burning issues of the day, especially the issues of state corruption and mismanagement, human rights abuse and the negative and sometimes vicious attitude to the opposition.

Despite these persistent obstacles, however, it is important to point out that the pro-

democracy movement in Africa is alive, and that the people are not relenting in their determination to plant democratic ideals and practices in African soil. One only has to observe the students in Kenya to realize that Africans are now determined more than ever before to rid themselves of tyranny and join the worldwide march to political pluralism, social justice and prosperity. African journalists, both print and broadcast, are at the very center of this struggle for democracy. In spite of the harassment, imprisonment, brutality as well as the vicious economic and financial distress that so many journalists and media houses have suffered, they continue to hold high the torch of freedom, democracy and justice.

Many independent newspapers are still being published in the face of persistent repression, and the FM revolution that started in the early 90s is also gaining momentum. Many governments have yielded to pressure to open up the system to private licensing, and civic institutions as well as entrepreneurs are striving to keep some of the stations alive. The FM stations are contributing significantly to the empowerment of the people. Many of them are fully licensed, while others are being operated clandestinely, because they insist on opening up the political discussion when some oppressive governments prefer them to remain silent.

Military repression against open discussion and popular dissent has not dampened the spirits of the entrepreneurial Nigerians, who have succeeded in establishing some 40 private FM stations so far. These include Ray Power, licensed in 1995 and Radio Obosi in Eastern Nigeria, 1996. However, a broadcasting lobby called the Broadcasting Organization of Nigeria (BOA) has been established and given the authority to regulate aspects of broadcasting. There is fear that this body, which has government backing, might attempt to restrict the operations and further development of private radio in the country.

The absence of popular access in Nigeria, for example, has led to two important developments: first, the emergence of the Freedom Frequency in Lagos. It is an underground radio station that has become the most popular in the country. We understand that the Nigerian military government has been making strenuous efforts to find this station, to no avail. The Freedom Frequency broadcasts two hours a day, in the morning and at night. Its message is to mobilize people to resist military rule. It plays conflict music, such as Fela, the popular and controversial Nigerian musician, and Bob Marley; then the station offers news and brilliant and powerful commentaries, exhorting the people never to give up the struggle but to press on until final victory.

The second development is Radio Kudirat, set up, we understand, by the eminent Nigerian playwright and novelist, Wole Soyinka. A shortwave station anchored

somewhere in Europe, it is reportedly funded by some Scandinavian groups. It is named for the assassinated wife of Chief Abiola.

There is concern in some quarters that the proliferation of FM stations, which by definition have limited outreach--150 kilometers, could be used to accentuate ethnic consciousness, since many of them are only catering to the needs of their immediate environment. There is concern that this could spell danger in a place like Nigeria where there are 250 ethnic groups, and give new impetus to the conflict between cultural pluralism and national identity. While the A.M. stations were promoting the illusion of national unity and monolithic culture, the F.M. stations have come to respond to the ethnic yearning for diversity, pluralism and democracy. However, this need not be a dangerous omen. Indeed, charity begins at home, and local stations are expected to cater to the socio-cultural, economic and political needs of the local community, which local news papers throughout the world are doing.

The thing to hope for is enlightened leadership in these stations, and in media as a whole, that will accentuate the positive, while dealing forthrightly with the problems of the immediate and wider society. It is possible that other parts of a country, seeing how effectively FM radio is being used to develop the people's political and social consciousness and improvement of the community, would want the same for their regions. This is a healthy development.

Among the countries where the greatest progress is being made in private radio are the two French-speaking nations of Mali and Senegal. Senegal has always maintained an openness to media, and this has improved over the years. today, Sud Communication and other private media institutions are forging ahead in the establishing and operation of successful newspapers, magazines and radio stations. Sud was waiting for a license to start a TV station as well. In Mali, there are scores of FM stations, perhaps comparatively more than in any other country. And the press is free. In that situation, the potential is limitless for political, economic and social development.

The challenge is to most African governments to loosen the restrictions on media and open discussion, and allow the people to freely express themselves and in that way contribute wholesomely and effectively to community and nation building. But if the governments insist on the archaic method of repression, which people throughout the world, including China, have simply rejected today, then there will be more and more underground movements in media and elsewhere that will be difficult, if not impossible, to regulate or contain.

It is not surprising that the two shining examples of democracy in Africa today, South Africa and Namibia, have liberalized their media and become the first on the continent to turn the state broadcasting apparatus over to independent management and

regulation. The South African Broadcasting Commission is an independent body, charged with monitoring and regulating the powerful South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) and all other broadcast institutions in the country. The Commission grants licenses and frequencies and regulates the operations of all stations, radio and television. In both Namibia and South Africa, the press is free and it is refreshing to note that journalists in those countries are not subject to the harassment and indignities prevalent in most parts of the continent.

Hopefully these two countries will continue to show the light to the other parts of the continent, and give encouragement to peoples still struggling for free expression, free press, free association and democracy as a whole.

Conclusion

I have chosen to close on this note of hope, that Africans are being inspired by the light that is coming from the southern part of the continent, even as they struggle by their own efforts to break out of the structures of dictatorship and repression in the greater part of the continent that used to be called 'Independent Africa'. Our brothers and sisters down south, only yesterday trapped under the yoke of racial domination, are today showing that democracy is possible, even in a country as diverse and complex as South Africa.

Encouragement is what Africa needs. The United States, the world's democratic leader, can do a lot to help us. We need more training. We need equipment and supplies. But most important, we need political and diplomatic support for our struggle against for the building of viable democracies in Africa. If the USA is serious about helping us build democracy, and I believe she is, the US Congress and the Executive Branch will have to make some tough choices. This country has the capacity to use the economic weapon to help bring about the desired change. The economic weapon has been effective in many places. It can also work in Africa. I am not talking about foreign aid. I am talking about bringing pressure to bear on the oppressive governments; and also by helping the people on the ground, like those taking the initiatives in the media, especially the radio and newspapers.

But though I am a newspaperman, I know that radio can have a far greater impact on democratization; for people do not have to be able to read and write to listen to a clear and powerful message on radio. I believe that it is possible for radio to become the most potent force in the democratization of Africa. The initiatives have already been taken by people on the ground in Africa. All they need is encouragement and support to help them through this last hurdle. Democracy in the whole of Africa is a distinct possibility. If we could achieve it in South Africa where once it seemed impossible, every place else is within the realm of possibility.

I thank you.

Testimony of Kakuna Kerina
Program Coordinator for Africa at the Committee to Protect Journalists
July 15, 1997
Subcommittee on Africa of the House Committee on International Relations
Subcommittee on International Relations and Human Rights
Topic: The Impact of Radio on African Democracy

Introduction

My name is Kakuna Kerina. I am the Program Coordinator for the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization based in New York City. Our board of directors includes some of the most distinguished figures in the U.S. news business and is dedicated to the defense of the professional rights of journalists around the world, regardless of ideology or nationality. We are funded entirely by private donations, and accept no funds directly or indirectly from any government.

CPJ's mandate is the promotion of press freedom: We document, protest, and publicize physical and legal attacks on journalists and other violations of press freedom. We also monitor and analyze regional trends with regard to media issues. Our organization has no position on the broad questions of U.S. policy toward any other country, except to the extent that those policies have an impact on the ability of independent reporters, editors and broadcasters to do their jobs without government interference or fears of reprisal.

As CPJ's program coordinator for Africa, I am responsible for all of our research and advocacy projects in 45 countries generally classified as sub-Saharan Africa. As you would expect, the issue of radio broadcasting and the democratic process is a priority for CPJ because liberalization of the airwaves in the region has, to date, not materialized as expected in the new multi-party democracies.

Section I: The African Media's Role in the Democratic Process

Democratization, while heralded by Africa's citizens and supported by Western governments, has brought unexpected and often painfully familiar conditions for the press in recent years. Few leaders appeared willing to tolerate the free speech they promised fellow citizens on the campaign trail. As a result, the broadcast media remains state-owned throughout most of Africa, with government showing no signs of relinquishing their control of the airwaves. By restricting private ownership of the broadcast media by independent press and opposition political parties, state officials deny the majority of the population access to information which could threaten current governments' future success at the ballot box.

Instead of being viewed as a partner by officials of the new democracies, Africa's press, which played an invaluable role in fostering and encouraging the democratic process throughout the region, is today being attacked by the same leaders who proclaim to the West that they have successfully completed the transition to democracy. Election campaigns, the period when citizens should enjoy unrestricted access to information in order to fully participate in the democratic process, are in reality the time when journalists are most often targeted for judicial harassment and attacks ranging from routine detention and physical assault (note the current crisis in Kenya) to bombings of editorial offices (note the Ivory Coast elections in late 1995).

Because of high illiteracy rates, low incomes in high-inflation economies, and large numbers of citizens living outside urban areas, radio is truly the medium of the masses and the most effective tool for reaching most of the continent's population.

Section II: The Challenges Facing State and Independent Radio Journalists

Government intolerance for criticism and demands for more transparency in state operations and policymaking has resulted in numerous cases of both independent and state journalists being detained, threatened, interrogated, and attacked by state security personnel. (I have attached examples of such cases documented by CPJ for your reference.)

Journalists who continue to question or report on the contradictions between state officials' rhetoric and their actions, run the risk of being viewed as "agitators" and "antagonists." As such, radio journalists employed by the state practice self-censorship, or what they often term "practical journalism," as a defense against such harassment. State journalists, who have few opportunities for employment in the private media, often live under a psychological obligation to three conflicting sides: the government, their fellow citizens, and their dependents. In a profession where the term "job security" is an oxymoron at best, private radio journalists walk a fine line between being branded as government enemies and retaining their licenses which are granted by the state.

Section III: The Struggle to Gain Access to Africa's Airwaves

Throughout Africa, the broadcast media remains firmly in the grip of government. Even countries that permit independent radio are not taking any chances; licenses are granted to religious organizations or allies of government. As a result, while publicly claiming to support pluralism, state officials have institutionalized a means to perpetuate their views and their rule by broadcasting ruling-party propaganda to the poor and undereducated.

The Nation newspaper group which publishes Kenya's leading independent newspaper, *The Daily Nation*, submitted an application for broadcasting licenses over six years ago. To date, the government has not provided any explanation for the delay in reviewing the company's application, however applicants linked to President Daniel arap Moi's ruling Kenyan African National Union Party (KANU), and those who agree not to broadcast news programming, have been awarded private broadcasting licenses. With the exception of community radio, such as the stations which are flourishing in post-apartheid South Africa, most of the region's privately owned FM radio stations air music programming and rarely broadcast issue-oriented shows or information relevant to a population whose daily life is shaped by poverty and unemployment.

Section IV: Shortwave Broadcasts by International Radio Networks

One cannot overemphasize the importance of international radio networks such as Voice of America (VOA), The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Radio France International (RFI) and others, broadcasting in numerous African and European languages, that are the sole source of international news, "sensitive" regional issues, and local news that does not make it onto state-owned radio broadcasts. At this very moment, Sierra Leone's besieged citizens are tuning in to the VOA and BBC for information about current clashes between the ECOMOG peacekeeping forces and the Sierra Leone Armed Forces Ruling Council which ousted President Tejan Kabbah's democratically elected government last month.

The irony of depending upon foreign broadcasts for reports about mortar fire that is in earshot of anyone in Freetown, is not lost on local journalists, many of whom were employed by the private radio stations which were immediately shut down by the AFRC after the coup. It is no coincidence that state-owned

radio stations are among the most well-guarded government properties in Africa—after all, a coup is only successful when its leaders can broadcast that they have captured the State House.

Section V: Affiliate Relations With International Radio Networks Support Local Efforts

Affiliate relations between international broadcast networks such as the VOA have, in addition to providing vital information in local languages to vast segments of Africa's rural populations, provided invaluable opportunities to local broadcasters and journalists. By airing original broadcasts from local broadcasters internationally, the VOA has provided a desperately needed and long-overdue outlet for Africa's journalists to broadcast their news to the outside world. Additionally, this relationship has also helped to promote the professionalism and quality of the often-underestimated skills of the region's journalists.

These relationships do come at a cost, however—many independent radio broadcasters with international affiliate relationships, such as Horizon-FM in Burkina Faso, Radio 2000 in Angola, and Radio Anfani in Niger, have been targeted by intolerant governments for their refusal to restrict their broadcasts. Subsequently, they were forced off the air, had their programming banned, and employees were detained or assaulted.

Section VI: The Importance of Continued Support for International and Local Independent Media Broadcasting in Africa

At a time when many of Africa's new democracies are not yet secure enough to face and weather challenges by disgruntled militaries, the risks of underfunding international broadcast are significant and could result in a reversal of the gains of internationally funded programs supporting the democratic process and the media to date. Continued support for international radio broadcasts must be combined with policies that encourage democracy and pluralism for Africa's citizens to be afforded the opportunity to participate fully in this nascent form of governance.

International aid funding policies also must wholly incorporate support for Africa's independent journalists who must buck a daunting set of obstacles, including competition with subsidized state-owned media for advertising, the escalating costs of production, government harassment and the steady erosion of the population's already limited or non-existent disposable income. Despite these impediments, the region's journalists persevere with great conviction. As staunch supporters of democracy, these professionals have already paid and will continue a high price for their convictions.

By widening the range of information available to citizens, independent radio reinforces multi-party democracies and contributes to the creation of freer and more tolerant societies. In the meantime, as Africa's journalists struggle to gain access to the airwaves, international broadcasters must continue to fill the existing void by providing a link to the international community as well as desperately needed information about local issues.

APPENDIX I

**INCIDENTS OF HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION AGAINST BROADCAST
JOURNALISTS IN AFRICA****ANGOLA****October 30, 1996, Antonlo Casemero, Angolan Popular Television, KILLED**

Casemero, a reporter working for the state-run Angolan Popular Television, was murdered by four unidentified gunmen at his home in Cabinda. The motive behind the murder has not yet been established, but informed sources in Angola say Casemero had quarreled with a government official two weeks before he was murdered. CPJ asked President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos to conduct an immediate and thorough investigation into the circumstances of Casemero's death.

BURKINA FASO**March 14, 1997, Horizon-FM, CENSORED**

The government's Conseil Superieur d'Information (CSI) served Horizon-FM with documents instructing the radio station to suspend the listener call-in programs "Sondage Democratique" and "Ca Ne Va Pas" until the CSI creates regulations governing radio broadcasting. The ban is believed to be designed to quash the program's broadcasting of anonymous callers' critical comments on government policies. According to CSI documents, "those who call in under the protection of anonymity are making serious attacks on the honor and dignity of others, and are threatening the public order. The programs mislead the public into thinking that there is freedom without any sense of responsibility."

February 17, 1997, Moustapha Thiombiano, Horizon-FM, ATTACKED

Thiombiano, president general of the independent radio station Horizon-FM, was physically attacked by four supporters of the Congress for Democracy and Progress (CDP), the ruling party, in front of the CDP's offices and at the U.S. Embassy. The attack followed the Feb. 16 broadcast of a call-in program, "Sondage Democratique," during which listeners are invited to voice their opinions on democracy in Burkina Faso. Because of Thiombiano's fear of government reprisals against news programs, Horizon-FM suspended broadcasting on Feb. 17. It resumed on-air programming on Feb. 19 with an all-music format. In a letter to President Blaise Compaore, CPJ condemned the attack against Thiombiano.

GABON**May 20, 1997, La Radio Commercial, ATTACKED**

Independent radio broadcaster in Libreville was vandalized by several unidentified armed men who stormed the station's broadcast studios. The transmitter was completely destroyed and the station has been off the air since the attack.

GAMBIA**February 22, 1996, Boubacar Sankanu, Free-lancer, IMPRISONED, HARASSED**

Sankanu, a free-lancer for the biweekly newspaper The Point, Voice of America (VOA), Radio Deutsche Welle, and the British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC), was detained incommunicado for one week and interrogated about his reports for VOA. He was released on bail, without charge, and directed to report daily to the police for one week. Sankanu was also "strongly encouraged" by state security agents to cease filing radio reports for broadcast on international networks.

June 28, 1996, Boubacar Sankanu, Free-lancer, HARASSED

Sankanu, the Banjul stringer for the Voice of America, was stopped by immigration officials at a checkpoint and prohibited from leaving The Gambia. Sankanu was on his way to Senegal to cover stories there. Police claimed that he has been under surveillance since he was released from detention Feb. 29, and must obtain police clearance to cross borders.

July 22, 1996, Boubacar Sankanu, Free-lancer, THREATENED, HARASSED

Sankanu, a stringer for the Voice of America, was interviewing spectators at a Banjul celebration when three intelligence officers detained him and drove him from the event to a distant road. They confiscated his script for a VOA story that quoted sources as calling for interim elections, and demanded he identify his sources or "pay the consequences." He was released the same day.

LESOTHO**March 7, 1997, Candi Ramainoane, MoAfrika, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) HARASSED**

Ramainoane, editor in chief of the independent Sesotho-language weekly MoAfrika and a correspondent for the British Broadcasting Corporation and the South African Broadcasting Corporation, returned home from work to find five policemen surrounding his house. Ramainoane fired gunshots into the air and the policemen fled. The incident followed a statement by Deputy Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili on state-run Radio Lesotho earlier that week, accusing Ramainoane of misrepresenting in the foreign press the Basutoland Congress Party's

annual general conference. Mosisili also accused Ramainoane of taking part in a plot to oust Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle as leader of the ruling BCP.

LIBERIA

April, 1996

ELCM Radio, ATTACKED Ducor Radio, ATTACKED Radio Monrovia, ATTACKED

Several news outlets that had been critical of the Liberian Council of State, a recently formed coalition group, were attacked in April during factional fighting between the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), whose leader Charles Taylor is a vice-chairman of the Council, and the United Liberation Movement (ULIMO), led by Roosevelt Johnson. The transmitter of ELCM, an FM radio station operated by the Catholic Church, were destroyed by arson in separate attacks in the capital of Monrovia. In another incident, the offices of the privately owned Ducor Radio and Radio Monrovia were ransacked. All of the news outlets have been targeted in the past by fighting factions loyal to the NPLF and ULIMO. However, it is suspected by many that the NPLF is responsible for the attacks. The Press Union of Liberia condemned the destructive acts and told CPJ that it believes they were calculated attempts on the parts of some members of warring factions to silence the press.

April 7, 1996, Nyenati Allison, Associated Press (AP), British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC), THREATENED

Allison, a correspondent covering the outbreak of fighting in Monrovia for AP and the BBC's "Focus on Africa," was chased into hiding by fighters belonging to the United Liberation Movement (ULIMO), the warring faction led by Roosevelt Johnson, on April 7. Johnson accused Allison of reporting lies about ULIMO's role in the fighting that erupted in Monrovia the previous day. Allison fled to safety in the U.N. compound for two nights, during which ULIMO fighters returned, circled the compound, and fired their guns. On April 9, because his presence was putting the lives of others in the compound at risk, Allison left in disguise. He sought refuge at the headquarters of ECOMOG, the West African peacekeeping force. Allison returned to covering the conflict on April 11.

April 19, 1996, Nyenati Allison, Associated Press (AP), British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC), HARASSED

Allison, a reporter for AP and the BBC'S "Focus on Africa", was detained up by soldiers from Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia. The fighters cited Allison's critical reports on fighting in Monrovia and the neighboring suburbs as the reason for his detention. Allison was released on April 21.

May 3, 1996, Nyenati Allison, Associated Press (AP), and British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC), HARASSED

Allison, the Liberian correspondent for AP and the BBC, fled the country with his two children after being threatened by soldiers for the third time. On May 3, a commander of the National Patriotic Forces of Liberia (NPFL) ordered Allison to go with him to NPFL headquarters to answer questions about a story the correspondent had filed in which he reported that no armed faction had the upper hand in the fighting. Before reaching the headquarters, however, Allison managed to escape. He picked up his two children, and together they boarded a fishing boat that took them to the Ivorian capital of Abidjan. But immediately after learning that several NPFL agents were in the city, they left by bus for Ghana.

January 7, 1997, Liberian Broadcasting Service (ELBC), CENSORED

The Liberian Broadcasting Service (ELBC), a state-run radio station operated by opposition members, suspended the broadcast of human rights programming. The suspension stemmed from government disapproval of the critical coverage of the warring factions and of the Council of State's activities on the program "Justice and Peace Forum."

NIGER

July 6, 1996, Radio Anfani, CENSORED

Soldiers took over the offices of Radio Anfani (FM100 MHz), a privately owned radio station and Voice of America affiliate in Niamey. The military's actions were believed to be in retaliation for the station's coverage of the political opposition during the run-up to presidential elections, held July 7-8. Radio Anfani resumed broadcasting on Aug. 4.

July 30, 1996, Abdoulaye Senyi, Haske, British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC), IMPRISONED

Senyi, a reporter for the independent newspaper Haske and a correspondent for the BBC, was arrested, apparently because of a BBC broadcast in which Senyi quoted a U.S. State Department communiqué that said the U.S. government intended to cut aid to Niger. Senyi was not charged. He was released on Aug. 3.

March 1, 1997, Radio Anfani, ATTACKED

Five men, armed and wearing military uniforms, entered the premises of Radio Anfani (FM 100) and forced the station off the air. They held the night security guard and janitor at gunpoint, and ransacked and destroyed equipment worth an estimated US\$80,000. The security guard recognized the assailants as military personnel and questioned them about their actions. They responded merely that they were under orders. In a letter to Gen. Ibrahim Bare Mainassara, CPJ condemned the attack on Radio Anfani and called for a thorough and timely investigation of the

incident.

NIGERIA

February 15, 1996, Hillary Anderson, British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC), HARASSED

Anderson, a correspondent for the BBC, was arrested by State Security Service (SSS) agents as she was leaving the Reuter office in Lagos. Anderson was transported to SSS headquarters and detained without charge. She was released on Feb. 16. Anderson had arrived in Lagos just days before her arrest to begin her work for the BBC.

July 31, 1996, Okina Deesor, Radio Rivers, IMPRISONED

Deesor, a producer with Radio Rivers in the state of Rivers, was arrested and detained at the Government House Cell prison, reportedly without food or water. On Aug. 3, he was transferred to the Mobile Police Headquarters in Port Harcourt. According to Maj. Obi Umabi, who ordered the arrest, Deesor's detention was in connection with the July 18 Radio Rivers broadcast of the national anthem of the Ogoni people. As of Dec. 18, Deesor remained in prison. In a letter to President Sani Abacha, CPJ denounced Deesor's continued detention and asked for his immediate and unconditional release.

ZAIRE

February 15, 1996, Jane Standley, British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC), EXPELLED BBC crew HARASSED

Nairobi-based correspondent Standley was expelled from Zaire at the border town of Goma because of her coverage of relief workers' charges that Zairean troops were pillaging the Kibumba camp for Rwandan refugees. The expulsion was ordered by Zairean Interior Minister Gustave Malumba Mbangula, who claimed the workers' charges were "full of lies and damaged the dignity and security of the Zairean State." In a related incident, a BBC television crew in Goma was blocked from leaving the country by Zairean intelligence officials, who confiscated their passports.

May 23, 1996, Adrien de Mun, Free-lancer, HARASSED, EXPELLED

De Mun, a French free-lance journalist based in Rwanda and working for Radio France Internationale and several other international radio networks, was detained on unspecified charges in the Goma region of Zaire, then transferred to Kinshasa. The arrest followed the Zairean government's ban on journalists crossing into Zaire from neighboring countries. De Mun was accused of working illegally in Zaire and expelled on May 29.

February 23, 1997, Jean-Phillipe Ceppi, Liberation, British Broadcasting Corp (BBC), EXPELLED

Zairian authorities expelled Jean-Phillipe Ceppi, a correspondent for the French daily Liberation and the French service of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), after detaining him for questioning for 48 hours. Authorities objected to his report, published in the Feb. 21 edition of Liberation and broadcast on the BBC, concerning the retreat of the Zairian army, which is fighting rebel forces.

ZAMBIA

November 19, 1996, Zambia National Broadcasting Corp. (ZNBC), HARASSED

Ten members of the opposition Zambia Democratic Congress (ZADECO) forced their way into the Kitwe television studios of state-owned ZNBC. They demanded to appear on live television to declare their objections to alleged manipulation of the Nov. 18 presidential and parliamentary elections. Police based at ZNBC persuaded the ZADECO protesters to leave the TV studios.

November 26, 1996, Chibamba Kanyama, Zambian National Broadcasting Corp. (ZNBC), HARASSED

Kanyama was dismissed from ZNBC because he had been working at the same time for his own news agency, the Chibamba Kanyama Media Agency (CKMA), and because he had accepted 21 million kwacha (about US\$16,000) from the Committee for a Clean Campaign. He allegedly used the money to produce a series of television-debate programs on the topic of the November presidential and general elections.

February 6, 1997, Zambia National Broadcasting Corp. (ZNBC), THREATENED, HARASSED

Zambian Vice President Godfrey Miyanda accused the state-owned ZNBC television station of screening "dirty programs that run contrary to Christian values" and warned of impending government action.

ZIMBABWE

March 27, 1996, Chris Chinaka, Reuters, THREATENED

While attending a government reception in Harare, Reuters bureau chief Chinaka was told by the secretary general of the Indigenous Business Development Center (IBDC), Enoch Kamshinda, that he should have been killed for writing stories critical of President Robert Mugabe. Kamshinda advised Chinaka to stop writing such articles in the future, adding that the matter had been discussed by government officials and that Chinaka and other reporters were on a "hit list."

**TESTIMONY OF JOHN MARKS
BEFORE THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA**

July 15, 1997

Mr. Chairman, I very much appreciate the chance to testify before you. I commend you for holding these hearings and recognizing the huge potential of radio in helping to prevent conflict and build democracy in Africa-- and elsewhere for that matter.

I am John Marks, President of Search for Common Ground and Common Ground Productions, non-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) based in Washington, DC. Behind me is Sheldon Himelfarb, Common Ground Productions' Executive Producer.

Founded in 1982, Search for Common Ground currently works in the Middle East, Burundi, Angola, Macedonia, Bosnia, Ukraine, and Liberia. We try to prevent violence and transform conflict into cooperative action. Over the years, we have developed a number of operational methods, which cumulatively make up our *toolbox*, containing 17 techniques - including such traditional means as mediation and facilitation - and less conventional methods, including TV production, team newspaper reporting, and community organizing. Radio is one of our most important tools.

In Africa with its strong oral tradition, radio is the only medium for reaching a mass audience - for good or for evil. The evil side was evident in Rwanda in 1994, when *Radio des Mille Collines* literally incited that country to genocide. That was truly *hate radio*.

One of Search for Common Ground's basic premises is that radio can also be a force for good and help bring tolerance, peace, and reconciliation into popular awareness.

We currently operate radio production studios in Burundi and Liberia and are just finishing a multi-part series on African conflict and its resolution for broadcast across the entire continent.

Just as I believe that radio helped keep alive democratic ideas in Eastern Europe during the Cold War, I feel that radio can strengthen democratic alternatives to violence in Africa. I am convinced that, over time, a steady stream of accurate information and positive messages can make a difference. In my view, programs like ours reinforce moderates and increase the chances of peaceful solutions. Results might include: providing a counter balance to mis-information intended to promote paranoia and incite violence, making young people less willing to join a murderous militia or strengthening parents in discouraging their children from getting involved.

In Burundi, in 1995, with funding from USAID, we started *Studio Ijambo* to counter *hate radio* and promote reconciliation. *Ijambo* means *wise words* in the Kirundi language. Our field producer in Bujumbura for these last two years has been Bryan Rich, a gifted young man whose work was recently recognized when Harvard University awarded him a Nieman Fellowship. Bryan established the studio, put together a team of Hutu and Tutsi journalists, and started producing programs in Kirundi, Swahili, Kinyarwanda, and French.

Today, at a cost of about \$900,000 a year, we produce about fifteen hours a week of *common ground* programming for Burundi. We specialize in news and half-hour-long magazine programs that combine culture, politics, music, and social issues. In addition, we air dramatic programming with themes of reconciliation, including *Our Neighbors, Ourselves*, a 52-part soap opera that tells, on the human level, the story of a Hutu and a Tutsi family and how they transcend hatred.

In Burundi as elsewhere, we do not compete with local radio stations, and we do no actual broadcasting. Rather, we use our studio to produce programs that we make available to Burundi National Radio and to such international broadcasters as BBC, the Voice of America, and Reuters.

In December, ABC's *Nightline* profiled *Studio Ijambo* which Ted Koppel called "the voice of hope."

I must say that the Hutu and Tutsi reporters at *Studio Ijambo* show great courage, simply by working together. It is truly remarkable that during a civil war, a staff of 22 comprised of an equal mix of both ethnic groups remain committed to working together and producing accurate, unbiased information. Many Burundians - even family and friends - consider them to be traitors to their ethnic group. Balanced reporting is very dangerous in Burundi. As *Nightline* said, "*Studio Ijambo* [is built] on the fundamentals of good journalism. Fairness is everything."

The Dutch government wanted us to replicate *Studio Ijambo* when it provided funding last year to establish a similar radio production facility in Liberia, another country with bloody civil strife. In Monrovia, we operate as *Talking Drum Studio* - talking drums being the instrument used by all ethnic groups to communicate during traditional ceremonies. We produce programs to aid the reconciliation process and support elections scheduled for July 19. Eight different Liberian stations carry our programs. However, even the best programming cannot reach people without working radios - in a country where electricity and batteries are extremely scarce. To help overcome this problem, we are distributing 5,000 *wind-up* radios to refugees and rural population centers, with support from USAID/OTI and the UN Development Programme.

Mr. Chairman, I request permission to wind up my radio and demonstrate to you how it works and to place into the record a *Washington Post* article describing this type of radio, along with descriptive material on our other radio projects.

Beyond Liberia and Burundi, we and Ubuntu Productions of Cape Town are currently producing a multi-part radio and TV series to look at conflict and its resolution across the entire African continent. Called *Africa: Search for Common Ground*, the series premiered in South Africa in June. We plan to broadcast the series in more than thirty countries, with English, French, and Portuguese versions.

To give you an idea of what these programs sound like, I am providing copies of a cassette, containing three short programs we produced about reconciliation in Angola. These relate how Angola is rebuilding the bridges to join the country together after thirty years of war.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that you and your colleagues take the time listen to this 30-minute audiocassette, perhaps as you drive home tonight.

In conclusion, let me say that American media usually operate from the premise that conflict is interesting and agreement is dull. Indeed, the media tend to reward discordant behavior with airtime and column-inches, and they usually penalize efforts at building consensus and solving problems -- by ignoring them. Such an approach may be fine for provoking listeners and selling newspapers, but this sort of reporting has a negative impact on the democratic process and on sustainable development.

I very much hope that the United States will not choose to try to export this negative side of our free press to Africa. Societies - and this includes our own - almost certainly function better when differences are resolved peacefully. Indeed, if solutions are to be found to the growing list of problems that confront Africa, common sense calls for outcomes which reduce polarization and which are inclusive rather than exclusive.

I also hope, Mr. Chairman, that in your praiseworthy desire to use radio to promote democracy in Africa you do not create a broadcasting monolith that sucks up available resources and makes it more difficult for NGOs like mine to do our work. We are independent, and we are private. We do not adhere to a party line. Our programs cost a small fraction of what they would if they were paid for directly by the government. And we are not centralized. We produce in Burundi for Burundi. We produce in Liberia for Liberia. We work with local partners and journalists. Production decisions reflect local conditions, and that allows us to avoid the tag of "cultural imperialist."

Please consider what the *Sunday Times* of Johannesburg's media critic, Zakes Mda, recently wrote, as he reviewed our new radio and TV series:

It is a fact that South Africa depends on European and American media organizations for information about Africa. Even though we are of this continent, it is by Reuters, Gemini, CNN, BBC, or even Hollywood that our perception of it is shaped.... They are, after all, meant first to serve their own home markets in the western world, which have been socialized over the centuries into expecting only

catastrophe and backwardness to come from this continent. Out of more than 50 countries on this continent, we therefore only hear about a handful that have strife and bloodshed.... We need to see more of this continent....not through the eyes of the Western media. It is in light of these sentiments that I must commend the producers of *Africa: Search for Common Ground* (SABC2, Thursday 9PM). This series, expertly presented by John Matshikiza, who has produced quality documentaries on Africa before, shows us another face of Africa....This episode was the most inspiring piece....in a long time.

Mr. Chairman, my colleagues and I thank you for your attention.